AWEJ Volume.4 Number.4, 2013

Team of this issue

Editor
Khairi Obaid Al-Zubaidi
Language Academy, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Associate Editor
Ronnie Goodwin, PhD
Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST), Kuwait

Prof. Dr. Noureddine Guella
College of Languages and Translation
King Saud University, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Kimberly Bunts-Anderson, PhD
Department of Language and Humanities, Northern Marianas College, Saipan,
Northern Mariana Islands

Marielle Patronis, PhD
Department of Languages, University College, Zayed University, Dubai, UAE

Channarong Intaraprasert, PhD
School of English, Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand

Dr. Saad TORKI
Department of English Language and Literature University Sétif 2 Algeria
Dr Jeanette Sakel  
Programme Manager Linguistics & English Language  
University of the West of England, United Kingdoms

Abdul Hafeed Ali Fakih, PhD  
Department of English, Najran University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Niel Hunt, PhD  
Education Faculty, Al Ain Women's College, U.A.E

Jirada wudthayagorn, PhD.  
Director Language Center, Faculty of Art, Maejo University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Nada Qanbar, PhD  
Faculty of Arts, Taiz University Yemen

Choudhry Zahid Javid, PhD  
Department of Foreign Languages, Taif University, Saudi Arabia

Jaishree Umale, PhD  
Sur University College, Sur, Oman

Muhammad Aslam Sipra, Ph.D  
Department of GRC (English), JCC, King Abdulaziz University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Ahmad AL-Harahsheh, PhD  
Translation Department, Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan

Mohammed Qassem Al-Shormani, PhD  
Department of English, University of Ibb, Yemen

Michael John Fennel, PhD

Tsze Sun Li, Ed.D.  
Business Communication Unit, College of Economics and Political Science, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman.
AWEJ Volume.4 Number.4, 2013

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team of this issue</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter from the editor</td>
<td>4-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algerian University English Language Teaching Materials: How readable are they?</td>
<td>4-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saad TORKI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Sociocultural Exploration of English Faculty Perceptions of the Writing Center in the Qatari Context</td>
<td>17-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molly McHarg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Writing Proficiency among Three Types of Students in an ESL Composition Course</td>
<td>45-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maxine E. Goldburg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Discussion on Teaching a Language without Teaching its Culture</td>
<td>60-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronnie Goodwin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Construction and Negotiation through an EFL Syllabus in Sudan</td>
<td>78-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nada Sid Ahmed Eljak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdelrahim Hamid Mugaddam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Act of Prohibition in English and Arabic: A Contrastive Study on Selected Biblical and Quranic Verses</td>
<td>95-111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawsan Kareem Al-Saaidi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghayth K. Shaker Al-Shaibani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashim A. Mohammed Al-Husseini</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigating Saudi EFL Learners’ Vision of Future-self and its Relationship to their Self-regulated Learning Behaviour</td>
<td>112-127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara M Al-Otaibi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS Metaphor in the Financial Times</td>
<td>128-142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Nader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception and production problems: To what extent is Sudanese English intelligible to the native British and American listeners?</td>
<td>143-166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezzeldin Mahmoud Tajeldin Ali</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pragmatic Suitability of the Algerian ELT Secondary School Textbooks: The Case of Requests and Apologies</td>
<td>167-182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boudjemaa DENDENNE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Motivational Selves of Saudi Preparatory Year EFL Learners: A</td>
<td>183-201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamid Ali Khan Eusafzai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Perceptions of the Foundation Programme Assessment in Two</td>
<td>202-222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges in Oman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatma Al Hajri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation for Meaning and Feedback in ESL Writing Class</td>
<td>223-234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samah Elbelazi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role of Cohesive Devices and the Interplay of Theme and Rheme in</td>
<td>235-251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidating the Argument of Krauthammer’s <em>Free-lunch Egalitarianism</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emad Ahmed Saleem Abu Ayyash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paradigms: Researchers’ Worldviews, Theoretical Frameworks</td>
<td>252-264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Study Designs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayyed Rashid Shah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdullah Al-Bargi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit Two Birds with One Stone: Idioms and Culture in FL Translation</td>
<td>265-284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Ahlam Mohammad Alharbi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss and Maintenance of Somali Language in the UK</td>
<td>285-309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shamsudin Abikar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Comprehensive Method for Teaching English for Specific Purpose</td>
<td>310-322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammed Ali Chalikandy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code Mixing in the KSA: A Case Study of Expatriate Bangladeshi and</td>
<td>323-338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian ESL Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most. Tasnim Begum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Md. Mahmudul Haque</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Reproduction of Racialization and Racial Discrimination in</td>
<td>339-353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms and its Impact on ELLs' Social Interactions and L2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Ayesha Mohammed Mudhaffer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Effects of Metacognitive Awareness-Raising on Learners’ Reading</td>
<td>354-370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency and Strategy Use: Case of First-Year LMD Students at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen Yassamina HAICHA – ABDAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognition: Components and Relation to Academic Achievement in</td>
<td>371-385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Amine Amzil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth A. L. Stine-Morrow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of Bilingual Identity among Arabic-English Speakers in</td>
<td>386-399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America Jamie Elizabeth Gabrini</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Foreign Language Learning Beliefs and Attitudes of</td>
<td>400-419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi College English and Non-English Majors Hassan M. Kassem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of MALL Applications on Vocabulary Acquisition and Motivation</td>
<td>420-447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdul Aziz I. Fageeh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Use of Literary Texts and Questioning to Examine First-Year Central</td>
<td>448-461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Students’ Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>Dinara Karimova</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bidirectional Influence between Languages: Theoretical Foundations and Pedagogical Implications</td>
<td>Hosni Mostafa El-Dali</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Letter from the Editor

Dear Colleague,

A happy New Year to all our readers. It is my great pleasure to introduce the new issue of Arab World English Journal (AWEJ). I want to also to express our gratitude and sincere thanks for all members of our team for their hard work to make this year a success. Why do I call the last year’s work success? The international recognition increased. The number of manuscripts increased and we selected only the best manuscripts for publication.

We would like to express our sincere apology to the authors whose papers are not published in this issue due to a large number of submissions. We have given the priority to the date of submission and the date of completion of the requirements.

On the other hand, we would like to extend a very warm welcome to all new colleagues joining us and wish them all a successful and professional career with us.

Kind regards

Editor
Prof. Dr. Khairi Obaid AL-Zubaidi
Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)
editor@awej.org.com
www.awej.org
Algerian University English Language Teaching Materials: How readable are they?

Saad TORKI
Department of English Language and Literature
University of Setif 2, Algeria

Abstract
The main thrust of the present study was to analyze the readability level of teaching materials used both in Algerian departments of English and in secondary schools. The ultimate objective was to determine whether these materials were written at a level appropriate for Algerian freshmen and sophomores in departments of English. Text from lectures delivered at the university and others used in secondary schools were analyzed for their readability level using the four most popular readability formulas: The Dale-Chall Readability Formula, The Flesch Reading Ease formula, Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease formulas, and The Lexile Formula. The analysis of the data revealed a significant difference between the readability of reading material in the secondary school and the university. The results suggest that there is a wide gap between them. Consequently, this readability level is too far beyond the freshmen and sophomores’ reading ability to achieve the desired optimum comprehension. It is suggested that teaching the reading skill and an emphasis on vocabulary at the university could be one step toward bridging such a gap. Furthermore, there is a need for more careful matching of reading material readability levels and Algerian students’ reading levels.

Keywords: readability, reading difficulty, reading formula, text difficulty.
Algerian University English Language Teaching Materials: How readable are they?

It is a byword in educational settings that the most important instructional decision that teachers make is supplying students with materials that are at the appropriate level of difficulty. If students are given materials that are too easy, they may lose interest and motivation. If students are given materials that are too difficult, they may struggle to understand the lectures and the learning material. There is a good chance that they will be low achievers. They may also become so frustrated that they simply fail and give up.

The present research aimed at investigating whether Algerian freshmen and sophomore’s reading level enables them to achieve comprehension of reading material used in departments of English, as well as comprehension of the lectures they attend. The motivation of this research comes from the fact that complaints by teachers and expression of frustration about the students’ level at English as being far from the standards are often heard in staff rooms. However, no evidence has been adduced in support of such assertion.

Matching learning material and students’ reading ability requires knowing the readability level of materials. In the context of the present study, one way to reach such an end is to assess the readability of the reading material used both at the department of English and in secondary schools in order to (a) establish the difficulty level of these materials at both levels; (b) determine the gap which may exist between student reading ability and the level of the materials being used to teach them; and (c) know whether material used for university students is written at a level suitable for them.

To this end, three main research questions were posed:

1- What is the reading difficulty of Algerian secondary school English language teaching materials?
2- What is the reading difficulty of Algerian university English language teaching materials?
3- How does the reading difficulty of Algerian university English language teaching materials compare with the difficulty of Algerian secondary school English language teaching materials?

The results could be utilized in future studies to highlight the gap which may exist between student reading ability and the level of the materials used to teach them.

Literature review

What do we mean by readability?

There is no consensus on the exact definition of the concept of readability. Simply defined, readability is what makes one text more difficult or easier to understand than others. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2010), it is the “sum total of the entire elements and their interactions that affect the success of a piece of printed material” (p. 331). The most comprehensive definition may be that of Dale and Chall (1949) who define readability as:

The sum total (including all the interactions) of all those elements within a given piece of printed material that affect the success a group of readers have with it. The success is the extent to which they understand it, read it at an optimal speed, and find it interesting. (p. 12)

These elements make a reader’s comprehension of a text a function of the difference between reader ability and text readability. It should be mentioned that in literature there is a distinction between legibility and readability, though sometimes the two terms are used
interchangeably. Actually, they denote different things. Research on legibility is concerned mainly with typeface and format factors. In contrast, readability research focuses on linguistic factors such as word and sentence length. Both seek the same objective, to ascertain the degree of reading ease of a piece of text and eventually find ways to improve it, but their approaches are totally different (Anagnostou and Weir, 2007).

Readability: a brief historical overview

According to Klare (1963), concerns about text readability can be dated back as far as the antiquity, around 900 A.D. when word counts were used as a rough index of reading ease by Talmudists who counted the occurrences of words and ideas seeking to distinguish differences in meaning. However, the publication of Thorndike's *Teacher's Word Book* (1921) which provided teachers with an objective means for measuring the difficulty of words and texts is considered as the major breakthrough in estimating reading difficulty. Chall (1988) reports that the beginnings of readability formula research came from two main sources: studies of vocabulary control and studies of readability measurement. Vocabulary control studies were concerned with the vocabularies that would be most effective for learning to read from reading textbooks while readability measurement were targeted at the evaluation of the comprehension difficulty of reading textbooks. Both types of studies sought objective means of measuring the difficulty of texts for learning to read and for comprehending and learning from textbooks, newspapers, novels, and so on. It follows that research on readability has a common ultimate goal consisting mainly in finding objective means to measure the difficulty of reading materials for the intended readers, or to predict how well reading materials will be comprehended by the intended readers. The basic tenet of readability research is that it assumes that words encountered frequently by readers are less difficult to understand than words encountered rarely, i.e., word frequency.

Readability pioneers focused on surface characteristics of written texts to determine the extent to which readers could comprehend texts. They considered any measurable elements of writing such as the number of personal pronouns in the text, the average number of syllables in words or number of words in sentences in the text. Then, they compared the data with certain predetermined standards. One such standard was tabulating the average grade level of students who could correctly answer a certain percentage of questions from the text. Researchers judged the characteristics with the most accurate standards as indicators of readability, which they developed into readability formulas. There ensued the design of mathematical equations which correlate these elements.

Over the past sixty years, the concept of readability has been revitalized and the notion that reading difficulty needs to be matched with student reading ability has been emphasized by readability investigators. Starting from the 1950s and influenced by new insights gained from linguistics and cognitive psychology, new variables such as reader’s interest, motivation, and prior knowledge came to be explored as variables affecting reading comprehension and readability. This era was characterized by a certain number of features. The number of researchers and studies that took interest in readability grew considerably. A large number of researchers and studies took interest in readability and attempted to improve readability formulas. Presently, there are over 200 readability formulas with varying degrees of accuracy and success rate (DuBay, 2004).

Factors that influence readability

Graves & Graves (2003) identified a set of ten factors that can have an effect on a learners’
comprehension. These ten factors can be divided into two groups. The first group comprises six factors inherent to the text itself: vocabulary, sentence structure, length, elaboration, coherence and unity, and text structure (or organization, i.e., narratives or exposition). However, the authors are quick to point out that since reading is an interactive process that involves both the reader and the text, no text factors are fully independent of the reader. The second group comprises four factors that involve both the reader and the text: familiarity of content and background knowledge required, audience appropriateness, reader motivation and interest. Factors considered were described as "semantic" if they concerned the words used, and "syntactic" if they concerned the length or structure of sentences.

The level of reader comprehension of the text is, as research tends to confirm, determined by how well the reader variables interact with the text variables. Comprehension is, as already mentioned, seen as a function of the difference between reader ability and text readability. These studies have relied on readability formulas which are mathematical calculations based on some text features. Traditionally, studies on readability have focused on linguistic and psycholinguistic factors to explain text difficulties. Early readability studies (Dale and Chall, 1948; Flesch, 1943) investigated observable text characteristics (e.g., number of words in a sentence, number of syllables in a word, number of prepositions, and vocabulary frequencies). Studies conducted in the last decades have continued to be interested in factors affecting readability (Fry, 2002; Greenfield, 2003). More recently, researchers have made use of computer science (Litz, 2005; Crossley, 2006; Campbell and Weir, 2006). These studies have tried to explain text difficulties by measuring texts readability and the ability of readers by attempting to place the two constructs on the same scale. Examples of such studies are: The Lexile Framework, The Strathclyde Complexity Measure, and Corpus analysis studies.

Readability formulas

Readability formulas serve to give an estimate of text difficulty. Their sole purpose is to predict such difficulty. They are multiple regression equations in which the dependent variable is the reading difficulty predicted of a text and the independent variables are two or more directly measurable characteristics of the text, such as the number of letters per word and the number of words per sentence. The purposes for which readability formulas are designed might vary, but they tend to have one objective in common, that is, to predict the difficulty of the text for the intended readers without the latter’s actual participation in the course of readability evaluation. The prediction of the text's difficulty is expressed as a grade level, a cloze score, or a score on some set scale (Greenfield 2004). Text difficulty is measured according to the familiarity of the vocabulary to the reader. It is assumed that if a word is familiar to the reader, its level of difficulty is low, and vice versa. The common measurement of vocabulary familiarity is word frequency. By word frequency, it is meant the frequency with which a given word occurs in a sample of the target language. Word frequency and vocabulary difficulty vary inversely. The higher the word frequency, the smaller will the vocabulary difficulty be, and vice versa (Lin, 2002, p.170).

According to Prichard and Hayden (2008), in the United States of America, many government agencies now require that documents, such as loan agreements, rental agreements, and property purchase contracts meet specific readability levels. Over thirty states have some form of plain language, or readability component in their insurance laws, and a number of states specify that insurance policies must be written at a minimum Flesch Reading Ease score to be judged “sufficiently readable”.

Arab World English Journal
ISSN: 2229-9327
It should be mentioned that readability formulas differ in the features they consider in their analysis. Common parameters include: average word length in characters, average sentence length, average word length in syllables, ratio of difficult sentences, ratio of difficult words, ratio of unfamiliar words, and number of unique words.

Below is a consideration of the four most popular English readability formulas listed by the United States Institute for Academic Excellence (1998). All four formulas base their calculations on at least two variables: (1) semantic difficulty as measured by word length, word familiarity, or word frequency, and (2) syntactic difficulty as measured by sentence length—the average number of words per sentence. As a result, the formulas tend to measure similar factors, correlate well with one another, and, on average, yield only slight differences. These formulas are: (1) The Dale-Chall Readability Formula; (2) The Flesch Reading Ease formula; (3) The Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease formula and (4) The Lexile Formula.

The validity of these formulas for predicting the readability of English texts in English as a Foreign Language contexts has been demonstrated in a number of studies such as Nilagupta (1975), Hamsik (1984), Brown (1998), (Greenfield, 2003), Crossley (2006), and many others. For this reason, they were used in this research.

**Flesch Reading Ease formula.** The Flesch Reading Ease formula developed in 1948 is one of the most widely used readability formulas in use today. It is considered suitable for all kinds of text. This formula uses average sentence length and number of syllables. It multiples the average number of words in the sentence by 1.015 and the total syllable count by .846. The sentence length and syllable count are then added and subtracted from 206.835 to arrive at a readability score (DuBay, 2004, p. 20).

The formula reads as follows:

\[
\text{Flesch Reading Ease Score} = 206.835 - 84.6 \times \text{ASW} - 1.015 \times \text{ASL}
\]

where:

- \(\text{ASW}\) = average number of syllables per word
- \(\text{ASL}\) = average sentence length

It measures reading from 100 (for easy to read) to 0 (for very difficult to read). The higher the score, the easier the document is to read. It is based upon a 50% comprehension rate. A zero score indicates text has more than 37 words on the average in each sentence and the average word is more than 2 syllables. This formula also has been incorporated into most word processing programs including MS word.

**Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease formula.** The Flesch Reading Ease Score was later revised by other readability researchers (Kincaid et al., 1975, cited by Klare, 1984, p. 692) in a study commissioned by the U.S. Navy, in order to provide grade level scores (Table 1). The adapted formula became known by different names, like Flesch-Kincaid Index, Flesch-Kincaid Scale, Flesch-Kincaid Score, Flesch-Kincaid Readability Score, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Score, Flesch-Kincaid Readability Statistics, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Index, Flesch-Kincaid Readability Index, Flesch-Kincaid readability equation, and so on. The result is a number that corresponds with a grade level.

The specific mathematical formula is:

\[
\text{FKRA} = (0.39 \times \text{ASL}) + (11.8 \times \text{ASW}) - 15.59
\]

Where:

- \(\text{FKRA}\) = Flesch-Kincaid Reading Age
- \(\text{ASL}\) = Average Sentence Length (i.e., the number of words divided by the number of sentences)
ASW = Average number of Syllable per Word (i.e., the number of syllables divided by the number of words)

A score of 5.0 indicates a grade-school level. It means that a student in the fifth grade would be able to read the document. Such a score would eventually help teachers, parents, librarians, and others to choose reading material.

For the purpose of comparison, Reader's Digest magazine has a readability index of about 65, Time magazine scores about 52, and Harvard Law Review has a general readability score in the low 30s.

Table 1

Interpretation of the Flesch Reading Ease Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flesch Score</th>
<th>Readability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 - 100</td>
<td>Very Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 - 90</td>
<td>Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 80</td>
<td>Fairly easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 70</td>
<td>Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 60</td>
<td>Fairly Difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 50</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 30</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Dale-Chall Formula. Published by Dale and Chall in 1948, this is a very influential formula. It was meant to bring improvements to the Flesch Reading formula. The formula uses two variables, average sentence length and a percentage of difficult words. The idea behind this formula is that readers typically find it easier to read, process and recall a passage if the words are familiar. The Formula uses a count of difficult words. These difficult words are words that do not appear on a specially designed list of common words familiar to most students. It is based on the Dale list of 3,000 familiar words, 80 percent of which are known to fourth-grade readers (DuBay, 2004, p. 23). In addition to the percentage of words found on the Dale list, the formula uses average number of words per sentence (Chall and Dale 1995).

The formula is as follows:

Raw Score = 0.1579 PDW + 0.0496 ASL + 3.6365

Raw Score = Reading Grade of a reader who can answer one-half of the test questions on the passage.

The first measure (PDW = Percentage of Difficult Words) is the percentage of words in the passage not found on the Dale Word List. The second measure (ASL = Average Sentence Length) is the average number of words per sentence, which is calculated by dividing the total number of words in the passage by the total number of sentences in the passage. Table 2 displays the correspondence of the raw score to grade level as calculated by The Dale-Chall Readability Formula.

Table 2

Mapping Raw Score to Readability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw Score</th>
<th>Readability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.9-</td>
<td>Very Easy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The main idea behind the Dale-Chall readability formula is that when a text is written with familiar words, it becomes easier to read and, therefore ideas expressed therein are easier to comprehend and recall.

The Lexile Formula. A more recent application of traditional readability formulas is known as the Lexile Framework and which has been defined by its designers (Wright and Stenner, 1998) as a scientific approach to reading and text measurement.

The Lexile Formula is based on two components. The first is a measure of sentence length, which by hypothesis indicates the level of syntactic complexity. It is based on what the proponents of the formula call the syntactic axiom: the shorter the sentence, the easier the passage is to read. Worded differently, the length of a sentence is a good indicator of how hard it is to read. Longer sentences take longer to read and require more concentration to understand. The longer a sentence, the more likely it is to contain complex phrases and clauses, which will complicate things for the reader, especially in a foreign language (Fry, 1989).

The second component is a measure of semantic complexity, based on word familiarity. The more frequently a word is encountered the more chances there are for the reader to know its meaning.

Lexiles evaluate the semantic difficulty of words by their frequency in standard written text. The authors have developed a process that assigns a value to the reading capacity of a person. The central idea is that, when a person is reading with 75% comprehension, he/she is at optimal reading capacity. The process, therefore, assesses a person’s level of reading comprehension, and then calculates what they called the lexile value of texts they can read with 75% comprehension. This is the measure of their reading capacity.

Designers of The Lexile Framework for Reading explain that it is made up of Lexile reader measures and Lexile text measures, both of which are put on the Lexile scale. A Lexile measure is defined as the numeric representation of an individual’s reading ability or a text’s readability (or difficulty), followed by an “L” (Lexile). There are two types of Lexile measures: The Lexile reader measures and The Lexile text measures. The Lexile reader measure typically is obtained when an individual completes a reading comprehension test. Once a field study has been performed to link Lexile Framework with the test, the individual’s reading score can be reported as a Lexile measure. A Lexile text measure is obtained by evaluating the readability of a piece of text, such as a book or an article. The Lexile Analyzer, a software program specially designed to evaluate reading demand, analyzes the text’s semantic (word frequency) and syntactic (sentence length) characteristics and assigns it a Lexile measure.

The Lexile scale runs from below 0L (Lexile) to above 2000L. Scores 0L and below are reported as beginning reader and scores above 2000L are reported as high Level. By way of example, the novel Gone with the Wind by Margaret Mitchell scores 1100L, A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens scores 990, and American university textbooks 1250L-1450L.
In sum, The Lexile Framework for Reading is an approach to reading measurement that matches readers to text. The Lexile Framework measures both reader ability and text difficulty on the same scale, called the Lexile scale (Table 3).

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Lexile Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>200-350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>350-500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>500-750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>620-910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>730-960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>800-1030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>880-1090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>910-1140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1030-1160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1080-1210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1130-1260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1180-1300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.lexile.com/findabook/

In order to give the reader an idea about these measures, Table 4 gives the Lexile for a few well known books.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Lexile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Cat in the Hat</td>
<td>Dr. Seuss</td>
<td>260L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Giving Tree</td>
<td>Shel Silverstein</td>
<td>530L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</td>
<td>J. K. Rowling</td>
<td>880L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Tale of Two Cities</td>
<td>Charles Dickens</td>
<td>990L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride and Prejudice</td>
<td>Jane Austen</td>
<td>1100L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Trial</td>
<td>Franz Kafka</td>
<td>1100L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Brief History of Time</td>
<td>Stephen Hawking</td>
<td>1290L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Last of the Mohicans</td>
<td>J. F. Cooper</td>
<td>1350L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Quixote</td>
<td>Cervantes</td>
<td>1410L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.lexile.com/findabook/

Limitations of Readability Formulas. The main criticism that has been addressed to readability formulas is that they can only measure the surface characteristics of text. Qualitative factors such as sentence structure, concreteness and abstractness, and incoherence cannot be measured mathematically. They have pointed out that material which receives a low-grade level score may prove to be incomprehensible to the target audience. As an example, they suggest to consider what happens if the words are scrambled in a sentence, or on a larger scale, the sentences are randomly rearranged in a whole text. The readability score could be high, but comprehension would be lacking. In addition, readability formulas cannot give an idea of how complex the ideas are, whether or not the content is in a logical order, whether the vocabulary is appropriate for the audience, and whether there is a gender, class or cultural bias. For these reasons, Klare et al. (1969, cited in DuBay, 2004) stated that formula scores are better thought of as rough guides than as highly accurate values. Used as rough guides, however, scores derived
from readability formulas provide quick, easy help in the analysis and placement of educational material.

Methodology

Reading Material

In order to answer the research questions asked above, it was necessary to collect reading material used in secondary schools and material used in Departments of English. In the latter case, given the limitations of this study, materials (described hereafter) were collected by the researcher from colleagues and students at the department of English Language and Literature at the University Setif 2, Algeria. The university texts used in this study were handouts given by teachers to students in the courses of literary studies and Linguistics.

Concerning secondary school material, it is available in the Ministry of Education-approved secondary school textbooks, in term papers, and in the ‘Baccalaureate’ English paper. The latter, being a paper taken nationwide by secondary school final year students, it is assumed that it is aimed at the student with an average reading ability and hence as representative of the “national reading ability level” as it has been designed by professionals working very close to the secondary school students and the best aware of their reading ability.

Readability formulas used

The readability formulas used were: The Dale-Chall Readability Formula, The Flesch Reading Ease formula, Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease formulas, and The Lexile Formula. It should be pointed out once again that these formulas were selected for the present study mainly because they have been proved to be valid for English as a Foreign Language context. Another reason is their ease of accessibility online. In addition, The Flesch Reading Ease formula, Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease formulas are easily accessible via MSWord.

Procedure

The reading material selected was scanned using an OCR program. Then each passage was transferred to a Microsoft Word (Microsoft Software 2007) document so that standard readability statistics such as the Flesch and Flesch-Kincaid Grade Scale could be calculated via the formulas included with MSWord's grammar checker. Next, the readability of these passages using The Dale-Chall and Lexile formulas was assessed via software tools available online.

The passages selected were:

Secondary school material:

1- Two passages from the Ministry of Education-approved secondary school reading textbook New Prospects, Secondary Education Year 3, were chosen for analysis of readability. These were The Unicorn in the Garden (pp. 189-90), and Satellites (p. 206).

2- Baccalaureate English papers: Two Baccalaureate 2013 papers were selected. The first was taken by students of the “Experimental Sciences” stream, the second by the students of the stream “Foreign Languages”.

These streams were selected on the basis that the overwhelming majority of students incoming to the department of English come from them.

University material:
1- A handout in linguistics from the first lectures of the academic year entitled *The Syllable* intended for freshmen.

2- A handout in literary studies from the first lectures of the academic year entitled *The Origins of a Nation* intended for sophomores.

**Results**

For the interpretation of the results, the purpose here is not to compare Algerian student reading abilities to that of American students. The idea is to use the American grade level as a benchmark, a measuring tool and, most importantly, as a unit of measurement only in order to compare Algerian secondary school and university reading material. The closer the level of Algerian reading material is to the American one, the more it is difficult, and vice versa. The fact to use the American grade level does not affect in any way the results.

Table 5 below displays the overall results for all the reading passages analyzed.

Texts analyzed:

1. The Unicorn in the Garden
2. Satellites
3. Baccalaureate Paper Foreign Languages
4. Baccalaureate Paper Experimental Sciences
5. Origins of a nation
6. The Syllable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
<th>Overall results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary school material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counts</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters</td>
<td>2217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td>12.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. / parag.</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words / sent.</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charact / word</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readability</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive sentences</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flesch Reading Ease</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level</td>
<td>640L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexile Formula</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of the data revealed that all the formulas used agree on the degree of difficulty of each text under investigation. That is, the four formulas used yield roughly the same result related to reading ease. For ease of presentation and interpretation, the averages of the results yielded by the formulas have been calculated. These are displayed in Table 6.
The following is an attempt to answer the research questions which guided this study.

Research question 1: What is the reading difficulty of Algerian secondary school English language teaching material?

A close examination of the results in Table 5 and Table 6 shows that the reading texts used in secondary schools do have more or less the same readability level. However, the passages used in the official Baccalaureate paper do have a readability level a bit higher than those taken from the textbook. The readability level of the secondary school material was rated by the Flesch Reading Ease as 70.25, by the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level as 5.97, by Lexile Formula as 683, and by the by the Dale-Chall Formula 5.15. Any of these score corresponds to either ‘easy’ or ‘fairly easy’. However, this is not the main point in this research. This was done to serve as a benchmark to answer the next research questions.

Research question 2: What is the reading difficulty of Algerian university English language teaching material?

The readability of university reading materials was rated by all the formulas used as being fairly difficult, difficult or even very difficult. According to the Flesh Reading Ease, the readability score of university material (46.6) is between Time magazine scores (52) and … Harvard Law Review (30).

According to the Lexile formula score (1240L), the university lectures are harder to read than Gone with the Wind by Margaret Mitchell (1100L) and A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens (990L). They are at the same level as novels written by renowned novelists such as Kafka, Austin, and Hawking (see Table 4). They are not far from American university textbooks whose score is 1250L-1450L (MetaMetrics, 2010). Obviously, this is too far out of the reach of freshmen and sophomores.

Research question 3: How does the reading difficulty of Algerian university English language teaching material compare with the difficulty of Algerian secondary school English language teaching material?

Referring to Table 6 above, it appears that on the whole, the difference between the readability level in the secondary school and the university varies from simple to double. That is, university material is twice as harder as secondary school material. There appears to be no common measure between what students are exposed to in secondary school and what they are exposed to at the university.
Conclusion and Implications

The major findings of this research reveal that, in general, the reading levels of the reading material and the lectures at the university do not match with reading abilities of the freshmen and sophomores. Specific implications drawn from these findings include the following:

1. There is a need for a more careful matching of the readability of reading material and Algerian students’ level.
2. Reading material and lectures need careful analysis to determine their readability level to match it with students’ abilities.
3. English Teaching will be more effective if instructional materials are selected for students after their reading levels have been determined.
4. University teachers should be made aware of the reading level of students incoming to the university to help them improve their reading abilities and to make their lectures understood. Otherwise, students will reach the frustration level.
5. Careful consideration of relative syntactical difficulty is needed.
6. Educational authorities should find a way for bridging the gap between the secondary school and the university.

About the Author:
Dr. Saad Torki has a thirty-five-year long teaching experience at all levels in Algeria and the Middle-East where he worked as a teacher trainer on a professional development program he designed and implemented for native teachers of English. His scholarly interests include EFL/ESL, vocabulary teaching and learning, reading, readability, phonetics, phonology, teacher development, and materials development.

References


A Sociocultural Exploration of English Faculty Perceptions of the Writing Center in the Qatari Context

Molly McHarg
Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar

Abstract
This study examines English faculty perceptions of the Writing Center at American Design University in Qatar (ADU-Q) through a sociocultural framework and social capitalist analysis. The current proliferation of American higher education branch campuses in the Arabian Gulf region make this a timely study, as the local context warrants an in-depth analysis of how writing centers are situated in this unique environment of language learners and dynamic social and cultural changes. Data triangulation in this qualitative study was informed by three sources: interviews with English faculty, interviews with the ADU-Q Writing Center Coordinator, and archival documents. Preliminary findings suggest that collaboration between the Writing Center and various stakeholders tends to improve positive perceptions of the Center. Furthermore, the changing nature of the local context contributes to changes in these perceptions and ways in which the participants’ viewed their own role as faculty. This research unites the fields of Composition, TESOL, and writing center research; furthermore, it aims to inform an understanding of teaching and writing center practices in Qatar.

Keywords: Qatar, writing centers, sociocultural theory, ESL, faculty perceptions
Introduction

In one of my first experiences as a writing center instructor in Qatar, a student came to me and confessed, “My professor told me not to come to the writing center. She won’t know I’m here, will she?” I found it ironic that this student’s professor was an English Language Learner (ELL) herself, with limited English language proficiency. Furthermore, in Qatar, where most of the students studying at the branch campuses of American universities are second language speakers, I had anticipated the writing center to be flooded with students seeking assistance. I have not experienced this influx, however, and when this particular student revealed to me her concerns about a faculty member advising her against using writing center services, I began to ponder faculty perceptions of the center. I found the warning to her students rather bewildering, and it has remained a source of puzzlement that served as the impetus for this study.

Background

The findings in this article stem from a doctoral study that explored English faculty perceptions of the writing center at the American Design University in Qatar (ADU-Q). A wide range of open-ended questions were asked of English faculty about their personal backgrounds, education, experiences with writing centers, and their work in Qatar. The primary data analysis of this study involved transcript analysis and coding; this coding then led to the discovery of emergent themes, one of which was the unique perceptions of the writing center in the Qatari context.

Although writing centers have been in existence since the early 1900s (or perhaps even earlier; see Boquet, 1999), writing center research has only substantially proliferated since the wake of open admissions in the 1960s, and it remains an emerging field of inquiry (Gillespie, Gillam, Brown, & Stay, 2002; Grimm, 1992, 2003; Pemberton, 2009; Rose & Weiser, 1999). One of the under-researched areas is the faculty perceptions of the center (Boquet, 2002; Lerner, 2010; Masiello & Hayward, 1991; Pemberton, 2009; Thonus, 2001). Research suggests that the more positive the perceptions of faculty about writing center work, the more effective writing centers can be in outreach to students (Boquet, 2002; Clark, 1985; Eodice, 2003; Hall, 2007). This relationship between perception and effectiveness suggests a collaborative model that lends itself to a social capitalist data analysis, which this study adopted. For example, how does a closer relationship between faculty and the writing center influence the growth of social capital between the two? This research investigated one particular institution, American Design University in Qatar (ADU-Q), through a qualitative, sociocultural research approach in order to investigate English faculty perceptions of the writing center; the study’s framework links writing center theory to TESOL practices within this particular Middle Eastern context. The primary method of data collection included interviews with English faculty at ADU-Q. Archival data, such as tutorial and statistical reports, were also collected and analyzed. Interview questions with English faculty explored the individual faculty members’ cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds; for example, did they have experience with a writing center during their education? If so, what were those experiences? What types of experiences had they had with ADU-Q Writing Center? With an overwhelming majority of ELL undergraduates and colleagues, how does language play a role in their expectations of students, the Writing Center, and within their own classrooms?

This particular site, an American higher education institution in the Middle East, also offers an important arena for exploring TESOL-related pedagogical challenges. Statistics reveal
that English is the global language of many disciplines (Crystal, 2006; Hanauer & Englander, 2011; Jenkins, 2009; Maher, 1986). Therefore, the importance of English at ADU-Q is critical to the overall institutional mission of educating students for a global community in a place where the students and faculty often speak Arabic, Urdu, and a wide variety of other languages. Furthermore, the importance of writing across the curriculum in a variety of educational and international environments has become a recent focal point of scholarly attention and research inquiry (Bazerman et al., 2012; Thaiss, Brauer, Carlino, Ganobcsik-Williams, & Sinha, 2012). Finally, these ELLs often utilize the services of peer consultants, which presents a unique consideration of faculty perceptions of the writing center because the concept of ELL peer tutors teaching other ELL learners is relatively new (Eleftheriou, 2011; Ronesi, 2009, 2011).

A plethora of influences shape the status of a writing center within an institution. One of these influences is the degree to which faculty are involved with the center (Hall, 2007; Harris, 2000; Masiello & Hayward, 1991; Mauriello, Macauley, & Koch, 2011). More importantly, however, as the anecdote in the above introduction highlights, faculty can play an influential role in encouraging or discouraging student visits to the writing center. Research has also underscored the positive value of writing centers’ collaborative work with faculty, and how these relationships can yield beneficial results for all stakeholders (Hall, 2007; Kinkead & Harris, 1993; Mauriello et al., 2011). When faculty support the writing center and encourage students to utilize its services, this support benefits students’ writing success. In particular, student use of the writing center can positively affect academic success for ESL students.

The frequency of writing center tutoring seemed to be especially valuable for ESL students, who outperform their domestic cohorts, receiving significantly higher grades in composition....it indicates that even students with minimal English proficiency are able, when appropriate help is available, to make significant progress toward mastering academic writing. (Williams & Takaku, 2011, p. 13)

In the current context at ADU-Q, where most students are ELLs, the writing center seemed to be a valuable component in fostering student success.

While student success is critical in education and should arguably be the focal point of educators’ concerns, a writing center’s overall position within the institution is also a vital point to consider because it contributes to student success. Writing centers have always held rather untenable positions; in the face of a budget crisis, writing centers are often one of the first lines to be cut (Harris, 2000; McHarg, 2011; Pemberton, 2009). If faculty play a pivotal role in supporting a writing center, then their perceptions are crucially instrumental in upholding support for the center. By extension, faculty support for the center is key to maintaining writing support for students and increasing their academic potential, especially in the face of budgetary or political challenges. Social capital theory offers a framework for investigating this faculty-writing center relationship because it focuses on the social and relational connections between these groups, rather than financial or economic relationships. The social capitalist framework utilized in this study will seek to analyze this relationship through the lens of collaboration.

Research Question

Data has been triangulated through three primary sources: interview transcripts with all six full-time teaching English faculty, interview transcripts with the ADU-Q Coordinator, and
archival artifacts, such as tutorial reports and institutional reports and statistics. Primary Research Question: What are English faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q Writing Center?

Local Context

As previously noted, recent years have experienced an explosion of American higher education institutions in the Arabian Gulf. Each of Qatar’s seven American universities represents a branch campus that was established to identically replicate the home campus. Each university in Knowledge City also houses a writing or academic resource center, and these centers vary widely in their goals and purposes. Nonetheless, writing centers in Qatar all deal primarily with ELLs, who comprise the overwhelming majority of the student, faculty, and staff populations. Within this group of ELLs is a subpopulation of Qatari students who receive government benefits that provide them with a greatly privileged lifestyle. Social, cultural, and political pressures to service and benefit Qatari students remain a constant undercurrent at all institutions in Knowledge City and likely play a role in the construction and delivery of services such as the Writing Center. It is hoped that this research will give insight into what is surely a complex relationship among students, the writing center, the faculty, and the institution, and allow a framework for enhancing the social capital of the writing center.

The sociocultural theory adopted in this study provides a lens through which the researcher may identify the multiple and often conflicting viewpoints that a faculty member may have in developing perceptions of the writing center. What factors have influenced a faculty member’s understanding of the role of the writing center? Have faculty generally understood writing centers to be facilitators and coaches in writing instruction in the United States higher education context, but then developed a greater sense of need for editing and proofreading services for the largely multilingual student population at ADU-Q? Have their experiences and interactions with students, other faculty, or the writing center influenced what they perceive to be the writing center’s role? What other societal factors in the Qatari context have shaped faculty ideas about the writing center’s role? This social capitalist view provides a structure for data analysis that connects faculty perceptions with the writing center from a collaborative viewpoint. The historical background and rationale for these two theoretical perspectives will now be discussed.

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory has its origins with Vygotsky (1986), who introduced the notion that children are not individuals brought up in isolation, but rather formed as a result of the plethora of external influences in society. Although his research focused on child development and socially mediated learning, it laid the foundation for further inquiry into and development of sociocultural theory. Wertsch (1985), who coined the term “sociocultural”, is credited with “capturing the notion that human mental functioning results from participation in, and appropriation of, the forms of cultural mediation integrated into social activities” (J. P. Lantolf & Beckett, 2009, p. 459). Given the complex nature of the historical background and cultural context of this research project, a Vygotskian sociocultural theoretical framework is appropriate. Framing this study through a sociocultural lens takes into consideration the many variables that come into play – this study considers gender, age, nationality, cultural and educational background, history, language, social interactions, and more (Johnson, 2009; J. R. Lantolf, 2000):
a sociocultural perspective also emphasizes the role of human agency...It recognizes that learning is not the straightforward appropriation of skills or knowledge from the outside in, but the progressive movement from external, socially mediated activity to internal meditational control by individual learners, which results in the transformation of both the self and the activity. Thus, cognitive development is not simply a matter of enculturation or even appropriation of existing sociocultural resources and practices, but the reconstruction and transformation of those resources and practices in ways that are responsive to both individual and local needs.[emphasis added] (Johnson, 2009, p. 2)

Johnson’s description of a sociocultural perspective offers a useful framework for this current writing center study because it allows for the possibility of fluid and dynamic perspectives. For example, has a faculty member always had a particular perspective about the writing center? Or has this perspective been reconstructed and transformed in response to changes at the ADU-Q Writing Center? Do the sociocultural dynamics of the Qatari context play a role in a faculty’s expectations and understanding of the writing center’s role?

Kim’s (2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2011) recent work on sociocultural theory provides a particularly useful model of research inquiry. Kim’s work has primarily focused on Sociocultural Theory (SCT) as it relates to motivation in second language learners. Specifically, he has investigated how Korean immigrants in Canada have undergone changes in their motivations and attitudes regarding language learning. His work reveals the numerous influences that contribute to language learning successes and failures. Kim’s work is particularly relevant for this study because it incorporates the multitude of social influences he identifies, such as motivations for living in a foreign environment, length of time in the country, etc., that may similarly play a role in how faculty perceptions are formed and developed in the unique context of ADU-Q. Additionally, Syed (2003) notes the importance of sociocultural context in English language teaching in the Arabian Gulf to teachers: “The sociocultural context is important not only for the learner but also for the teacher” (p. 337). Syed’s call to understand the faculty’s personal situation underscores the value of eliciting perspectives from English faculty, as this study will do. The status of education reform in Qatar raises critical questions about the linguistic imperialism of English in a country where Arabic is the official language. It brings to the surface pedagogical and professional issues such as the role of faculty vis-à-vis the writing center. It is imperative to explore and reveal the underlying origins and perceptions of these issues in order to strengthen the relationships between the faculty, writing center, and other stakeholders.

Social Capitalism

While sociocultural considerations were an important component of data collection, this study primarily takes a social capitalist perspective in analyzing data. Social capital theory has its origins with Bourdieu (1986), who based his theories on economics and global social conditions in France at the time. He identified social capital as one type of capital whereby “social capital is the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). In the present study, I explore the possibilities of social capitalism between English faculty and the writing center at ADU-Q.
Bourdieu’s theories focused on socioeconomics and class privilege, which is one relevant component of the Qatari context. For example, Qatari students are granted significant privileges—e.g., free education, stipends for attending school, and often guaranteed employment upon graduation. In this scenario, Qatari students do not need to invest in the development of social capital to supplement their economic wealth. On the other hand, non-Qatari students typically find themselves having to borrow money or prove themselves worthy of financial assistance from the Qatari government. These international students must demonstrate and develop a higher level of social capital.

In contrast to Bourdieu, other scholars developed social capital theory in different ways. For example, Coleman (1988), an American sociologist who wrote during approximately the same time as Bourdieu, placed more emphasis on the value of social capital for the marginalized and powerless. Non-Qatari students enrolled in higher education institutions in Knowledge City parallel Coleman’s idea of “marginalized and powerless”, because they are not entitled to the financial privileges that Qatari students receive. Coleman brought together the fields of sociology and economics and suggested that people had the ability to use the resources available to them in order to become more successful. “Social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible”; furthermore, “social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors” (Coleman, 1988, p. S98). More recently, Putnam (1995) made a passionate call for the reinstatement of social capitalism with his publication Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. He argues that the changing society in America is leading to greater individualism, with less emphasis placed on the importance of social connections and social capital. Although Putman writes from an American framework, his theories are useful to consider in the Qatari society where social connections are paramount (Zaharna, 1995). Putnam’s theory that social connections should increase social capital raise questions about the Qatari context—is the ADU-Q writing center, a focal point of collaboration and social networking, thriving because of the local context? If it is not thriving, why not? Furthermore, ADU-Q is an American institution that embraces many of the American values Putnam discusses, such as greater individualism. Does the sense of greater individualism and personal responsibility conflict with the local Qatari context? Do English faculty expect students to invest a greater amount of personal dedication to their writing and academic development? Is there a disconnect between students’ expectations of themselves and the writing center staff’s expectations of them? A sociocultural investigation into the relationship between faculty and the writing center fits neatly within this framework because how faculty perceive the writing center then results in actions that directly affect student visits to the writing center (as the introductory anecdote clearly demonstrates).

Social capitalism and its relevance to writing center work is particularly noted in The Writing Center Resource Book:

As we conceptualize ‘The Idea of the Writing Center’ for this new century, one of our greatest ethical challenges will be to define and actualize the writing center as a form of social capital that can produce aggregate growth within academic and social communities...we should also recognize the transformative power of writing center work and seek to envision the writing center as a locus of significant social capital for both the academy and the community. (Murphy & Stay, 2006, p. 278)
In 2007, Hall repeated this call to view writing centers through a social capitalist framework in his description of a successful Writing-Across-the-Curriculum initiative (Hall, 2007). Both Murphy & Stay and Hall cite Putnam’s recent contributions to the field of social capital, whereby “social capital is found in social connections, from which emerge the most significant types of networking and interpersonal relations that are the basis of community formation” (Murphy & Stay, 2006, p. 278).

These frameworks of sociocultural theory and social capitalism are key and distinctive features in this research study, because they allow a framework for exploring the multiple converging, and sometimes conflicting, elements of perceptions that impact the use of the writing center and the resulting institutional profile of the center.

Writing Center History

Boquet opens *Noise from the Writing Center* by sharing an email communication from another faculty member who felt it was “inappropriate and discourteous to make such a racket as I heard coming from the Writing Center this evening” (Boquet, 2002, p. xiii). Boquet goes on to explain that the writing center, in fact, had been holding a meeting where they were discussing and working on various professional development initiatives. Throughout the book, Boquet continues to discuss the sheer and clear lack of understanding from the faculty about the nature of writing center work.

Clark (1985), Bishop (1990), Perdue (1991), Masiello and Hayward’s (1991), and Pemberton (1995) conducted writing center research related to faculty perceptions. Other research into faculty perceptions of writing centers has been scant and has typically revolved around quantitative data collection and analysis. Most information about faculty perceptions has been conducted through satisfaction surveys at the end of each term, as indicated by the WCENTER listserv, an electronic forum for writing center professionals across the globe. More recently, Mauriello, Macauley, and Koch (2011) have provided an entire edited collection, *Before and After the Tutorial: Writing Centers and Institutional Relationships*, which includes various types of institutional relationships shared with writing centers; the volume, however, is curiously silent about faculty perceptions.

Research relating to composition studies and English language learners typically has its roots in contrastive rhetoric, as introduced by Kaplan (1966). Contrastive rhetoric focuses on the idea that different cultures have different rhetorical patterns, and, therefore, explicit teaching about these differences is imperative to developing successful writers in new academic contexts. Recent years, however, have witnessed considerable growth in research more specific to ELLs within U.S.-based writing centers; this scholarship has tended to maintain a focus on contrastive rhetoric, in addition to concerns of effective pedagogical practices, linguistic differences, and cultural considerations (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Bruce & Rafoth, 2009; Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ruzie, 1983; Williams, 2004; Williams & Severino, 2004). Other studies have investigated students’ and tutors’ perceptions of effective tutorials (Eleftheriou, 2011; Thonus, 2001, 2002; Weigle & Nelson, 2004).

guide tutors in working with ESL students. While the above literature focuses on ELL students’ experiences in the writing center, it is also critical to look at one of the most controversial, recurring, and still unresolved themes in writing center scholarship regarding English language learners: the debate between directive versus non-directive tutoring strategies. Current writing center pedagogy tends to purport a very indirect, Socratic method of tutorial teaching (Ryan & Zimmerelli, 2010); yet this model has been primarily based on work with native English speakers. Lefort (2010) summarizes the debate concisely and appropriately concludes that neither one is correct nor incorrect, but rather writing center professionals need to use appropriate instructional strategies that reflect their context. This clear gap in research lends itself well to my research questions: What are faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q writing center? Specifically, what types of practices do faculty perceive are or should be taking place during writing center tutorials? How does this type of instruction relate to the development of their perceptions of the writing center? For example, occasionally members of the Doha Writing Center Network have commented that faculty have suggested a student has received “too much” assistance in the center. Direct instruction can often be interpreted as too much help and, therefore, raises questions about academic integrity issues. The sociological approach to this study seeks to reveal some of these underlying issues that may raise concerns for faculty, especially with regard to peer tutors. For example, if a peer tutor is less skilled in explaining a grammatical concept, might he or she simply rewrite a passage of the writer’s work? On the other hand, some faculty might expect the writing center to provide more editorial-type services, especially for ELLs. While it is not the focus of this present study to directly investigate this particular phenomenon of direct versus indirect instruction, the results of the study may indicate that this key debate does influence faculty perceptions. For example, do faculty who expect direct, explicit instruction (perhaps even editing and proofreading) then get frustrated or confused when a student submits a paper full of errors? Do faculty feel that their students, as language learners or design students, need a particular type of writing instruction? As Bizzaro and Toler (1986) have suggested, do the tutors’ and faculty’s own writing apprehensions influence the nature of perceptions of the writing center? As Bauer (2009) aptly points out, many faculty are simply not engaged with writing at all; therefore, the directive versus non-directive debate may not even be at a conscious level for many faculty. This lack of engagement with writing was an unlikely scenario in the current research, since the participants were all ADU-Q English faculty and, therefore, were likely to be more engaged with writing. Nonetheless, this study aimed to unearth these varying levels of understanding of writing and viewpoints about teaching and tutoring writing to ELLs in a design institution in Qatar.

A similarly unique perspective is offered in Yavarow’s (2012) column “From the Interior Design Studio to the Writing Center: One Tutor’s Unconventional Journey to Designing a Tutorial.” In this brief article, Yavarow articulates many of the ways in which she views the process of design to be helpful in explaining writing concepts and processes to her peers in writing tutorials. Yavarow’s article reinforces the idea that writing can be appropriately adapted and situated in a discipline-specific context, such as at ADU-Q. It also highlights the positive and reflective nature that a peer tutor can offer when working with other peers in the design discipline. Nonetheless, it stops short of investigating faculty perceptions and connections more relevant to the unique language learning environment in Qatar.
Finally, Matsuda and Jablonsky (2000) have wisely cautioned about some attempts to suggest that disciplinary writing is akin to writing in a second language. These authors clearly outline their goals from the outset:

Our first goal in this paper, then, is to critically examine the “WID as a second language” metaphor and consider its implications for WAC programs. Specifically, we want to argue for a critical approach to the use of this metaphor because, as we will discuss, its broad and uncritical use can mask the complexity of second-language learning and can lead to the marginalization of second-language writers in WAC programs as well as in the professional discourse of composition studies in general. By critiquing the use of the L2 metaphor in composition studies, however, we do not mean to suggest that specialists in both WAC and English as a second language (ESL) have much to learn from one another. Our second goal, then, is to consider mutually beneficial ways of achieving interdisciplinary collaboration between WAC and ESL specialists. (p. 1)

Matsuda and Jablonsky’s cautionary, yet optimistic, advice is particularly important and valuable for this present study which investigates language learners in the context of a disciplinary-specific institution.

Peer tutors have played a role in ADU-Q’s writing center since the program began in 2011, and, therefore, it is essential to explore the historical background of peer tutoring in academia and in the present context. The concept of peer tutoring has always been complex, and remained a source of constant debate since its inception. In 1983, Harvey Kail wrote “Collaborative Learning in Context: The Problems with Peer Tutoring,” which delineated some of the challenges that collaborative learning strategies, those typically used in writing center work, faced in the academic context. While Kail’s work critically examined the value of peer tutoring in academia, Bruffee’s (1984) work continued to espouse the benefits of collaborative learning. In “Peer Tutoring and the ‘Conversation of Mankind,’” Bruffee articulates the foundations upon which collaborative learning was based:

For American college teachers the roots of collaborative learning lie neither in radical politics nor in research. They lie in the nearly desperate response of harried colleges during the early 1970s to a pressing educational need. A decade ago, faculty and administrators in institutions throughout the country became aware that, increasingly, students entering college had difficulty doing as well in academic studies as their native ability suggested they should be able to do. Of course, some of these students were poorly prepared academically. Many more of them, however, had on paper excellent secondary preparation. The common denominator among both the poorly prepared and the seemingly well-prepared was that, for cultural reasons we may not yet fully understand, all these students seemed to have difficulty adapting to the traditional or ‘normal’ conventions of the college classroom…to provide that alternative some colleges turned to peer tutoring. (1984, p. 637)

This acknowledgment of poor academic preparation, as well as understanding “conventions of the college classroom” reflects the current status of many students at ADU-Q, who come from a very different and wide variety of educational backgrounds.
Writing center research about peer tutoring has proliferated in recent years (Boquet, 1999; Bruffee, 1984; Eleftheriou, 2011; Fallon, 2010; Fels, 2010; Geller, Eodie, Condon, Carroll, & Boquet, 2006; Kail & Trimbur, 1987; Ronesi, 2009, 2011). The existence and development of such peer tutor initiatives displays the growing professionalism and solid foundation of peer tutoring in writing. Nonetheless, this development primarily stems from the U.S. context with Inner-Circle native speakers as tutors. The current study explores the phenomenon of peer tutoring within the Arabian Gulf context, through the perceptions of English faculty at ADU-Q. Are faculty perceptions, in fact, a result of the linguistic diversity found in Qatar and on ADU-Q’s campus? Do faculty experiences in more monolingual educational environments play a role in how they perceive the role of the writing center?

Although there has been a considerable growth of writing centers in the Middle East in recent years, research and scholarship still lags behind that which is produced in the United States. Jodi Lefort, Past President of the Middle East-North Africa Writing Center Alliance (MENAWCA) plainly states, “There is virtually no literature about Writing Centers outside North America.” (Lefort, 2008). Another recent contribution to the writing center field investigates perceptions of the tutor and tutee in a Middle Eastern writing center (Eleftheriou, 2011). This study builds on Eleftheriou’s research by extending it to the exploration of outside influences, such as faculty perceptions.

Eleftheriou notes, “There is evidence that qualitative evaluation strategies may be better suited than quantitative ones for application in cross-cultural research environments” (Eleftheriou, 2011). Given the unique international and cross-cultural environment and atmosphere at ADU-Q, the qualitative methods adopted for this study are appropriate. Therefore, this study pursues an exploratory methodology, “which seeks to understand how individuals in a given social and educational context make meaning, draw conclusions and make suggestions about their own learning” (Troudi & Jendli, 2011, p. 30). This methodology aligns well with the sociocultural perspective that I take throughout the study because it allows for fluidity in participants’ perspectives and an acknowledgment of participant agency.

**Primary Research Question: What are English faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q writing center?**

Responses can best be captured through the voices of English faculty; perceptions of the writing center were positive overall. English faculty expressed appreciation for the type of work that the Writing Center provided to students, as well as the Writing Center’s strong support for assisting and supporting English faculty. Cindy noted:

> Here, I have loved the writing center. I love that we have a writing center. I um…I think it has served me well and served my students well. It has...saved my students…many times. I always have a close connection with the writing center staff and faculty. Um, I consider them part of the….I’ve always considered them part of the English program really….I think that, um, there is a general regard and respect for the writing center. At least that’s the impression I get.

Alice supported this view:

> I’ve loved the writing center here because I feel like the students cannot… they cannot really benefit from [series of basic English courses], especially those 3 courses without
the benefit, the added benefit of the writing center. I think to rely just on their professor, you know, in the course, I think it’s asking…it’s just too much. They don’t…they need other readers… and of course it helps when they, they…have their peer review in the class, but they often don’t trust their classmates, so…uh, no matter how much we try to emphasize how helpful they can be to each other…um…so to have the writing center uh…tutors available um…I, yeah. It’s, I just feel like it’s most important…

Silvia similarly commented:

I always try to thank the writing center whenever they work with any of my students…and make more comments if I have time. So I want them to know, even if it’s just thank you, I want them to be thanked.

When describing his experience at ADU-Q, Jerry compared the Writing Center with his prior institutional experiences:

I wouldn’t say that anywhere else that I’ve taught...has actually had, in my opinion, such a well-defined and developed writing center. And by that I mean, you know, here’s a clear schedule, with available um, tutors, and, um, you know, mission statement, and all of that….which, which I actually think is fantastic….umm…at the [name of previous university where Jerry taught], we …if there was any such a thing it wasn’t promoted, which is really a shame.

Jerry went on to note that he promoted use of the Center to his students, “I always encourage the writing center, basically with all my classes....”

In contrast, while Julia did not specifically convey a positive or negative attitude about the Writing Center-English faculty relationship, she did indicate a lack of strong ties:

I feel like…often times I feel like the writing center gets forgotten in the minds of the English faculty or not forgotten…well yeah I would say it’s put after…work for students … and it’s not because I’m like “oh the writing center isn’t important” but just in the scheme of things that are, you know, on my plate it’s one of the last things that I think of…I feel like it could…there could be stronger ties between the two…

Julia also repeatedly suggested that her lack of collaboration was a result of trying to “mostly just to avoid confusion for you guys” because:

there might be like a….I don’t know…a disconnect in terms of understanding like maybe somebody’s saying “I would love for you to help my student with this paper” but there’s all this backstory that I’d have to give you about where we are in the classroom in order for you to help them, so maybe you should just help them with what they come in with and then see how that goes.

The ADU-Q Coordinator shared this perception of a lack of collaboration, and she added her own perception about how she believes the Writing Center is perceived and has shifted over time:
Well it definitely has changed…. when I first came…. If a student needed help with writing…. then one of the English faculty, and I don’t know how decisions were made, but one of the English faculty probably took that person under their wing and worked with them…. the English faculty were accustomed to pitching in because one person could not manage the need that there was at that time. …. the English department considered the Writing Center instructors their liaisons, or their colleagues…we collaborated in their portfolio reviews, we collaborated with them, if there was a crunch time such as at the end of the semester they pitched in…. um, it was just a very collaborative relationship. Then a few years ago the attitude changed, and I think it was with the hiring of a few newer people who were um… not [just] one but perhaps they had been teaching assistants…and they really didn’t want to re-live that experience because they wanted to go do the “higher” work, if you will, of teaching in the classroom; in other words they wanted to build their repertoire and their career. Traditionally …the English department considers those who do the writing, you know the writing center people, to be the second-class citizens if you will. And… that attitude certainly emerged in full force. And we had some…. notable disagreements and…. priorities were made and um, the two departments were more clearly differentiated. So today, um, we’re not accustomed to collaborating very much with them, although we do work with them as we do with other professors about the content of their courses. But the, the spirit of collaboration we once had really is not there.

Participants’ experiences with writing centers, receipt of tutorial session reports, and general experiences (personal friendships, hearing from students, having peer tutors in the classroom) are the strongest contributing factors to what influences English faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q Writing Center. Participants’ experiences with writing centers prior to ADU-Q were highly varied. The Coordinator had never heard of a writing center prior to coming to ADU-Q, whereas some of the English faculty had worked in them in the United States. Some English faculty had utilized writing center services as clients, while others explained that they felt their writing was at a high enough level that they often did not seek out support. Explaining his understanding of a writing center’s role, Randy stated:

…my understanding is that they were there…. they were there to help without writing the paper. They were there to make suggestions, um, that could be very specific at times but could be very broad at others. Um, and they were just…. generally helping me to improve everything that goes into writing, including the thought behind it…. I mean I think why I stopped using them was that at, when I was at [university] I would bring my stuff to the writing center and they just wouldn’t have anything to say. You know they would just say, “Wow this looks really good, I’m not sure, I think you’re writing sort of ‘above’ my level”. Because often they were you know, undergrad tutors, maybe some from the graduate school but even then they’d be in other disciplines and they would just say, you know, your… maybe a couple commas to point out of something like that, but they really stopped being sort of helpful at the level that I was at.

Despite the fact that Randy stopped using a writing center when he felt it stopped being helpful, his belief of the writing center’s role did not solely encompass remedial-type work. He clearly stated, “I think the writing center’s role is to help them think.” Cindy had been trained
and educated as to the nature of writing center pedagogy in the U.S. context, but she also noted the ways in which it needed to be adapted for the ELL population at ADU-Q.

In addition to previous personal experiences with writing centers, English faculty understandings of the Writing Center were also influenced by the tutorial session reports they received. Randy stated, “I appreciate the reports, I read them carefully, I respond to ones that merit response…um I save them, I keep track of them…” Jerry further indicated:

one thing that I truly appreciate is the level of depth in the feedback that I get from the email…um…for each visit. I think that’s fantastic. Because, you know, despite the fact that we’re somewhat spoiled in having relatively small classes, um, still to get to that level of…um…knowledge of your students’ writing on a one-to-one basis is very time-consuming. So that we have a writing center where you or [name of Writing Center staff] or [name of Writing Center staff] or even some of the tutors now that you have the peer tutors can write up something and say I’ve seen this person, and this is what they were dealing with. It’s just a tremendous help for me to understand that student, you know? And to help to support them.

Silvia indicated that she appreciated the reports, although simultaneously confessed that her grammar abilities were at a far lower level than that of the Writing Center instructors’, “It’s just…I don’t even understand when she writes some of the notes back about some of the things they did…you know, that they addressed in the writing center I’m like I don’t know what those terms mean…dangling whatevers and…” Julia also talked about how emailed reports could help her, not necessarily in understanding the Writing Center, but in working with her individual students:

I do talk to students about their experience post [writing center tutorial session] – especially if I get an email about them going I talk about that with them and see, you know, how it went ….but if they, if you guys have talked to them about a specific thing then that’s something I’ll be sure to bring up the next time I sit down and talk with them about their paper.

Samantha, the ADU-Q Coordinator, further validated the importance of session reports for faculty:

in the case of a few professors I think we win them over when, you know, they receive the reports that we write from working with the students….and once they begin to read those reports and get those reports and they compare what those students are doing or they realize what those students are doing compared to some of the others…. they begin to realize, you know what, I don’t have to read these half-written, poorly punctuated things, and it’s going to make life easier for me if I send them.

Experience with writing centers and interaction with the writing center through the receipt of emailed reports emerged as the greatest influential factors in how English faculty perceptions of the Center had been shaped. Nonetheless, other factors undoubtedly influenced individual opinions, such as hearing back from students, the intimate work environment, and more. Cindy also indicated that the small work environment allowed individuals to get to know each other professionally during personal time.
A Sociocultural Exploration of English Faculty Perceptions

some of us are personal friends…I mean [name omitted] is my neighbor, has been for years, and a personal friend of mine, and I know she’s that way with [name omitted], she and [name omitted] came, started at the same time. Um…so, that’s, you know, some of us are personal friends and then I think that, um, there is a general regard and respect for the writing center.

Ongoing experience and interaction with the Writing Center at ADU-Q are the overarching themes of how English faculty have formed their perceptions and understanding of the Writing Center. These insights offer possible critical implications for the disciplinary faculty who have far less experience with/interaction with the Writing Center.

Another overarching theme was that students should receive priority in receiving writing center support. As Jerry said, “I do feel that the first line of services…is…you know, basically, the students come first. And it has to be like that.” Randy clearly expressed, “I think the only way it seems to me to go about it is to give the people the most support that need it.” Silvia went further by discussing ways in which the Writing Center should not assume responsibility for teaching subject matter that faculty might not be interested in teaching:

The writing center is there to support the classrooms not do all the heavy lifting that you don’t want to do in the classroom. And I think particularly at an art and design school it’s very difficult for designers who are uncomfortable with writing not to just throw everything on the writing center.

There was also constant recognition that ADU-Q is a unique and entirely different context in the ways that it employs many ELLs as faculty and staff. Consequently, participants seemed to be searching for a model as a guide when it came to writing center support for faculty and staff. When discussing faculty and staff clients in the Writing Center, Silvia stated:

I wonder though if it unduly strains the writing center, particularly the types of writing that they’re bringing in which tend to be like dissertations or, you know, articles for scholarly journals….these aren’t like a couple of pages. Um…and I don’t know of any other writing center that caters to professors, um…so it’s a wonderful service…

Jerry reinforced this concern:

…my concern…for the writing center, though, is whether or not those requests from faculty overtax the resources… something to think about is how, how are the work flows managed? Can those requests from people like me and other faculty members really be accommodated without sinking the ship?

Alice expressed similar concerns:

I think it’s a little tricky because I hate to think that they’re….that they’re taking up too much of the time, and that students then can’t get in which happens so often toward the end of the semester…which of course, that’s not the time for students to be waiting to go but, but I do worry that if faculty is taking up too much time then students….it’s…not fair, yeah. So I don’t know what the solution is there….

In contrast, Julia bluntly voiced her opposition to helping faculty and staff:
I really don’t like it. I feel like it takes away from time that you guys should be spending with students or could be spending with students or should be. I think that…this is something that I…struggling with from the Master’s thesis point of view too, at what point do you cut somebody off from the service that’s offered freely and what point does it become a professional or, you know, money exchange service?

While Julia expressed her dislike for time spent on working with faculty and staff as clients in the writing center, she offered advice for how this challenge might be overcome, such as offering workshops to a group of faculty. Samantha also noted the overwhelming demand placed on the Writing Center by faculty and staff clients:

The problem, here, one thing needs to be noted, we’re an atypical situation because so many of our faculty are second language speakers. And once they find out what the writing center can do, we have them as students. Uh, so we are at times, very overwhelmed in our responsibilities.

English faculty and the Writing Center staff perceptions seem to align with regard to offering priority services to undergraduate students before assisting faculty and staff. Further quantitative research may offer insight as to the depth of the challenges with prioritization.

As expected, many of the English faculty expressed that one of the primary roles of the Writing Center was that of providing grammar-related English language assistance. Cindy noted how the role of ADU-Q’s Writing Center was unique as a result of the local context and demographic composition of learners:

…it’s slightly different from perhaps on the home campus. Um, yes, generally I think that it’s a support at any stage to the student in their writing….but I think, too, that what’s…an important component is working with students on grammar, and sentence construction, and punctuation, these sorts of things. Because we don’t have a lot of time to go over that in class. Um, we’re teaching the same things that are taught on the home campus, and it’s expected that the student has all these sorts of skills and…um, developed, and established before they get here. That’s not really the case here.

Silvia also echoed Cindy’s perspective that the curricular requirements assumed many of these skills were in place for students when they entered ADU-Q:

…helping them build those critical skills…um…dealing with the ESL mechanical grammar issues…that’s the biggest help to us because we don’t have the ability or the time or both to do that as much as we can, and there’s really no room in the curriculum for teaching grammar…all the [course] outcomes are based on other things that assume that those elements are already in place…

Julia also acknowledged the problem of underprepared students but, when asked if these weaker students should be required to visit the writing center, she offered a slightly more radical response:

I think it’s something that should be headed off at the pass in Admissions if that’s an issue. And I think that we really haven’t addressed it enough here, but… if a student’s
not capable of writing at the university standards coming in, then they should probably not have been admitted to the school. I don’t think that’s fair to the student. So maybe that means a readjustment of expectations from the university and a changing of the curriculum of the lower level classes, or...um...restricting admission for students who aren’t prepared...

Julia further explained:

...if there’s a student who is collectively not getting a lot of things then I’ll recommend that they come see me or that they...go to the writing center for help with this particular thing that...that issue...if it’s grammar-related or if it’s usage related...

Later, Julia also noted how she viewed her own support and that of the Writing Center as equivalent:

I usually say that in tandem...either come to my office hours or go to the writing center because, um...you know, if it’s super-busy here I don’t want them to feel like they can’t come to see me for the same problem, you know?

Time constraints were cited by all English faculty. Randy plainly stated:

I think what it comes down to for me is a matter of time....if I see that there is just a student that is struggling with writing on so many different levels, I will often send them to the writing center as well as continue to work with me because they need, obviously, a lot of um...one-to-one instruction and time.

Similarly, the ADU-Q Coordinator commented on the importance of basic English language support. She noted that this is one area in which the Writing Center and English faculty may diverge in their roles, “Where we differ is I think we also have uh, the responsibility of the more elementary parts of writing such as the grammar and the punctuation and um...the clarity and...and conciseness and those things.”

When discussing language issues related to writing, English faculty and the Coordinator often discussed the critical connection between thinking and writing. Samantha stated, “My motto is clear writing means clear thinking. ...And the courses we have here are very much involved with teaching our students to think.” Randy articulated this as one of the roles of the Writing Center, “I think the writing center’s role is to help them think. ...they’re there to give suggestions and help them think through things, and things like that...”. Alice echoed this challenge, “I think one of the biggest problems is the critical thinking.” Cindy went on to note the value of thinking in a different language than their native tongue:

... there are certain kinds of thinking that come around in English....So I, I’m wondering if, I think it helps people you know, if you’re used to thinking in certain patterns in your native language, to learn another language, you might find out that you’re thinking in different patterns.

This recurring theme offers validation that while somewhat dated, Kaplan’s (1966) discussion of contrastive rhetoric and cultural thought patterns remains a concern in the present day.
One interesting finding was that although English faculty recognized that they were in a design school, they felt no particular need to teach to or within the disciplines. They seemed to recognize that the issue of disciplinary writing may be part of their teaching context, but, as Jerry commented, “…to be honest with you, other than trying to ground my students more in I guess, academic um…register…um, I don’t find a heavy onus on me…I don’t feel that…heavy onus to sort of teach to the field of design.” Randy felt that connecting design with English was relatively natural in the ways that they share similar concepts, “…most of the skills or tools or concepts or ideas that I articulate to them I will often try to, to re-articulate through the framework of art and design in some way.” Alice similarly commented on how the English faculty build on design studies to help shape their courses, “For example…[course name]…what used to be that first essay….now it’s the writing about a piece of artwork.”

One of the oft-cited concerns from English faculty related to how their work connects with a discipline-specific institution was that of the lack of transfer from English classes to other classes (McHarg, 2013a, 2013b). This theme of problems with transfer of skills is another key issue that could yield stronger social capital for the ADU-Q Writing Center within the entire institutional context.

English faculty perceptions of the use of peer tutors were another aspect of this study’s investigation. Cumulatively, English faculty perceived peer tutors as a positive addition to ADU-Q’s writing center. Most suggested a general feeling of skepticism at the beginning; as Silvia stated, “I think people were skeptical at first, um…but it has become a really strong program...”. The ADU-Q Writing Center Coordinator, Samantha, further validated this sentiment when she voiced how her perspective had changed over time:

Well, you have convinced me, actually, with the peer tutor program. You know [name omitted], who trained me, uh, when…when I first began talking with her she said “Don’t even try peer tutors. The students will not use them because they don’t trust their peers. ” …we really had a changing student body, and we really had enough demand that we needed peer tutors. …I’m tickled to see our students learning that these students who have training can help them.

The English faculty voices indicate a positive perception of the peer tutor program; however, feedback tended to focus on more general ideals of peer tutoring – being a positive model or mentor, being closer in age to students, etc. – rather than any specific language and writing development. Jerry commented:

Overall, I think it’s a fantastic, really a fantastic, um, endeavor, and uh…very worthwhile because it feeds back into the whole idea of the culture of writing, and when you have peers that can model to, you know, a freshman or whatnot, like “one day maybe you will be a peer tutor” or you can be, you know, you’ll move to that level of confidence…that sort of thing I think is…sends a really positive message, a hopeful message to our students…as writers.….but just by virtue of A) having more people available to work with them; B) having people…much closer, proximity I guess to their age group, umm, and who are typically also students, whether here or elsewhere, uh, I think just sends a really, really strong message to our writers that “you know what, you know, you can move in this direction”, you know one day you can be a peer tutor here, you know.
Cindy also stated:

I think it’s a great program. I really do….Again, we are helping to develop student leaders. And because they are responsible for helping other students with language, I imagine that this will make them more conscious of language, conscious about how to write well…I have a feeling it will help them develop in their, help them develop their own ideas and also in their writing.

Silvia also responded with a positive perception of the peer tutor program:

I think it’s fantastic! …and I think people were skeptical at first, um…but that it has become a really strong program, I think a peer can impact a student in even a different way than an instructor can because the student feels like they can relate to this peer a little more, but it also gives them something to aspire to like “here’s somebody like me who writes well…” and can teach others and help others, um…so I think it breaks down that idea that we can’t be good writers because we’re not native speakers or we’re not…or because we’re ESL…I think it’s a fantastic program…

Julia further noted how the peer tutors and English department offer very similar methods of teaching:

…and also it’s something that we do in our own classrooms you know, at least for [course name] I can’t constantly be…I mean I can model thesis writing but I also have to let them work in small groups a lot and so in some ways they are tutoring each other, even and helping each other through the process of writing even…without having the official peer tutor title so it’s not that strange or…you know…or like beyond the scope of what they’re already doing.

Some English faculty still freely expressed their reservations about the questionable competency of peer tutors. For example, despite Jerry’s great enthusiasm for the program, he noted:

…the only concern that I’ve had, and it’s maybe crossed my desk once…? Once or twice… is the actual level of competence, writing competence, of some of the peer tutors. …one or two maybe… emails from the peer tutors, after a visit from, with one of my students. And I’ve seen some grammatical errors in their email. Now I routinely…make errors in my own email….but they don’t strike me to be that type of error, you know, of just sort of quick writing, it’s more sort of verb accord, so to speak, and so that poses, for me, a slight concern ….still that small con is far outweighed by the pro of having another student there who can write something coherent and can look for coherence in a piece and can help spot the, the larger grammatical issues…

Randy similarly expressed concerns about peer tutor competence:

…there are some worries that they might not be as qualified as they could be, to help other students….I’m a little bit concerned that um…that they may not be getting the same quality or level of instruction that is given from someone who has a lot of experience and someone who has been well-trained in it.
Cindy echoed Randy’s concerns with her feedback about peer tutors:

…I have a slight concern about maybe their um, level of achievement or their expertise because they are second language, uh, still in college, students, um, but I trust the writing center faculty to supervise and work with them on this. So it’s a concern that’s not really deep. It doesn’t run deep, I just have wondered about it at times.

Despite any reservations or hesitations, all English faculty returned to being strong supporters of the peer tutor program and perceived the tutors as a positive addition to the Writing Center.

In addition to responses from the interview questions, some additional themes emerged during this study. The first, perhaps most salient theme was the emergence of unsolicited suggestions and recommendations for ADU-Q’s writing center. Many of these stemmed from questions about the role of the Writing Center in assisting faculty and staff. English faculty indicated that although services for faculty might be valuable, necessary, and appreciated, they should only be offered only if writing center staff time permits. Another emergent theme related to the purpose and existence of the American higher education institution within Qatar. Responses suggested almost an existential questioning of the governmental mandate in the region. Jerry questioned the purpose of his mission when discussing the use of English in an Arabic-speaking context:

…it’s really a philosophical slash ideological um…question. And it goes to the core of what the purpose of, you know, the Knowledge City campuses are. Is it Westernization slash modernization? Is it globalization? Um…or is it enhancement of local culture and local skills? I think…clarity is desirable…

Randy said:

…you know, ideally we would not be here. I mean that’s sort of my opinion. Ideally they would not need us nor want us…the powers that be that have invited all of these branch campuses. I mean the upper levels of government, right, are the people that are spearheading this whole endeavor. I mean…it’s so difficult because the system is set up in such a monolingual way. You know like myself for instance…I can’t help them with their Arabic, that’s just the reality of my position. I can help them enrich and strengthen their speaking, writing, thinking skills in English…um, but I can’t help them with their Arabic and…ideally they would… have some kind of system that that would be multilingual or maybe focuses almost exclusively in Arabic with English as an option… but the political…it’s so complicated, you know, the story of why we’re here goes back hundreds and hundreds of years…

While English faculty tended to question their role in the country’s scheme, Samantha felt the country’s vision was somewhat clear, “[W]e are here for…a particular reason, for a particular time, and they don’t want us to have citizenship, they don’t want us to stay, this is their country.”

Undoubtedly, Qatar remains in a stage of rapid development that will continue to transform the spheres of education, society, and politics. Participants also discussed this phenomenon in relation to how they view Qatari and non-Qatari students. While Silvia admitted “I don’t even really know a lot of times which ones are Qatari and which ones are not.…,” most
faculty indicated a clear distinction between the two groups. Jerry noted that despite the benefits and services prioritize for Qatari students, this may, in fact, be a drawback:

I know this sounds funny to say this almost an at-risk population [Qatari students] when it comes to equal access to um, the job market and education. And why I say that is…basically inviting people to do something and having them actually do it are two different things…

Alice shared this concern of Qataris becoming an at-risk population:

…because of the way their [Qatari] elementary and you know, all of that early learning was happening the way it took place, um…it has…it’s penalized them a little…it’s put them behind, so that when these other students from other places, other countries come shining through…it’s…it’s not fair, it’s kind of sad…but I think….I think it’s changing….

Randy echoed similar concerns about Qatari students being “left behind”.

I feel like the Qatari students are kind of getting left behind somehow. And that the expat students because they’re so…they seem to be so well-educated, motivated, and everything else to begin with, they’re the ones who are getting the most out of this education. And the Qataris are somehow getting left out. Not intentionally…I think it’s, it’s, it’s a sort of a product of the situation.

Another emergent theme related to questions of ethical responsibility related to helping students. The question of ethics related to writing was an issue for both English faculty and the Writing Center in terms of how much assistance students should receive. Randy explained his conflicted feelings, “You know, when I’m going in to evaluate papers I think to myself, “How much specific advice, you know, should I give?” Should I do sort of these line-by-line scans and edits….is that really helping them to learn?” Alice indicated that her position had changed throughout her years at ADU-Q, “…I’ve tried more and more through the years is to steer away from doing that line-by-line editing, proofreading and I try to emphasize with my students the 3 levels of, of revising.” Jerry offered this question of levels of help as one of his reasons for referring students to the Writing Center, “I feel, ethically, a little bit better if they’re able to sit in with somebody else and work with them on their writing and then bring it back to me.” Interestingly, Samantha also hinted that she did help too much at times, “I’m sure I earned a couple of Bachelor’s degrees along with some of the students. I had repeat students who came in daily, essentially, because their language use was ….not up to par.” Finally, although English faculty questioned to what level and degree they should provide direct language assistance, they were also optimistic about their students’ willingness to read feedback and incorporate suggestions into their writing. Silvia recalls:

They ask for feedback more than they did in [home campus]. They follow feedback more. Students here, and I’ve actually had to sort of limit this…they will revise until…the last second… Students here, if you give them a C, they’re going to revise until…they’re not at a C anymore.
Cindy repeated this sentiment, “…they get tons of feedback and they appreciate it and they read it.”

Results of this study reinforced the appropriate selection of a sociocultural framework. Almost all participants’ responses related to notions of what it means to be teaching and working in the local Qatari context. Work and life are inextricably linked. As Julia noted, “[E]verything in my life is completely connected to this job, if I lost my job I would lose where I live.”

The local context also dictates that ADU-Q prioritizes local Qatari students. Interestingly, this need for prioritization does not seem to transfer into the classroom. Despite government requests and laws for developing Qatari nationals’ human capital, preference is not given to Qatari students in the classroom. English faculty at ADU-Q maintain egalitarian principles in the classroom, and, therefore, do not seem to give additional time or attention to any particular group of students.

Other critical implications for the ADU-Q faculty-Writing Center relationship lie in the social, cultural, and political trajectory of the country, which aligns well with the sociocultural perspective of this study. Participants’ voices repeated a refrain of uncertainty with regard to their own positionality and that of the students. The current institutional mandate is for them all to teach solely through English medium, and yet recent political decrees and societal undercurrents suggest that the country may be moving towards a bilingual society. Furthermore, despite the prioritized services for Qatari citizens, these students seem to be falling behind the educational curve in the classroom. What implications do these changes have for faculty in all disciplines at National Institution? At ADU-Q?

Another unique finding relates to the first research question: What are English faculty perceptions of the ADU-Q Writing Center? The participants’ voices, both from the English faculty and Writing Center Coordinator, suggest that while English faculty perceptions of the Writing Center may be positive, they have changed over time. These voices also offer insight as to the possible sources of a changing dynamic and possible growing disconnect. In other words, while Julia suggested that she may not collaborate as much due to time constraints and not wanting to confuse the students or Writing Center staff, Samantha viewed this decrease in collaboration as a reflection of the traditional lower status that writing centers have within an institutional framework. She noted that ADU-Q’s Writing Center was similar to most “typical” writing centers by its lesser prestige compared to other departments. Samantha also made comments that echoed Perdue’s (1991) assertion that “Writing-center directors have another kind of powerful evidence at hand…the progress reports and case histories we and our tutors write…” (p. 18). ADU-Q English faculty perceptions related to conference summaries reinforce Cogie’s (1998) findings that conference summaries do provide additional insight for faculty to understand and appreciate the value of writing center work. Cogie’s survey “confirmed the value of the weekly reports for the responding instructors” (Cogie p. 55).

While English faculty tended to agree that students should receive priority in receiving writing center support services, there was also clear indication of the perceived need for writing instruction for faculty and staff. As Silvia aptly stated, “We really do have professors who are seriously ESL”. Therefore, there is an identified need and an identified possibility for improving the level of English writing proficiency for ADU-Q faculty and staff. This finding may have implications for the future of staffing at ADU-Q’s Writing Center; the level of staffing remains
low, but with a demonstrated need to fill, the administration may consider the Writing Center a more key component of the overall institutional success.

Another finding specific to the needs of Qatar is that most of the English faculty and the ADU-Q Writing Center Coordinator commented on the need for more basic grammar instruction with in the writing center. There was a shared acknowledgment that the Writing Center, indeed, was an appropriate place to address the challenge of language development, in particular when students entered the institution less prepared than most of their peers. This finding tends to contrast with general writing center scholarship that recommends writing center work begins with higher order concerns. And while some English faculty embraced this type of teaching themselves, other English faculty participants saw it better-situated in the Writing Center. As Silvia stated, “I’m like I don’t know what those terms mean…dangling whatevers and…” English faculty and the ADU-Q Coordinator seem to agree that higher order concerns remain a priority in the Writing Center, but the technical, lower order concerns of grammar and mechanics also play a fundamental role in the work within ADU-Q’s Writing Center – more so, perhaps, than in other contexts.

English faculty and the ADU-Q Coordinator shared the common stance that although the genre of writing at a design school was seemingly of no major concern for own their teaching practices, they all worked to support the design faculty through the teaching of writing. Furthermore, there was agreement that transfer of knowledge between and across disciplines remained a concern while working with students. This shared concern was one that offered another avenue for future research. How can English faculty and the Writing Center at ADU-Q work collaboratively and effectively to support disciplinary-specific writing?

English faculty also raised concerns about the relative academic weaknesses with which many Qatari students enter into the classroom. This population of students, which receives preference and priority services according to government mandates, may, in fact, be “falling behind”. These sentiments echo recent news reports that suggest a level of underpreparation the Qatari students face (Khatri, 2011). The ADU-Q Writing Center, a support service for university students, faculty, and staff, may be best positioned to provide the language and critical thinking support that English faculty indicate is needed. However, there remains uncertainty as to how the various levels of administration and hierarchy within ADU-Q and National Institution may implement such a prioritization. For example, American higher education institutions are bound by egalitarian principles and legal constraints for all stakeholders – how might this conflict with National Institution’s vision to give preference to all Qatari citizens? Participants’ voices echoed similar concerns with questions about the direction in which the country planned to proceed. While it was not the aim of this study to answer these types of questions, they do bring these challenges to the forefront of education in Qatar.

Silvia asked the question about what English faculty might do for the Writing Center. Walker (1991), who writes about the importance of a solid faculty-writing center relationship, offers one way to enhance this collaboration: “A third way to involve faculty directly in the Writing Center is to invite them to make short presentations to the tutors in an area of their expertise” (p. 13). This suggestion is also worthy of further investigation. If English faculty such as Silvia are offering expertise and others, such as Julia, are hinting that a more formalized faculty-writing center relationship be formed, then Walker’s invitation to make presentations
may be a likely solution at ADU-Q. Another key finding of this study relates to the challenge that students face with regard to transferring skills across the disciplines. This perception related to the English faculty-Writing Center relationship because both groups expressed concern that students were not able to utilize the skills they learned in their English classes by transferring those to their design majors. This challenge has great implications for future research, in particular for enhancing the social capital of the Writing Center within the institution. The ADU-Q Writing Center is positioned in such a way that gives Center staff access to students throughout their entire university education—not just in particular courses or during particular years of their studies. Therefore, it may be a positive benefit for the ADU-Q Writing Center staff to focus on this opportunity to maintain continuous interaction with students. Would it be meaningful and relevant for each student to be assigned to a particular Writing Center instructor or tutor throughout their education at ADU-Q? What types of training strategies could be implemented in the Writing Center to ensure continuity of teaching for each individual learner?

Interestingly, Silvia concluded our interview by asking, “What would the writing center here want from the English program different than what we’re doing now? Like in an ideal world, what could we be doing better for the writing center?” Her question began to indicate the importance of simply conducting research—by asking questions and involving English faculty, I was beginning a conversation that could extend to the future. Despite this sense of optimism, the recurring theme of time restrictions and limitations remained pervasive, and suggests that collaborative efforts between faculty and the Writing Center may need to be implemented, at least initially, by imposing a top-down approach.

Taking the time to simply schedule a formalized meeting time and getting feedback offered insight into English and Writing Center faculty perceptions. Participants felt actively engaged; furthermore, they all expressed interest in learning about the results. For example, Jerry ended our interview with the following sentiment:

[J]ust to do this, to just have that focus on writing center uh…I mean…clearly you’re using here specifically, but as a wider area, um…I think is really, really valuable…umm, you know, and for the same reason that I’m a believer in what the writing center does. So that anything you can do that, to enhance its role, and its effectiveness, I’m all for it.

Silvia also concluded our interview with offers of assistance by asking, “What would the writing center here want from the English program different than what we’re doing now? Like in an ideal world, what could we be doing better for the writing center?” Her question opened the door for increased dialogue between the Writing Center and English faculty. These positive interactions suggest an optimistic future for the development of English faculty-Writing Center relations, and suggest that additional research is worthy of exploring.

---

1. Selections of this article were taken from the original study; see (McHarg, 2013b).
2. See Appendix for sample interview questions.
3. All names and institutions are pseudonyms. To ensure confidentiality, any potentially identifying information has been modified or omitted in this document.
4. While statistics reflect the pervasive dominance of English in these fields, the linguistic imperialism of English is not without controversy; Pennycook (1994, 2007) and others continue to problematize this linguistic imperialism.
Knowledge City is an area of Doha that houses the branch campuses of the imported American universities. For a more detailed description of the development of Knowledge City, see Kane (2011).

While it is not within the scope of this study to examine the differences between the various centers, it is notable that they do vary considerably and are constantly changing. Trimbur’s (2000) work on the changing identity of global writing centers offers a clear indication of some of the changes that writing and academic centers in Knowledge City struggle with now.

About the Author:
Dr. Molly McHarg is an Assistant Professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar. She has lived and worked in Doha since 2005. She is currently President of the Middle East-North Africa Writing Center Alliance and serves on the Qatar TESOL Executive Board.

References


Grimm, N. M. (2003). In the spirit of service: Making writing center research a "featured character". In M. A. Pemberton & J. Kinkead (Eds.), The center will hold: Critical perspectives on writing center scholarship (pp. 41-57). Logan: Utah State University Press.


APPENDIX

Sample Interview Questions for English faculty Participants

1. Tell me about yourself — where were you born, where have you lived, what language(s) did your parents speak, etc.
2. Tell me about your educational background (where did you go to school – which country(ies), what was the language of instruction, public/private, etc.).
3. How long have you lived in Qatar?
4. How did you end up working at ADU-Q? Tell me about your experience at ADU-Q so far.
5. As you know, I'm interested in investigating your perceptions of the writing center. Therefore, I am interested in any experience you have with writing centers, either in the past or the present. When you were a student at other universities, did those institutions have a writing center? What was your perception of it and/or interactions with it? What about as a faculty member?
6. I’ve seen a wide range in the way faculty interact with their students, especially in the smaller, intimate environment at Knowledge City institutions. For example, some faculty are very close and friendly with their students, while others keep a greater distance because of cultural differences. What kind of relationship(s) do you typically have with your students?

7. What type of language or other academic support do you give your students? How does this affect the relationship between you, students, and writing center? Does gender play a role in how you interact with a student? Nationality? What other factors influence your work with students and the writing center?

8. What do you think is the role of the writing center at ADU-Q?

9. A lot of faculty (generally speaking, not specifically ADU-Q faculty) have told me that students whose native language is not English should be required to go to the writing center for a quick grammar check and proofread. Can you tell me about your thoughts on that?

10. You’re an expert in _____ (literature/English/other). Some people say that because you’re in the English department, you should provide every type of English support. Since most students at ADU-Q are not native English speakers, they often need more language assistance. What do you think is your role in providing ESL support? The writing center’s role?

11. Can you describe the relationship between the English faculty and the Writing Center? How do your roles intersect and/or differ?

12. Tell me about your experience with the writing center at ADU-Q (have you worked with the Coordinator, do you know students who have visited, have you referred students?)

13. How does writing in the disciplines (WID) affect your role as English faculty? The Writing Center’s role?

14. Have you ever been a client yourself to the writing center? How do you feel about faculty and/or staff as WC clients?

15. How do you feel about yourself as a writer? (Do you like to write, do you feel you are a good writer, what kinds of things do you write, do you receive support while you are writing, etc.? What do you think your own strengths and weaknesses are as a writer?)

16. What do you know about peer tutors in the writing center? How do you feel about the use of peer consultants (generally speaking and/or specifically at ADU-Q)?

17. How does the location of the Writing Center have any impact on your use of/relationship with it? Please explain.

18. How do you think the writing center connects with students’ overall academic experience at ADU-Q?

19. Obviously the mandate by NI is that English is the medium of instruction just as it is on the home campus. However, it is also clear that many of the students will ultimately use Arabic as their primary language in the workplace. What are your thoughts on this? What do you think about being trained in English and then using Arabic in the workplace? Is there a role for the writing center in this?

20. I have heard that sometimes faculty advise students not to visit the writing center. From your personal experience, and/or from anecdotal experience, can you talk about that?

21. The program is primarily aimed at attracting Qatari students. Furthermore, National Institution has clearly stated that Qatari students should be the primary recipients of services, including academic support. How do you see this playing out in admissions procedures, the classroom, and the institution?

22. Do you see differences in the classroom between Qatari and non-Qatari students? Please explain.
English Writing Proficiency among Three Types of Students in an ESL Composition Course

Maxine E. Goldburg
Alliant International University
San Diego, California, USA

Abstract
This article reports the findings of a study that identified similarities and differences in the perceived second language writing proficiency generation 1.5 students, immigrant/refugee students, and international student brought to an advanced ESL composition course at a local community college in Southern California. Under quantitative investigation was (1) students’ perceptions of their L2 writing proficiency as determined by self-rated perceived writing attitude, perceived writing ability, perceived word processing/computer skills, and perceived writing behaviors scores, (2) the regionalized distribution of participants’ overall L2 writing proficiency as determined by the sum of the four component scores, and (3) students’ actual writing ability and gain in writing ability as determined by teacher-graded in-class essay scores. G1.5 students maintained realistic perceptions of their L2 writing proficiency, IMR students overrated perceptions of their overall L2 writing proficiency, and IS students underrated perceptions of their L2 writing proficiency. The results suggested that the experiences and perceptions of academic literacy for different types of ESL students may not match ambitious standards and expectations of the American ESL college-level reading-to-writing curriculum.

Keywords: L2 writing attitude, L2 writing, L2 writing behavior, L2 electronic literacy
Introduction

In the past, writing instruction in second and foreign language classes was intended to support oral language, grammar and vocabulary, but this has changed. Learning to write in a second language has become a more worthwhile discipline in and of itself (Krashen, 2007, 2008; Will-Harris, 2000). Second language writing has come of age and evolved into an interdisciplinary field of inquiry with its own disciplinary infrastructure (Matsuda, 2003a, 2003b; Matsuda, et al., 2003; Silva, et al., 2001). The current momentum of second language writing is perpetuated by the acknowledgment of written English as the predominant medium in discourse about English as the language of globalization and international communication (Kushner, 2003; Rauch, 2000). Accordingly, a distinct complication when teaching academic English composition is the form writing instruction should take given the interaction and variations between ESL students’ L1 background, experiences, schema, and the meaning of academic literacy in both the target language culture and student’s L1 culture (Kern 2000; Hyland 2002).

Changes in U.S. immigration laws and globalized processes produced unprecedented human demographic shifts in higher education reflective of the cultural and linguistic diversity of American society-at-large (Kirkpatrick, 2001). The diversity of race, class, religious and cultural origins of student populations arrive in the U. S. from a wide variety of educational traditions and cultures substantially different from the traditions they encounter in American higher education (Aliakbara, 2002, Allison & Mei, 2001). Such a diverse student population brings a large array of needs and educational aspirations, prior experiences, expectations and qualifications that challenge community colleges in finding appropriate ways of responding to the diversity of backgrounds and needs these students present (Érdosy, 2001; Szelényi & Chang, 2002). Local learning communities are now composed of a growing number of immigrants, refugees, international students, and the economies of these communities are increasingly dependent on positive relationships with other countries whose culture and belief systems require understanding, regard and a degree of international sensitivity not demanded in the past (Vaughan, 2006). Therefore, understanding the characteristics of three types of ESL writers is of utmost importance for ESL writing teachers, administrators and researchers (Leki, 1992, 1999, 2003a, 2003b).

Despite the abundance of empirical evidence and commentary about learning and teaching L2 writing, there are areas that remain open to further investigation (Petrić, & Czárl, 2003) because the international student population has not been the only source, and perhaps not even the primary source of increasing linguistic diversity in higher education (Harklau, Siegal & Losey, 1999). Few studies examined or compared generation 1.5 students, international students’ and immigrant/refugee students perceptions of their L2 writing proficiency and what they bring to the shared context of the ESL learning community in higher education. What constitutes pluralistic writing instruction and good writing in the pluralism of a learner-centered ESL classroom is problematic, particularly when teaching and learning a second language extends beyond simply the use of the right words, or the correct grammar (Harklau, 2001, 2002, 2003).

The assumption frequently made in literature is that students’ progress in writing is simply part of their oral L2 proficiency, but Archibald (2001) asserted that there are aspects of writing proficiency specifically being developed through writing instruction aimed at improving overall English language proficiency. Harklau (2002) further argued that writing, as a communicative modality has been marginalized as a key to understanding second language acquisition in the context and content areas of the ESL classroom where academic literacy plays
a central role in communication and transmission of knowledge. This study favored Archibald’s (2001) assertion, Harklau’s (2002) contention, and what literature described as the arduous and slow process of acquiring a second language most L2 learners are involved while time trying to learn and perform higher order academic writing tasks within a shorter period of time.

Research Site

A community college in Southern California, by virtue of its open access policies, diversity, proximity and wide range of ESL course offerings was a suitable site for conducting the study. Community colleges in California are among those nationwide engaged in a wide range of efforts to internationalize the learning experience (“Community College Teaching,” 2009) and play an important role in providing foreign-born populations comprising persons residing in the United States who are not American citizens at the time of their birth, and individuals processing work, or student visas with opportunities to participate in the American educational system (CCC Commission Statement, 2001).

Moreover, the implementation of the California Basic Skills Initiative (CBSI) mirrors a nationwide concern about the ability of community colleges to meet the distinct educational, socio-linguistic, socio-cultural and socio-emotional needs of non-traditional students who are non-Anglo, older L2 students, with less college preparation in their background (Boroch, et al., 2007) in need of additional instruction to acquire sufficient academic language proficiency to pursue higher education and succeed in American academia (“Basic Skills Initiative,” 2008). New to the ESL curriculum at research site was an advanced ESL composition course. It was the fifth core ESL course required for all L2 learners proceeding through and out of the ESL Program prior to enrollment in mainstream English composition courses that lead to associate degrees, and/or transfer to four year college/university programs. Lectures covered the writing process, rhetorical structures, and research writing. This credit-bearing, 16-week, advanced ESL composition course was five semester units, 96 semester hours, and met two days a week for five lecture hours plus one hour lab.

Participants

A total of 122 participants enrolled in seven intact sections of the new advanced ESL composition course responded to a self-assessment questionnaire administered pre- and post-semester. Ten students classified themselves as generation 1.5 students; 55 as immigrant/refugee students; 57 as international students. Seventy-three were female and 49 students were male. Eighty-seven students were between 18-28 years of age; 15 students between 29-39 years of age, and 20 students were over 40 years of age. The length of stay in the USA for 83 students was one to three years; five to ten years for 17 students, over ten years for four students, and 18 students were in the USA less than six months. Eight-four students had less than three semesters of English composition or literature study at the college level, 35 students had three to five semesters of study, and three students had more than five semesters of English composition or literature study at the college level.

In the researcher’s estimation participants’ oral language skills ranged from low-intermediate to advanced levels, and contrasted with participants written second language skills that ranged from beginner to high-intermediate. For this reason, the spectrum of internal and external factors that contribute to the socio-culturally distinctions between the three types of students and their goals to acquire the English language socially and academically were considered, but factors relevant to second language acquisition such as participants’ oral English
proficiency, language aptitude, learning styles, motivation, levels of anxiety, and frequency and use of language learning strategies (Ellis, 2008) were outside the scope of the study.

Variables and Operational Definitions

The independent variable type of student included three types of ESL students: (1) generation 1.5 students (G1.5) with at least an American high school education, (2) international students (IS) with temporary student status in America, returning to their country, and (3) immigrant/refugee students (IMR) educated in their country, committed to staying in America and not returning to their country.

The first dependent variable, perceived writing attitude (WAT) was defined as a score obtained from the respondents’ about their position, thinking, opinion, judgment and degree of like, or dislike for L2 writing as measured on various Likert scale items ranging from four to one, where four indicated absolute agreement and one indicated absolute disagreement. A higher score indicated that participants’ perceived themselves as highly skilled second language writers with developed strategies to cope with and compensate for weakness and capitalize on strengths in terms of academic literacy. A lower score indicated that participants perceived themselves as unskilled second language writers with undeveloped or developing strategies to cope with and compensate for weakness and capitalize on strengths in terms of academic literacy.

The second dependent variable perceived writing ability (WAB) was defined as the score obtained from respondents about their writing competencies, abilities, predisposition, or tendency to respond positively or negatively towards writing as part of the learning process as measured on various Likert scale items ranging from four to one, where four indicated that perceived writing ability was outstanding, and one indicated that perceived writing ability needed improvement. A higher score indicated that participants perceived no problems understanding the writing process and were confident second language writers. A lower score indicated participants’ perceived serious problems understanding the writing process and lacked confidence in their ability as second language writers.

The third dependent variable, perceived word processing/computer skills (WPC) was defined as a score obtained from the respondents about their electronic literacy skills and qualities that make their second language writing unique as measured on various Likert scale items ranging from four to one, where four indicated that respondents believed they have outstanding electronic literacy skills, and one indicated electronic literacy skills in need of improvement. A higher score indicated that participants perceived themselves as knowledgeable and knew how to use word processing software for written tasks and oral presentations, and were familiar with online educational tools and databases for researching information. A lower score indicated that participants perceived themselves as lacking knowledge and experience with word processing software for written tasks and oral presentations, and were unfamiliar with online educational tools and databases for researching information (Hebe & Storey, 2006).

The fourth dependent variable, perceived writing behavior (WBE) was defined as a score obtained from the respondents about their preferences and dispositions to act in certain ways before, during and after composing measured on various Likert scale items ranging from four to one, where four indicated writing behaviors that always occurred, and one indicated writing behaviors that never occurred. A higher score indicated that participants tended to exhibit writing behaviors more frequently and perceived their writing behavior positively. A lower score indicated that participants tended to exhibit writing behaviors less frequently and perceived their writing behavior negatively.
Region of origin was defined as historical, political, economic, cultural variations in contact, variations in the meaning of academic literacy, and academic cultural capital based on the country of birth and first language background reported. Participants identified themselves as speakers of 29 different languages that when regionalized represented five geographical regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Mexico/South America, and the Middle East. The dominate languages were Arabic, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Perceived L2 writing proficiency (L2WP) was defined as thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, attitudes, actions or behaviors ESL students were consciously aware of and attentive to when self-rating themselves as second language writers and their anticipated performance during the semester. Participants’ perceived L2 writing proficiency was the composite score of their self-rated perceived writing attitude writing ability, word processing/computer skills, and perceived writing behavior scores. Self-rating put the participants in charge of rating their own performance (Luoma & Tarnanen, 2003) throughout the course of the semester in this study.

In-Class Essay was defined as the diagnostic, mid-term and final essays students composed under timed conditions. Students had 75 minutes to write approximately 600 words for the diagnostic essay without the use of a dictionary, and 90 minutes to write approximately 600 words with the use of a non-electronic dictionary during the mid-term and final essays. (Bishop, 2001).

Actual L2 Writing Ability was defined as a score on teacher-graded in-class essays as determined by an ESL Essay Scoring Rubric, and Gains in L2 Writing Ability defined as scores indicative of improved writing ability as determined by increases in teacher-graded in-class essays scores from the diagnostic essay to midterm essay to the final essay. Essay point values were converted to grade equivalent percentage scores based on the Essay Grading Scale established at the community college research site. (Matsuda, Cox, Jordon & Ortmeier-Hooper, 2006).

Instruments

Participants were divided into two groups. For the purpose of examining perceived L2 writing proficiency, Group A consisted of 122 ESL students enrolled in the seven sections of the new advanced ESL composition course. For the purpose of examining participants’ actual writing ability and gain in writing ability, Group B consisted of 98 ESL students enrolled in six sections of the advanced ESL composition course at the community college site. Twenty-four participants were excluded due to zero “0” grades on in-class essays, and because all the L2 writing teachers in the study, except one, used the same ESL Essay Scoring Rubric to evaluate the three in-class essays participants composed in the study. The instruments and sources of quantitative data included:

1. The Writer’s Self-Assessment Questionnaire administered pre and post semester measured perceived L2 writing proficiency and changes in student’s internal syllabus and perception of themselves as second language writers as a result of general writing instruction (Brown, 2005, 2007). The first part of the questionnaire asked participants for general demographic information. The remaining four parts contained 55 items drawn from instruments in previous L2 composition studies that examined similar issues related to L2 learners’ writing attitude, writing ability, word processing/computer skills and writing behaviors. The sum of Part A, B, C and D calculated separately then collectively yielded participant’s overall perceived L2 writing proficiency composite scores. The maximum score possible was 220. A higher composite score indicated overall confidence and favorable perceptions of L2 writing proficiency, while a
lower composite score indicated less confidence and less favorable perceptions of L2 writing proficiency.

In Part A of the questionnaire respondents rated their writing attitude (WAT) on a four-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.” There were 20 items and the maximum score possible was 80. A higher writing attitude score was indicative of favorable attitudes toward writing in English that tend to enhance learning and participants’ perception of themselves as second language writers, whereas, a lower writing attitude score was indicative of less favorable attitudes toward writing in English that tend to impede or hinder learning and participants’ perception of themselves as second language writers (Ellis & Yuan, 2004; Harklau, 2002; Krashen, 2002).

Respondents rated their writing ability (WAB) in Part B of the questionnaire based on a four-point Likert scale ranging from “Outstanding” to “Needs Improvement.” There were 10 items and the maximum score possible was 40. A higher writing ability score indicated that participants perceived no problems in their ability to express an understanding of the composition course and the writing process. In contrast, a lower writing ability score indicated that participants perceived problems in their ability to express an understanding of the course and the writing process (“Academic Literacy,” 2002).

In Part C of the questionnaire, respondents rated their word processing/computer skills (WPC), in other words, electronic literacy on a four-point Likert scale ranging from “Outstanding” to “Needs Improvement.” There were five items and the maximum score possible was 20. A higher score reflected participants’ knowledge, experience and familiarity with the use of word processing software for written academic tasks, oral presentations, and with online educational tools and databases for researching information, whereas a lower score reflected participants’ lack of knowledge, experience and familiarity with word processing software for written academic tasks and oral presentations, and educational tools and databases for researching information (Brown, 2009, Pennington, 2003; Warschauer, 2000, 2002).

Respondents rated their writing behavior (WBE) in Part D of the questionnaire based on a four-point Likert scale ranging from “Very Often” to “Never.” There were 20 items and the maximum score possible was 80. A higher writing behavior score indicated that participants’ perceived English writing behavior conducive for learning while a lower score indicated participants’ perceived English writing behavior less conducive to learning to write academic English (Laborda, 2006; Mohsin, 2009).
fulfilled the expectations of the course eight weeks into the semester; the score on the final essay at the end of the course was an indication of students’ readiness for the next level of English composition courses.

Results for Research Questions

RQ1. Is there a significant difference between the three types of students’ perceived L2 writing proficiency at the beginning of the semester and the three types of students’ perceived L2 writing proficiency at the end of the semester? Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics of means and standard deviations calculated for each of the three types of student out of a maximum score of 220. The G1.5 group’s L2WP composite mean scores were higher than both the IMR group and the IS group mean L2WP composite mean scores both pre- and post-semester. The results of a t-test conducted to determine if there were significant differences between participants’ pre- and post-semester L2WP composite scores revealed a significant difference ($t = -3.843$, df = 56, $p = .000$) in perceived L2WP for the IS group, marginal significance ($t = -2.543$, df = 54, $p = .014$) in perceived L2WP for the IMR group, and no statistical differences in the L2WP composite mean scores for the Gl.5 group.

Table 1. Perceived L2 Writing Proficiency Pre-Post Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>G1.5 Group (n=10)</th>
<th>IMR Group (n=55)</th>
<th>IS Group (n=57)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean SD</td>
<td>Mean SD</td>
<td>Mean SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2WP Pre-Semester</td>
<td>153.3 8.95</td>
<td>151.2 13.03</td>
<td>146.4 12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2WP Post-Semester</td>
<td>160.4 16.2</td>
<td>157.2 16.6</td>
<td>154.7 17.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANOVA comparisons of the dependent variables revealed that there was a marginal difference approaching significance $F (2, 119) = 2.638$, $p = .076$) at the .05 two-tailed level between the three sets of L2 writing proficiency (L2WP) composite scores pre-semester, and no statistically difference revealed between L2WP composite scores post-semester. The eta squared calculations at .042 and .010 indicated that approximately 4% of the total variance in perceived L2WP between the three groups was accounted for pre-semester, and only 1% accounted for post-semester. The remaining percentages in both instances were attributable to differences within groups, error, or other factors. Prior general English writing instruction in addition to general writing instruction over the course of the semester elicited change in students’ perceptions of their L2 writing proficiency post-semester.

RQ2. Is there a significant difference between the three types of students’ perceived writing attitudes, perceived writing ability, perceived word processing/computer skills, and perceived writing behavior pre- and post-semester? Table 2 summarizes the pre- and post-semester mean scores and standard deviations for the dependent variables comprising L2 writing proficiency for the three types of students. Pre-semester, differences between the three sets of mean scores was marginal and the magnitude of statistical differences in mean scores between the three types of students smaller post-semester.
ANOVA results revealed a statistical difference in perceived writing attitude (WAT) just under the significant $p < .05$ two-tailed cut-off ($F(2,119) = 3.18$, $p = .045$) pre-semester. Tukey’s HSD post-hoc test revealed that the nature of difference in perceived WAT scores was between the G1.5 group ($M=61.10$) and the IS group ($M=58.02$). The eta squared of .051 indicated that approximately 5% of variance between the groups was attributable to the group students were assigned to rather than the type of student, and the other percent of the variance came from the within groups, error, or the possible effects of social-psychological and social-cultural factors.

Further analysis revealed a statistically difference in perceived writing behavior (WBE) that coincided with the number of semesters the three types of students studied English. Perceived writing behavior ($M=53.20$, SD=6.45) for students with three to five semesters of English study was slightly higher ($M=52.71$, SD=6.03) for students with more than five semesters of English study, and significantly higher ($M=41.67$, SD=3.77) for students with less than three semesters of English study. There was no statistical difference found for perceived WAB and perceived WPC means scores pre-semester, and no statistical differences in four dependent variables post-semester. The obtained result suggested that prior educational training in the English language probably influenced the perceived writing behavior self-ratings of the three types of ESL student.

**RQ3.** Is there a significant difference in students’ self-rated perceived L2 writing proficiency, perceived writing attitudes, writing ability, word processing/computer skills, and writing behavior scores by region of origin pre- and post-semester? The demographic section of the self-assessment questionnaire elicited participants’ county of origin. When consolidated geographically, the countries of origin represented five regions of the world: Africa, Asia,
Europe, Mexico/South America, and Middle East. Table 3 summarizes the means and standard deviations by region of origin for perceived L2WP composite mean scores out of a maximum score of 220.

Table 3. Regional L2 Writing Proficiency Pre-Post Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions of Origin</th>
<th>L2WP Pre-Semester</th>
<th>L2WP Post-Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African (N=5)</td>
<td>Mean SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>161.20 5.85</td>
<td>169.60 14.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia (N=53)</td>
<td>Mean SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>146.70 12.40</td>
<td>154.40 17.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe (N=10)</td>
<td>Mean SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>148.80 11.43</td>
<td>149.70 16.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico/South America (N=17)</td>
<td>Mean SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>146.00 8.16</td>
<td>158.12 16.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern (N=37)</td>
<td>Mean SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>152.54 14.28</td>
<td>158.14 16.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The African group had the highest mean composite scores pre-semester (M=161.20) and highest post-semester (M=169.60), followed by the Middle Eastern group (M=152.54) pre-semester and (M=158.14) post semester. The results of a t-test conducted to compare pre- and post-semester L2WP composite mean scores by region of origin revealed a statistical significant difference (t = -4.838, df = 121, p = .000) at the .01 two-tailed level. The obtained result was consistent with participants’ self-rated overall L2WP pre- and post-semester in RQ1 to suggest that the regional groups of participants held more confident postures and perceptions of their overall L2 writing proficiency post-semester than they did pre-semester. An awareness of cultural variations in contact (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002), and students’ confidence in the academic cultural capital they possessed (Brammer, 2002) may have contributed to this finding.

With regard to the four dependent variables comprising participants’ overall L2WP by region of origin, there was a statistical difference (F (4,117) = 4.21, p = .003) in perceived writing attitude (WAT) pre-semester. The Tukey HSD post hoc test revealed a significant difference in the perceived (WAT) scores of students assigned to the Middle Eastern group and Asian group. The Middle Eastern group (M=61.97) was significantly different from the Asian group (M=57.72), but not significantly different from the perceived WAT mean scores of
students assigned to the Africa group (M=62.40); the Mexico/South American group (M=59.29), and the Europe group (M=57.10). The magnitude of difference between the regional group means in writing attitude was moderate. The eta squared calculation was .126. Approximately 13% of the total variance between the groups’ perceived WAT was accounted for. The other percent of variance was attributed to within groups, error, or from other factors.

Statistical difference (F (4, 117) = 5.062, p = .001) in perceived writing ability (WAB) by region of origin also reached significance pre-semester. Even though the regional groups were unequal in size, Tukey’s HSD post-hoc test revealed significant differences between the perceived WAB scores of students assigned to the African, Asian, European, and Mexico/South American groups. The WAB scores of students assigned to the African group (M=31.80) was significantly different from the WAB scores of students assigned to Asian group (M=22.66), of students assigned to the European group (M=22.60), and students assigned to the Mexico/South American group (M=21.71). The magnitude of difference between the regional group means in writing ability was large. The eta squared calculation of .148 confirmed that approximately 15% percent of the total variance between the groups’ perception of writing ability was accounted for.

Post-semester statistical difference reached significance (F (4,117) = 2.49, p < .05) in perceived writing behavior (WBE) by region of origin. The Tukey’s HSD post-hoc test revealed a significant difference in perceived WBE scores for students assigned to the African and European groups. The African group (M=61.40) was significantly different from the European group (M=50.10), but did not differ significantly from the WBE mean scores of students assigned to the Asian group (M=55.57), the Middle Eastern (M=54.62), and the Mexico/South American group (M=54.47). The eta calculation of .078 represented a moderate effect size. Roughly 8% of the total variance between the groups writing behavior was accounted for in the study. The rest of the variance came from within groups, error or some other factor(s).

There was marginal significance (F (4,117) = 1.93, p = .109) divulged in perceived writing attitude (WAT) by region of origin. Tukey’s HSD post-hoc test revealed a difference approaching significance at the .05 level in perceived WAT specific to the subset of mean scores for the Mexico/South American group (M=62.47) and the European group (M=55.40). Marginal significance (F (4,117) = 2.31, p = .062) was also found in perceived English writing ability (WAB) by region of origin. The difference approaching significance in perceived writing ability was specific to the African group (M=32.40) and Asian group (M = 25.21) subset of mean scores. Tukey’s HSD post-hoc test confirmed a p-value of .049, and the more conservative Scheffe post-hoc test a p-value of .111 for the African/Asian sub-sets of WAB mean scores. There was no statistical difference in mean scores for perceived word processing/computer skills (WPC) between the five regional groups post-semester.

RQ4. Is there a significant relationship between the three types of students’ actual L2 writing ability and their self-assessed L2 writing proficiency? Actual L2 writing ability mean scores on in-class essays, and pre- and post L2WP composite means scores for 98 participants by type of student are displayed in Table 4. The IMR final mean (M=79.61) was slightly higher than the midterm mean (M=79.27), and the midterm mean higher than the diagnostic (M=76.71). Similarly, the IS group final mean (M=79.67) was higher than the midterm (M=76.50), and the midterm mean higher than the diagnostic (M=74.11). In contrast, the G1.5 group midterm mean (M=80.22) was higher than both the diagnostic (M=75.89) and the final (M=78.11) mean scores.
Statistical differences ($t = -2.663$, df = 97, $p < .05$) between the diagnostic and midterm essays; between the diagnostic and final essays ($t = -3.908$, df = 97, $p < .01$), and between the pre- and post-semester perceived L2WP composite mean scores ($t = -5.837$, df = 97, $p < .001$) across the three types of students were significant t-test results. Differences between midterm and final mean scores did not reach significance. The strength of the relationships between actual L2 writing ability and perceived L2 writing proficiency composite mean scores of participants was then examined using Pearson correlations. Overall, there were more significant correlations for the IMR students than for G1.5 students, and both the IMR students and the IS students shared similar significant relationships.

The G1.5 group correlation revealed a significantly strong positive relationship between the midterm and final essays ($r = +.818$, $n = 9$, $p = .007$) at the .01 two-tailed level; a significantly strong positive between the midterm essays and post-semester perceived L2 writing proficiency ($r = +.706$, $n = 9$, $p = .003$) at the .05 two-tailed level, and a moderate, positive relationship approaching significance between the final essay and post-semester self-rated perceived L2 writing proficiency ($r = +.614$, $n = 9$, $p = .079$). The results suggested that G1.5 students’ actual writing ability on the in-class essays were related to L2WP such that G.15 students with high midterm and final essay scores were inclined to have realistic perceptions of their L2 writing proficiency post-semester.

Correlation results for the IMR group disclosed a significantly moderate, positive relationship between the diagnostic and midterm essays ($r = +.655$, $n = 51$, $p = .000$); between the midterm and final essays ($r = +.682$, $n = 51$, $p = .000$) at the .001 two-tailed level, and a significant, moderate, positive relationship ($r = +.340$, $n = 51$, $p = .015$) between the diagnostic and final essays at the .05 two-tailed level. A significantly weak, positive relationship existed between pre and post perceived L2WP ($r = +.332$, $n= 51$, $p = .017$) at the .05 two-tailed level, but
this finding was unrelated to the actual L2 writing ability of the IMR group on in-class essays and the overrated perceptions IMR students maintained of their L2 writing proficiency.

The IS group correlation showed a significantly, moderate, positive relationship between the diagnostic and midterm essays (r = +.468, n = 38, p = .003) at the .01 two-tailed level; a significant, moderate, positive relationship (r = +.618, n = 38, p = .000) between the midterm and final essays, and a significant, moderate, positive relationship between the diagnostic and final essays (r = +.542, n = 38, p = .000) at the .001 two-tailed level. Like the IMR group, the significantly moderate, positive relationship (r = +.441, n = 38, p = .006) found at the .01 level two-tailed level between pre- and post-perceived L2WP was unrelated to the actual writing ability of the IS students evident in the underrated perceptions IS students maintained of their L2 writing proficiency. In the final analysis of teacher-graded in-class essays participants produced and grades assigned, actual L2 writing ability across the three types of students differed by only one percentage point. The IMR students averaged 79% (C+), G1.5 students averaged 78% (C+), and IS group averaged 77% (C+).

**RQ5.** Are there significant gains in L2 writing ability for the three types of students’ from the diagnostic to midterm essay to final essay scores? Table 5 shows marginal gain that approached significance (t = -2.001, df = 50, p = .051) in IMR students’ diagnostic to midterm essay mean scores, and marginal gain (t = -1.873, df = 50, p = .067) in their diagnostic to final essay mean scores.

**Table 5. Gains in L2 Writing Ability**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Diagnostic to Midterm Essays</th>
<th>Midterm to Final Essays</th>
<th>Diagnostic to Final Essays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMR Group</td>
<td>.051+</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.067+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS Group</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.017*</td>
<td>.003**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G1.5 Group</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistically significant difference in gain was found in the IS group midterm to final essay mean scores (t = -2.498, df = 37, p = .017) at the .05 two-tailed level, and statistical difference in the IS group diagnostic to final essay mean scores (t = -3.192, df = 37, p = .003) at the .01 two-tailed level. There was no statistical difference in gain revealed for the G.1.5 group. Gain in L2 writing ability was, therefore, greater for IMR and IS students than for the G1.5 students. With low diagnostic and midterm mean scores, and a higher final mean score, the IS students had the most gain in L2 writing ability.

**Conclusion**

Participants’ expectations, aspirations, and perceptions of the cultural realities of the English academic written discourse community within the context of the L2 culture may not have been fixed or immutable, but the three types of students certainly needed more time to adjust, adapt and develop coping strategies and written academic language proficiency to...
succeed at the college level. Regional similarities and differences in perceived writing attitude, writing ability, and writing behavior were specific to the African and Middle Eastern group, and word processing/computer skills specific to European and Mexico/South American groups. Generalizability of the findings was limited due to varying circumstances/conditions and emotional/physical challenges created by immersion in a new society and different educational environment. For some students from the African, Middle Eastern, and European regions perceived L2 writing proficiency was overshadowed by the pressures of the resettlement, challenges to traditional familial roles, and motivation for adaptation in a duality of cultures (Lucey, et al., 2000). It is also possible that it may have been the first time students had a native English-speaking teacher and exposure to rhetorical differences in their L1 and L2 reading-writing skills and learning capabilities in the ESL context.

About the Author:

**Dr. Maxine E. Goldburg** is a TESOL educator/researcher, Academic Writing Editor and Student Affairs Representative at Alliant International University, San Diego, California who received a Master’s degree in TESOL education from Long Island University, New York and Doctoral degree in TESOL Education from Alliant International University. After a seven-year career as an ESL teacher in the American public school system, Dr. Goldburg accepted a commission as EFL teacher, Vice Director and Dean of the International Education Center at Shandong University of Science & Technology in Taian, China. There she authored in collaboration with Shandong University of Science and Technology a teacher training manual entitled *Aiming Beyond*, published by Taishan Shandong Foreign Language Training Center of the State Administration of Foreign Experts. In addition to student advising, she provides academic writing support and editorial services to domestic and international undergraduate and graduate students and serves on the Review Board of the *Arab World English Journal*.

References


Goldsburg


doi:10.1191/0265532200lt267oa


doi:10.1016/S1060-3743(03)00016-X


doi:10.1016/S0346-251X(03)00020-4


doi:10.1177/009155210203000304


http://efuse.com/Design/effective_writing.html#WritingAsyouSpeak
A Discussion on Teaching a Language without Teaching its Culture

Ronnie Goodwin
Gulf University for Science & Technology
Kuwait

Abstract
The human elements of language and culture are intricately and intimately intertwined, which is an aspect that has been studied by many linguistic scholars (Abdo & Breen, 2010; Annamali, 1989; Appel & Muysken, 2006; Gardner, 2012; Gregg, 2006; Hussein, 2013; Gumperz, 2001; Schegloff, 2001). When learning a new language, the cultural attributes of the language become relevant to the comprehension of the target language (L2). The purpose of this paper is to discuss the practice of teaching a second language (L2) without teaching the relative or content culture associated with the language. This is particularly relevant for individuals that speak Arabic and are learning English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL). The ensuing discussion will present a case study reflection of Jordanian Arabic speaking EFL/ESL students and how culture affects the comprehension of the English language due to the grammatical, syntactic, structural, and other differentiating characteristics in each linguistic paradigm, as well as a study conducted at a Middle Eastern university.

Keywords: Language, Culture, ESL/ EFL, Arabic language
A Discussion on Teaching a Language without Teaching its Culture

Why Investigate Teaching Language without Teaching Culture?

As the world becomes increasingly more globalized, being multi-lingual is a highly beneficial skill to possess. This has inspired increased efforts in many developed nations such as Europe, Asia, and the United States to establish English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in their primary and secondary educational forums. However, some linguistic concepts are culturally derived, making it difficult to teach the language without explaining the cultural aspects associated with the concept (Annamali, 1989). Within the English language alone, numerous slang terms and colloquialisms are actually culture-specific in that different cultures use different words to describe the same things. For example, the word ‘money’ is also referred to as ‘cheddar’, ‘cheese’, ‘ducats’, ‘dead presidents’, ‘Benjamin’s’, ‘moolah’, ‘cake’, ‘denero’, ‘pesos’, and ‘chips’, among many others, and the slang used often depends on the cultural paradigms of the speaker.

The current focus on creating learner-centered environments for ESL/EFL individuals requires the educator to take responsibility for the learning process by developing methods that can be engaged to support linguistic autonomy in the target language (Casteel & Ballantyne, 2010). This brings into focus the customary practice for ESL/EFL programs that teach children and adults to exclude cultural education and teach only the functional aspects of the target language necessary for fluency and linguistic comprehension. Although programs have been implemented to teach children English as a second language or English as a foreign language, there has not been a preponderance of research literature that discusses the relevance of teaching or not teaching culture in conjunction with the target language (Sybing, 2011).

However, existing studies do indicate that the absence of the learner-centered environment is typical when learning a foreign language without the benefit of the adjoining cultural dynamics and this can hinder the learner’s ability to properly comprehend the foreign language and culture (Corrius & Pujol, 2010). In many instances, ESL/EFL learners attempting to supplement culturally devoid linguistic instruction with English language translation (ELT) dictionaries discover these can be of limited assistance. Typically categorized as monolingual, bilingual, and bilingualized, ELT dictionaries are frequently of limited use because they tend to be written from a linguistic or culture-centric, homogenizing perspective (Corrius & Pujol, 2010). Some EFL/ESL students seek supplemental cultural input from peripheral sources, such as television or their peers, increasing the draw learners have to the pop culture associated with the target language (Sybing, 2011).

Additionally, in countries where English is not the dominant language, EFL/ESL students typically pursue such study because of a desire to communicate with native speakers and research has identified cultural differences in the learning styles of various ethnic groups (Sybing, 2011). The field of sociolinguistic anthropology examines the relationships between the social variations, linguistic variances, and social contexts in which communications occur, including non-verbal messages (Miller, 2007). Some analysts have speculated that the socio-cultural attributes of language can be integrated into ESL/EFL forums through a series of strategies that have to do with the “…localization, delocalization, globalization, and glocalization of language and/or culture” (Corrius & Pujol, 2010, p. 135). The sociolinguistic theory indicates
that culture, society, and individual social standing all have determining influence over language (Miller, 2007). But how are these elements taught in ESL/EFL environments?

Understanding the depth and breadth of the synthesis between culture and language is an important facet in assisting educators to provide EFL/ESL students with the most advantageous practices that will assist in their educational pursuits. It is hoped that this discussion regarding the practice and plausibility of teaching a language without teaching the native culture of that language will underscore proposals indicating the best linguistic and cultural strategies to help the EFL/ESL community improve students’ linguistic and cultural competencies. It is also anticipated that this analysis will help teachers evaluate the efficacy of different EFL/ESL programs and promote the creation of more effective EFL/ESL programs (Corrius & Pujol, 2010). The course of this examination will be guided by the research questions stated below.

Research Questions
The purpose of this project is to examine the dynamics of linguistic acquisition in order to determine:

1. What is the impact of teaching language without teaching the relative culture?
2. What is the purpose of “teaching” a language and not teaching/learning its culture?
3. Do some institutions require this and if so, why ‘teach’ or try to teach the language?
4. How can someone learn English but not its culture, since in some cases this can be disrespectful, and still respect its rules?

In examining these questions, this research will focus on certain dynamics specific in Middle Eastern EFL/ESL learning environments through examination of grammatical and structural similarities, as well as differences present in the Arabic and English languages.

Literature Review

The aim of this research is to investigate the importance of culture in the acquisition of language. There are many indications that language and culture are derived from each other and there is evidence that culture affects the way individuals interpret information (Miller, 2007). The literature review is performed to gain a deeper understanding of the contextual setting of the research questions in addition to the phenomena examined in the research.

The literature review will address the definitional issues and differences between code-switching and code-mixing, and thus examine its forms of constraints and patterns. The literature review will also discuss the dynamics of bilingual education, the functions of code-switching and code-mixing, and the cultural impacts on language acquisition. In addressing these issues, this literature review will draw on examples from empirical studies that have examined the state of bilingual education, sociolinguistic and cultural-linguistic dynamics, and the prevalence of code-switching involving other languages. The literature review will also discuss the extra-linguistic features that affect the acquisition of a foreign language and the usage of different forms of code-switching and code-mixing in individuals learning a foreign language.

Linguistics & Culture

All language learners consciously and unconsciously use language learning skills when they are learning a new language. Despite this, research has focused on language strategies used by only adolescents and adults (Griffiths & Parr, 2001). Education for ESL/EFL individuals in countries such as the USA, Canada, and Australia has been the primary focus of studies regarding language-learning strategies due to the large number of people migrating to these countries (Oxford, 1990).
There is a consensus that people do not acquire language skills in the same way, illustrating that code-switching and code-mixing are common phenomena in speech, provided that at least two languages exist in a community (Appel & Muysken, 2006; McKay & Hornberger, 1996; Philip, Oliver, & Mackey, 2008; Walte, 2007; Weinreich, 1953). In some societies, the expected means of communication is code-switched speech (Auer, 2002). Although code-switching and code-mixing were once viewed as interference phenomena among imperfect bilinguals, these entities have come to be recognized as imperative and indispensable communication strategies (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Studies have primarily investigated bilingual students placed in immersion classrooms, as well as individuals in ESL classrooms when attempting to evaluate the efficacy of teaching language without accompanying instruction regarding the parent culture (Allam & Salmani-Nadoushan, 2009). The high influx of foreign immigrants in every developed nation has increased the demand for EFL/ESL educational programs. This has facilitated an investigation of language learning behaviors, principally how culture interacts with morphological development (Cohen, 1998).

One common mode of speech alteration when Arabic speakers are learning a new language is code-switching. Code-switching is considered as “appropriate changes in the speech situation” rather than “an unchanged speech situation”, and it is also indicated that this switching does not occur “within a single sentence” (Weinreich, 1953, p. 73). Simply defined, code-switching is “the mixing of elements of two linguistic varieties within a single utterance or text” (Gluth, 2008, p. 6). When used in ESL/EFL communities, this demonstrates how the meaning in code-switching is derived from the stylistic association between sentences or phrases (Lefkowitz, 1991).

Defining conversational code-switching has been challenging because it frequently occurs in conjunction with other kinds of language contact phenomena including convergence, borrowing, and interference (Gluth, 2008; Halmari, 1997). In addition, codes themselves involve a high degree of variability and are often viewed as non-standard, in particular when bilinguals lack proficiency in what is known or perceived as standard codes (Gluth, 2008). Interestingly, preceding studies determined that one needs to perceive differently the process of selecting one definite code from the process of mixing as many as two existing codes, to generate the product that may be regarded as a third code (Bentahila & Davies, 1983).

Furthermore, research has proposed that code-switching is performed only for the duration of a conversational discourse, while the code-mixing is not performed with full sentences and has the grammar structures from other languages (Annamali, 1989). Additionally, it is suggested that code-mixing is essentially the mechanism of mixing elements from a minimum of two languages within one utterance, differentiating it from code-switching in that the latter is the product of this mix (Bader, 1995; Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Relevance to Current Cultural-linguistic Practice

Currently, many nations have programs implemented intended to provide ESL/EFL individuals with a variety of competencies, such as English Composition/Reading classes in overseas institutions outside of the U.S. However, these programs have traditionally approached bilingual education using the submersion method, which does little, if anything, to preserve the first language while the student transitions to the target language (Otto, 2010). Transitional and developmental bilingual programs or dual-language and second foreign language immersion
programs have been atypical structures in educational forums (Otto, 2010). Current knowledge regarding the impact cultural paradigms have on overall educational success has warranted further study regarding the direct effect of teaching language without teaching culture.

Although there is much support for the use of ‘proper’ or technical English as it is taught in scholastic settings, it is commonly reserved for these environments and not often heard in casual conversation (Gregg, 2006). Nonetheless, proper diction and speech is taught when learning any new language, which is reflective of the absence of the cultural idiosyncrasies apparent in every language (McKay & Hornberger, 1996). Considered as a skill, the ability to speak multiple languages can be used in specific atmospheres, such as professional venues, scholarly settings, when writing professional communications, and a variety of other similar circumstances.

Research Methodology

This research will perform a case study analysis using the expertise from existing research to help guide this examination of EFL/ESL linguistic acquisition and is the basis for the decision to select the qualitative method. In adapting a qualitative procedure for examination of the research questions presented, the phenomenological approach has been selected because using case studies allows the researcher to obtain more intimate knowledge of EFL/ESL learners within realistic contexts in order to understand the different behaviors of linguistic acquisition. Interpretation through naturalistic observations creates opportunities to determine the differences in the learning methods of the participants to examine how various attributes of the learner, such as age, race, and gender, affects their learning experiences (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). More importantly, a qualitative approach provides a better understanding of what influences behaviors, but also the meaning that the participants derive from their actions, including the human differences that can occur during linguistic acquisition (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

Examining existing case studies primarily involves reviewing existing studies to consolidate the most recent, relevant professional deductions, which principally involves drawing conclusions by analyzing existing sources of data. The analysis of current research typically involves making decisions ahead of time so that the process of data collection is smooth, simple, and systematic (Newman, 2011). This method of research provides a test of the hypothesis by examining existing case studies and, thereby, avoids most of the ethical and practical problems of other research designs (Babbie, 2007). Relative to this aspect, using case studies as the seat of this research, also avoids common complications associated with participant reactivity, as well as participant inclinations to behave in a different way when they know they are being observed (Newman, 2011).

The dynamics of the Arabic language, the native tongue of individuals from the Middle East, necessitates a method of inquiry based on the understanding that the reality of linguistic acquisition consists of objects and events as they are perceived by the individual learner (Hernandez, 2012). Case study research requires the use of relatively few resources since it allows for the examination of only one participant at a time, sometimes requiring the dedicated attention of more than one research assistant over a period of an hour or more (Babbie, 2007; Newman, 2011). Once data has been collected through the case study research process, it is a relatively simple matter to conduct an analysis of the compiled data.
Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection for this study involved reviewing a case analysis detailing the learning experience of Arabic-speaking students in Jordan (Abdo & Breen, 2010). In the primary case study used in analysis for this research, six student participants were used to study the linguistic acquisition in the ESL/EFL learning environment with the subjects being categorized into three groups according to their linguistic competence, behavioral characteristics and expressions, and their overall performance as students (Abdo & Breen, 2010). The categories used to analyze the subjects designated participants as “strong”, “average”, or “low-achieving” students and additional features examined included verbal and non-verbal communication (Abdo & Breen, 2010). These facets of communication examined included traits such as nervousness, shyness, mispronunciation, non-verbal communication, translation, and vocabulary with the subjects being separated into groups of two (Abdo & Breen, 2010).

Additionally, the research will include analysis of the technique of code-switching and code-mixing among the Arabic-English bilinguals using theoretical frameworks for linguistic acquisition since these language paradigms present a primary example of the cultural differences in how talk differs as it occurs in everyday speech (Gumperz, 2001). Each of these tools helped in collecting different forms of information about the participant that then assisted in the analysis of the code-switching behavior of the participants (Schegloff, 2001). The case study selected presented data collected during six meetings over a timeframe of three weeks with additional data that incorporated other instructional aspects, such as student conduct and attitudes, the classroom settings and conditions, teacher behavior and demeanor, and other general conditions that were observed, documented, and analyzed by the researcher (Abdo & Breen, 2010).

The case study employs the devices of participant and naturalistic observation, as well as interviewing as the primary modes of data collection so that the data could be examined using a standard ethnographic communication archetype (Abdo & Breen, 2010). The data analysis includes the incorporation of field notes containing verbal and non-verbal communication (such as words, gestures, and eye contact) during the EFL classes, as well as both impromptu and elicited verbal statements during individual interview sessions (Abdo & Breen, 2010). These details supplied the evidence from which strategies deemed “effective” or “ineffective” were identified (Abdo & Breen, 2010).

Theoretical Framework

The instructional strategy used by ESL/EFL educators determines whether they will attempt to integrate cultural aspects into the lessons (Sybing, 2011). Instruction that is used for teaching has changed focus and shifted to learner-centered environments that place increased attention to the learning processes that take place. The definition of strategy in this context is taken as a procedure that is used to develop, and promote learning process, it is developed by both the teacher and the learner based on the learning outcome desired (Hymes, 1964). The choice of a learning strategy will affect the way the learner acquires, selects, integrates, and organizes new information, and may alter the motivational state of the learner (Hymes, 1967).

The studies on strategy research that have been done mostly focus on the attributes of a good learner, and show the strategies a good language learner employs in the process of learning the second language (L2) (Joseph, 2013). This shows that all language learners use certain types
of strategies, but the occurrence of use varies from learner to learner. Learners’ have psychological and social differences, and therefore cannot use the same learning strategies. Strategies used for adolescents and adults cannot be used for children.

**Linguistic Development Theories**

**Cognitive**

The cognitive development perspective is based on the theories of Jean Piaget and speculates that linguistic acquisition comes with maturation and cognitive development, which is the foundation for teaching language (Ball, 2010). This perspective of linguistic development encourages early childhood educators to pay close attention to the cognitive developmental stages of their students and encourage stimulatory activities as precursors to the onset of linguistic development (Hill, 2007).

**Behaviorist**

The behaviorist perspective highlights the role of “nature” and the stimuli, responses, and reinforcements that occur in the child’s environment based on B. F. Skinner and his theory of “operant conditioning” along with the notion that children are “blank slates” before they are taught through various situations and learn language through imitative speech (Decker, Decker, Freeman, & Knopf, 2009). This perspective encourages teachers to focus on the types of stimuli and reinforcements regarding language that children encounter and would encourage them to communicate verbally.

**Interactionist**

The interactionist perspective is based on the sociocultural interactions that help children develop their linguistic capacities and is based on the theories of Lev Vygotsky, whose premise contends that language development in early childhood is formed through social interactions with those in their surroundings that create a language acquisition support system (LASS) (Giorgis & Glazer, 2008). This theory requires the adult to create conditions for effective development and to be aware of the child’s zone of proximal development and know what the child can accomplish on their own and what will require scaffolding from the supervising adult.

**Cultural-linguistic Theories**

**Code-switching**

Myers-Scotton’s model of a matrix language was developed to “account for and explain structural constraints on intra-sentential code-switching” (Myers-Scotton, Jake, & Okasha, 1996, p. 10). At the basic level, the model assumes that the two languages involved in a speech event do not have equal participation (Myers-Scotton, Jake, & Okasha, 1996). Thus, this theory hypothesizes that a base language exists during the process of code-switching. It is commonly asserted that people are equipped with a language faculty in their being that makes them capable of assessing linguistic choices (Myers-Scotton, 2000).

In this context, code-switching can be viewed as a phenomenon that permits morphemes from two or more codes to be present in a subordinate clause, using *complementiser* to refer to a subordinate clause. When a bilingual brings two languages together, a dominant language is actively working (Liu, 2008). In this case, one language is delegated the role of matrix language, which is the dominant language, while the other is the embedded language. The matrix language becomes the source of the grammatical frame of constituents while both the matrix and
embedded language supply morphemes (Joseph, 2013). The matrix language influence is always present in bilingual societies, and each of the languages exists alone at its own time. In intra-sentential code-switching there is always a matrix language (Hymes, 1964; Hymes, 1967).

**Whorfian**

According to Whorfian theory, our words are coded in language and so are our thoughts and this linguistic pattern dictates more than just the language we speak. This pattern also dictates our sense of reason, how we view nature, our relationship views, and every other aspect of our conscious and unconscious mind (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). This phenomenon is known as linguistic determinism and is based on Whorf’s theory that every language utilizes a unique set of semantic representations (Ajayi, 2008). These semantics determine aspects of our conceptual representations which is how linguistics influences habitual thought (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

When analyzed, Whorf’s theory has proven to bear significant merit. Franz Boas’ linguistic analysis revealed that many languages exclude specification of gender, tenses, location, and a vast array of descriptive terms present within the English language (Sybing, 2011). Other linguists believe that lexical development is contingent upon the life experiences of those speaking the language, meaning a culture that has only thatch-roofed huts would not be able to conceptualize a building, thus could not fathom a skyscraper (Sybing, 2011). However, slang is a lexical innovation created by individuals and often incorporates words and phrases from various languages, as well as variations of standard words (Bullard, Johnson, Morris, Fox, & Howell, 2010). Originally considered to be the lowest form of communication, slang is now commonly used in the highest social circles and is perpetuated based upon its usefulness and applicability (Bullard, Johnson, Morris, Fox, & Howell, 2010).

**Convergence & Divergence**

Convergence was seen as the strategy that allowed individuals to adapt to the communicative behaviors in terms of the features identified. The convergence of speech reflects the often unconscious need of a speaker to be socially integrated or identified with the other. Basically, convergence assumed that more the speaker becomes familiar to the listener then makes it more likely for the listener to also like the speaker. As such, convergence through speech and non-verbal behavior is among strategies essentially adopted to enhance one’s similarity with the other (Fleet & Torr, 2007). The result of convergence, generally, is the speaker’s attractiveness (Chen, Kyle, & McIntyre, 2008).

“Divergence” is referred to “the way in which speakers accentuate speech and non-verbal differences between themselves and others” (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991, p. 8). The linguistic divergence takes both verbal and non-verbal forms. In differentiating convergence from divergence, it was observed that “Convergence is a strategy of identification with the communication patterns of an individual internal to the interaction, whereas divergence is a strategy of identification with linguistic communicative norms of some reference group external to the immediate situation” (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991, p. 27). Divergence borrows from the theory of intergroup relations and social change proposed by Tajfel and colleagues (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). This theory holds that the intergroup social comparisons influence members of a particular social group to search for and at times create dimensions that positively differentiate them from individuals in the other groups (DeCapua, 2008). In other
words, divergence makes individuals feel more satisfied because they feel they belong to more superior group. As a result, the individual feels they possess adequate social identity, and they feel self-worthy (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991).

Cultural Dynamics of Language Acquisition

Culture is technically defined as people’s learned, shared behaviors and beliefs (Miller, 2007). The culture of the Middle East entails values that consider teaching as a noble profession. Teachers typically command significant levels of respect from both the students and the community at large. This environment facilitates the student’s interpretation of the teacher as the benchmark to which they try to emulate, which enables the educator to have a dominating influence in their academic decisions (Gumperz, 1982).

It is through this perception that a second language learner will tend to rely more on the teacher than the rest of the students (Gumperz, 2001). As stated earlier, the strategies should be tailor made to meet the dynamic needs of the student including culture and therefore, the teacher should lead the student in the best way to easily and comprehensively master the language as there is a higher chance the teacher will dominate and influence the choice of strategy to be used by such a learner. The teacher should take the cultural background to effectively deliver the best as the learner expects the teacher to be perfect.

Gender is an issue that is of great importance, especially in the Arab world. The Muslim religion and their form of government stipulate the separation of the two genders in relation to learning; therefore, enhancing the natural differences in the cognitive processing of information between the two genders that affects how each learns (Allam & Salmani-Nadoushan, 2009). Social effectiveness is the worst hit strategy in the Arabic set up. Due to their gender bias set up, the system maintains single gender relationship. The system blocks out the social effectiveness of schooling, and they are forced to understand one relationship, i.e., gender biased relationship. With such, the second language learner will have difficulty in learning language in an environment that will differ from what s/he already knows (Oxford, 1990). The understanding of such background information will help the instructors of these students to structure their strategies in a manner that is acceptable by the learner. At no instance should there be a conflict between the learner and the teacher concerning social setup or difference in belief; therefore, the teacher should appreciate the cultural beliefs of the learner.

Language acquisition is based on mastery of the five aspects of language knowledge, which are classified as morphemic, phonetic, pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic (Otto, 2010). These elements constitute the foundational attributes that comprise the three levels of language knowledge, which are linguistic knowledge, metalinguistic knowledge, and verbalization of metalinguistic knowledge (Otto, 2010). Since the mother tongue is every child’s first language, this is the foundation by which each individual bases all future knowledge concerning language acquisition (Crim, et al., 2008). Learning how to communicate orally is the prelude to mastery of an additional linguistic paradigm (Harris, 2009).

Every language has a standard lexicon and all cultures have forms of slang terminology within their dialect (Battenburg, 2010). Slang is a cultural aspect of linguistic expression that is typically defined as an informal way of speaking derived exclusively from the speaker’s awareness of social and stylistic customs as well as the slang status of any word or phrase (Bullard, Johnson, Morris, Fox, & Howell, 2010). Such terminologies often exist as culturally relevant jargon that interjects various stylistic elements into daily vernacular and they are linked to different kinds of social interactions that give the unique vocabulary meaning (Duff, 2001).
The recognition of slang or jargon as a linguistic element is specifically linked with the connection these expressions have to cultural or societal dynamics (Joseph, 2013). This includes the social jargon of small, localized groups that may be widespread for a short period before fading into obscurity. The origins and dynamics of casual speech tend to be ethnically inclined and originate within various areas so those native to the area can deliver messages faster and express ideas, events, or experiences (Bullard, Johnson, Morris, Fox, & Howell, 2010). Individuals that are attempting to become bi or multi-lingual do not always speak in the same way, illustrating that code-switching and code-mixing are common phenomena in speech, where at least two languages communally exist (Annamali, 1989). The most basic definition of code-switching describes an act that occurs in conversation where two languages come into contact with each other and both languages are used interchangeably (Appel & Muysken, 2006; Deibert, 2008; Halmari, 1997; Hamers & Blanc, 2000; Liu, 2008; Poplack, 2001).

These transient dynamics create perpetual fluctuations in linguistic meaning that are culturally derived and the creation of new terminologies ensures that languages are continually changed and renewed (Miller, 2007). The migration of casual conversational terms between cultures and races and the adaptations of these cultural terms by different groups help diverse people connect through the assimilation of linguistics and magnify the boundaries of interpersonal communication (Bullard, Johnson, Morris, Fox, & Howell, 2010). The paradigms of linguistic acquisition are not restricted to simply words, but gestures and body language as well and nonverbal messages are a large part of interpersonal communication.

During informal communication, people typically use physical gestures, facial expressions, and many other informal types of body language to convey various messages. Some of these informal communicative patterns are coded within the culture of language deeply imbedded within the human vernacular not limited by social boundaries and can exist in all languages, cultures, and classes of society. In examining the cultural aspects of linguistic acquisition and the development of multi-language skills, the deeper relevance to EFL/ESL individuals can be examined through analysis of current practice.

For example, students whose native language is Arabic face a particularly challenging learning curve when attempting to learn English as a second language due to the significant differences inherent in the dynamics of these vastly different languages (Abdo & Breen, 2010). Although there are many differences, these are just a few of the major obstacles that present for EFL/ESL learners whose native tongue is Arabic:

1. Arabic is written from right to left, which is the exact opposite of English,
2. Arabic orthography is subjective depending on the placement of the letter in the word, which means that the shapes of letters varies according to their initial, medial, or end placement in a word. Conversely, English letters only change shape if they are upper or lower case,
3. In English grapho-phomenic rules that govern the treatment of vowels are unpredictable and irregular, but predictable in Arabic,
4. Verb-free sentences in English would include a copula, but are allowable in Arabic, and
5. Arabic tenses are indicated by the addition of a suffix to a root.

While these are simply a few of the rules that differentiate these two languages, the differences are so vast that Jordanian ESL/EFL learners cannot rely on Arabic (L1) competence for building English (L2) competence (Abdo & Breen, 2010).
Results

Examination of the selected case study demonstrates that there is a need for the ESL teachers to understand the skills, and cultural heritage that their students bring to the classroom (Abdo & Breen, 2010). Additional research suggests that teachers should develop pedagogical practices that investigate the relationship that exist between student’s cognitive progress, the social, and the cultural context in which they engage in ESL/EFL educational paradigms (Hernandez, 2012). The case study further indicates that learning is mediated by social-cultural practices of students.

To supplement the indications presented in the case study, a survey was conducted (see Appendix A) in which students and EFL/ESL instructors were asked about their views regarding the inclusion of culturally relevant instruction amalgamated with the linguistic context. The survey conducted incorporates the responses of 50 EFL (25 male, 25 female) students at a Middle-Eastern university, 15 EFL professors (10 male, 5 female), 50 regular academic students (25 male, 25 female), and 25 academic professors (18 male, 7 female). The results of this survey is presented in Tables 1-4 and strengthen the argument posited in this paper, which favors the inclusion of cultural paradigms when teaching ESL/EFL to Arabic speaking learners. Table1: Survey Question 1 Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question 1 Results</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males that said Yes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males that said No</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females that said Yes</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females that said No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females that were Unsure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The query presented for the first question of the survey was: Does culture have to be a part of English Language Learning? The results illustrated in Table 1 show that 27 EFL male students responded ‘No, we can learn culture as we go through university’; 23 EFL male students stated ‘Yes, it is part of English language’; 44 female students responded ‘Yes, we need to learn all to help with understanding of English language and culture’; and 6 female students were unsure.

Social-cultural approach to be used in language learning requires a new shift for teaching ESL since there are complexities involved. The learners are social beings who are complex and whose language learning process is orchestrated throughout their socially and culturally
constructed artifacts. Communication is mediated by the learners’ social and cultural identities, and therefore, the language learning process should be viewed with respect of the social background, and structure. Learning English in itself as a second language constitutes the dialogical interdependence between the learner, the society, social practices, and the context of learning must be brought about in the classroom. The illustration in Table 2 presents the responses from the participants to the second survey question.

Table 2: Results of Survey Question 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question 2</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EFL Professors</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Professors</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second survey question posed asked: *Does culture have to be a part of English Language Teaching?* The question was focused on the educators in the respondent pool, both EFL professors and academic professors, and all 40 faculty members replied ‘Yes, it is needed; it is a requirement of the learning process. How can this not be put into teaching the language?’

Research suggest that social and cultural context of everyday brings about human cognitive development, and its functioning, and that individual’s learning cannot be detached from other people’s learning. The connection between the individual and the society do connect learning together with the cognitive aspect of the mind. Thorne put that language is entrenched into the society, and that people interprets information through their consultation of their social and cultural backgrounds. Second language learning should be instituted within the context of the micro-social and the structures of the institution. The social cultural approach suggests the need to expound on language teaching knowledge situations, the possibilities that can be afforded by social and cultural institutional structures, and the understanding of how teaching relates to the pedagogical practices and the social background of the learners (Ajayi, 2008).

The illustration in Table 3 presents the responses from the participants to the third survey question, which was: *Is it possible to consider a language-learning environment without teaching the culture?*
A Discussion on Teaching a Language without Teaching its Culture

Goodwin

Table 3: Survey Question 3 Responses

The results for this survey question illustrated in Table 3 show that 24 EFL male students indicated that, ‘Yes, we only need to know the words to communicate’; 26 EFL male students said, ‘No, words do not tell us everything’; 45 female students said, ‘No, culture of words/how and when to use them are important to understanding the life’ and 5 female students were unsure.

The fourth and final research question posed to participants was: Is it possible to consider a language learning environment without teaching the culture?

Table 4: Results for Survey Question 4
This question was also focused on the educators in the respondent pool, both EFL professors and academic professors, and all 40 faculty members responded “No, culture must be taught, always, since culture helps us explain why something is done a certain way, and culture helps us to explain things when words are not used.”

Code-switching has been documented as a way of signaling ethnic identity and unearthing shared background knowledge, which, for Arabic-speaking ESL/EFL individuals provides a stronger platform for language acquisition (Hinkel & Fotos, 2002). Through etiquette code-switching (also termed emblematic code-switching) speakers indicate that they are members of a certain speech community or ethnic group and that they are in solidarity with the other members of that group or community. Accomplishing this does not require extensive code-switching. It is documented that in diglossic situations, the native language of the bilingual or multilingual speaker tends to take the “we” code, and the second language is normally associated with the “they” code. The “we” code has a sense of intimacy, personal attachment and involvement, whilst the “they” code has authority connotations and distance attached to it (Helfrich & Bosh, 2011).

Basically, the theory is based on the fact that in a communication process, losses and gains are inevitable, which is why code-switching or code-mixing should be encouraged (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). It was further asserted that accommodation theory explains the diverse contextual processes that impact sociolinguistic codes, styles, and strategies that speakers select and consequences of such selections (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). Proponents of this theory hold that during social interactions speakers are in need of social approval from their listeners. Therefore, teachers should encourage and support code-switching in their students.

As a result, speakers tend to adapt their speech toward the direction of the code preferable to the listener, as way of seeking their social approval. This is what has been termed convergence or accommodation. Further, the theory retains that, during some speech instances, the speaker wants to set himself/herself aside from the listener. To achieve this aim in a speech event, the speaker places emphasis on the difference existing between the speaker and the listener. The way in which speakers stress this difference is through the choice of code. This is termed as speech divergence (Gardner, 2012). This speech behavior has been attributed to political, national, and cultural reasons (Appel & Muysken, 2006). This is an indication that code-switching and refusal to code switch, under this theory, all serves a particular purpose for the speaker.

Conclusion

Summarily, learning a new language is a complex task since many attributes of linguistics are derived from the surrounding culture. Verbal comprehension of a new language is the prelude to literacy in the target language and individuals that have strong oral competencies are more successful in mastery of the new language than those that are not (Gardner, 2012). In many circumstances, comprehension of the associated cultural dynamics adds clarity to the linguistic formalities relative to the target language and can help instructors convey details to their students (Gholson & Stumpf, 2005). The ability to comprehend spoken words will help ESL/EFL learners develop the phonetic skills to become literate in comprehending written words (Ajayi, 2008).
As the individual learns to comprehend the meaning of the words being spoken to them, they also learn how to mimic the sounds. As their linguistic skills increase, they become better able to ask questions and articulate their thoughts, helping them to become better learners (DeCapua, 2008). As the relevance of culture to the linguistic paradigm becomes better understood, the practice of teaching culture in conjunction with the associated language requires further study so that the real benefits can be better understood. Although this brief discourse has revealed several elements of the relationship between language and culture, as well as several of these benefits, there is still a need for a stronger body of literature based on research that can provide details regarding helpful methodologies that can be employed when instructing EFL/ESL students in a new language.

Limitations of the Study
Research using the findings of a case study has inherent limitations in that the study sample may be limited, as well as the extent of control the researcher has since this process relies on examination of information derived from restricted venues. Furthermore, restricting the discussion to EFL/ESL learners from the Middle East that speak Arabic as their first language limits the generalizability of the results since the Arabic language has numerous distinctions that differ from the dynamics of other languages such as Spanish, French, or Italian. Another limitation stems from the manner in which the data is collected because case study data often represent natural behavior, making it difficult to categorize and organize responses in a meaningful and qualitative way. Case study research often requires some creativity on the researcher’s part, such as analysis, and the challenges mentioned will be addressed by careful selection of the studies used in support of the findings to avoid inclusion of invalid details.

About the Author:
Dr. Ronnie Goodwin completed his doctorate in English: Rhetoric & Linguistics at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2005. He has over 24 years of teaching experience in university, community college, private and public school settings. He specializes in teaching Linguistics, Business Writing, English Composition and English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Dr. Goodwin is also experienced in teaching intensive English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses.

References


Appendix A

Participant Questionnaire & Results

Questions and responses posed to 50 EFL (25 male, 25 female) students at a Middle-Eastern university, 15 EFL professors (10 male, 5 female), 50 regular academic students (25 male, 25 female) and 25 academic professors (18 male, 7 female).

1. Does culture have to be a part of English Language Learning?

Twenty-seven (27) EFL male students said, No, “we can learn culture as we go through university.”

Twenty-three (23) EFL male students said, Yes, “it is part of English language.”

Forty-four (44) female students said, Yes, “we need to learn all to help with understanding of English language and culture.”

Six (6) female students were unsure.

2. Does culture have to be a part of English Language Teaching?

From both EFL professors and academic professors, all forty (40) faculty members said, Yes, “it is needed, it is a requirement of the learning process. How can this not be put into teaching the language”? 

3. Is it possible to consider a language learning environment without teaching the culture?

Twenty-four (24) EFL male students said, Yes, “we only need to know the words to communicate.”

Twenty-six (26) EFL male students said, No, “words do not tell us everything.”

Forty-five (45) female students said, No—“culture of words/how and when to use them are important to understanding the life.”

Five (5) female students were unsure.

4. Is it possible to consider a language learning environment without teaching the culture?

All forty (40) faculty members said, No, “culture must be taught, always.” “Culture helps us explain why something is done a certain way, and culture helps us to explain things when words are not used.”
Identity Construction and Negotiation through an EFL Syllabus in Sudan

Nada Sid Ahmed Eljak
Sudan University for Science and Technology, Sudan

Abdelrahim Hamid Mugaddam
University of Khartoum, Sudan

Abstract
This paper investigates the process of national identity construction among basic school pupils in Sudan. The paper adopts the assumption that identity can be constructed and negotiated via language. SPINE 3, a textbook of English as a foreign language taught to Grade 8 has been chosen as a representative of language programs implemented at basic level schools in Sudan and thus the main source of data for the study. Issues such as traditions, customs, good values, religion, clothes, food, literature, historical events, famous people, etc, have been carefully considered in terms of their representation in the textbook. A critical discourse analysis approach has been employed in the process of data analysis. Results show that SPINE 3 promote and help construct a national identity among the pupils. Yet, the identity constructed and negotiated through the textbook is based primarily on the Arabic and Islamic culture which is thought to be the most effective unifying factor of the Sudanese nation. As such, PINE 3 completely ignores and marginalize Sudan’s rich linguistic, cultural and ethnic heritage. The paper concludes that paying due respect to the cultural and linguistic diversity of Sudan will help realize political and economic settlement in Sudan.

Keywords: national identity, ideology, school textbooks, content analysis
Introduction

National identity is a collective feeling based on the belief of belonging to the same nation. In national identity people share most of the characteristics that make them different from other nations (Guibernau, 2007). These characteristics include a common culture, history, kinship, language, religion, territory and destiny. This suggests that people who belong to a particular nation share a set of attributes that constitute their national identity. The specific way in which the nation is defined affects the nature of these attributes.

The fact that Sudan is rich in different ethnicities, cultures, languages and religions serves as an incentive for us to attempt the present study. Constructing national identity through education is the main theme of the present study. Although this theme appeared in the 16th century becoming widespread in the 19th century (Parmenter, 1999), very little research was conducted in the Sudanese context. Construction of national identity in Sudan needs to be initiated in the school syllabuses. Like any other type of learning process, identity construction requires certain instruments (Smith, 1991). For example symbols such as the flags and the national anthems are important instruments in building and maintaining a nation. In this paper we are trying to show how national identity is constructed through written texts in school syllabuses. It is argued that the current Sudanese national syllabus at basic level (henceforth BL) is based on a policy favouring a certain ideology and culture. The main assumption here is that the syllabuses adopted at school do not reflect the diversity of Sudanese society. That is, pupils at BL are not provided with fair opportunities to negotiate, develop or construct their own identities through the current syllabus. In this context, this specifically addresses the negotiation of national identity in SPINE 3, an English language textbook taught to Grade 8 in Sudan.

Theoretical background

The term ‘identity’ proved to be highly significant in the 1960s, and acquired currency across disciplinary and national boundaries. It has established itself in many fields such as the journalistic and the academic lexicon. Foucault (1972) views identities (or subjects) as the product of dominant discourses that are attached to social arrangements and practices. Guibernau (2007) claims that the two key questions in relation to identity are ‘who am I?’ and ‘Who are we?’ She argues that identity is a definition which she takes as a psychological and social interpretation of the self which establishes what and where the person is.

Smith (1991) suggests that the self is composed of multiple identities and roles: familial, territorial, class, religious, ethnic and gender. He also indicates each of these identities is based on social classifications that might be modified or abolished. Musa (2007) argues that religion, language, values and manners compose the main characteristics of identity and intersect with the component of culture. He goes on to highlighting different kinds of identities: individual identity, social identity and national identity. Moreover, Musa argues that discourse about identity is always linked with the discourse about ethnicity and culture. This fact is very clear in the newly independent countries which suffer from the existence of different ethnicities trying to homogenize their society. Being one of those countries that are characterized by diversity in ethnicity, culture, religion and languages, Sudan is a case in point. It has got about 572 tribes; 50 of them compose huge tribal groups which communicate through 115 languages. Addressing this situation, Sudanese political pioneers did not succeed in building a homogenous society, but a heterogeneous one that endangers prosperity, security and peace.
The relationship between language and identity

Researchers draw some correlation between identity and language. Joseph (2006) argues that language is of political origin which means that it is basically political. However, other linguists, particularly psycholinguists, counter this by stressing that the function of language has primarily to do with 'cognition' which is the connection with mental processes of understanding and not with relationships between people (ibid). In the same sense, Benwell and Stokoe (2006) define identity as essential, cognitive, socialized, phenomenological or supernatural phenomenon that governs human action. Many questions arise from this understanding such as: what identities people possess, how they may be distinguished from one another, and how they correlate with a variety of social science measures. It is assumed that in spite of presenting themselves differently in a number of contexts, beneath that presentation, people lurk a personal, pre-discursive and steady identity. Thus, people should know who they 'really' are, and if they do not, they may need the help of professionals, psychoanalysts, spiritual leaders, etc. to reveal that knowledge (ibid).

Going back to the argument of Joseph (2006) that language is of political origin, the significant question here is that what do we mean by 'politics'? Joseph elaborates the answer to this question arguing languages themselves are constructed out of the practices of speech and writing, and the beliefs (or 'ideologies') of those doing the speaking and writing. Language is shaped by the audience and what the interlocutors communicate will affect their relationship. It is believed that the politics of identity shapes the interpretation of the messages being exchanged which is a prime factor in deciding the truth value of utterances (Joseph, 2006). Identity is also understood as a "public phenomenon, a performance or construction that is interpreted by other people" (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006:4). The construction of identity occurs in discourse and other social and embodied conduct. Hence, some questions rise such as: how we move, where we are, how we talk, etc.

To sum up, language and identity are inseparable. Thinking about language and identity, as reflected by Joseph (2004), improves people understanding of who they are, in their eyes and in others', which would deepen their understanding of social interaction. During their lives, people engaged with language in constructing who they are, and who everyone is that they meet, or whose utterances they hear or read. People from childhood engage in psychological and developmental processes through which their subjective feelings, attitudes, behaviors, affective and cognitive aspects, and beliefs are gradually constructed. The language they speak is crucial to them and is linked with their subjective identities.

Joseph (2004:6) argues that individual or group identities ‘are not natural facts about us, but are things we construct’. Some people would not accept this idea when they think of their identities as related and grounded in a soul; or when they think of their identities as something stable and unchangeable through their life. The separate and inner identity is never singular or coherent. If one is to think about the fact that individuals usually have various roles with regard to others, such as to children, parents, friends, spouses, etc, their identities shift and change according to the context of whom they are talking to. People can construct others' identities depending on what they have observed of each other.

It is generally argued that the negotiation of identities occurs where relations of power are unequal. These situations are usually influenced by the social, cultural, political, and historical
settings in which these identities are negotiated. Negotiation of identities occurs every day in multilingual contexts where different ideologies of language and identities come into conflict. This should be taken with regard to which languages or varieties of language are spoken by a particular kind of people in particular contexts (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2003).

Positioning and negotiation of identity in classrooms

Regan and Chasaide, (2010) argue that first language sociolinguistic research has shown that identity construction is particularly intense during adolescence and young adulthood. They suggested that language use is an especial key resource in this dynamic process. Eckert (2000) and Rampton (1995) state that identity construction is at a particularly intense stage during adolescence and young adulthood, and language is powerful factor in this process. Norton (1997) uses the term ‘subjectivity’ for ‘identity’. Subjectivity refers to the ways in which our identity is formed through discourse. She has worked to show how language learners take up different subject positions in different discourses. Norton uses the notion of identity as multiple entity constructed through discourse, and a site of struggle. From this point of view, a person takes up different subject positions within different discourses. Language or discourse is a crucial element in the formation of subjectivity. Kearney (2004) states that in addition to the traditional factors which influence each individual learner such as age, previous experience etc., other factors have come into play. Some of these are the socially constructed nature of language learning and the effect that it draws on the individual learner.

Materials and methods

This study depends primarily on data derived from SPINE 3, a textbook taught to grade 8 pupils in Sudan. The textbook covers a wide range of topics and themes in English language. The actual sample used in the analysis is taken from six units. The choice of language textbook is based on the assumption that language is the field in which identity is more likely to be reflected. SPINE 3 as a non-probability sample, is taken to represent the English language syllabus taught at the basic level (SPINE2 at Grade 7 and SPINE1 at Grade 5). Selection of the units in this study depends on the purpose of the research (exploratory and descriptive). This study adopts a number of units of analysis such as: word, theme, characters, item, etc. Each unit of analysis is defined accurately before being used in the analysis. The direct relationship between the categories of analysis and the units of analysis is explicitly explained.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed based on qualitative and quantitative approach in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The quantitative data analysis (QNDA) was based on the instrument especially developed for this study entitled Dimensions of National Identity Construction (DNIC). The instrument was implemented on an inter-rater-based approach (see Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 2007). Two raters completed the checklist and the most commonly agreed rate was taken as the most acceptable. The texts were examined under the sub-dimensions mentioned in the taxonomy of the research instrument. The results of the tallying up of the checklist were tabulated and presented in graphs. The second instrument adopted by this study was used to analyze ideological expressions in the school textbooks. This instrument (ID) is based on a taxonomy developed by van Dijk (2006). Cohen’s et al. (2007) approach to content analysis has been
considered for handling the data. Three questions were raised to help organize the process of content analysis. The questions are as follows:

1. To what extent does the current textbook, SPINE 3, support the process of constructing national identity among the pupils?
2. To what extent does SPINE 3 help deconstruct preexisting diverse ethnic identities of the pupils?
3. Is SPINE 3 based on a certain ideology?

The entire content of the six units chosen for the study were scrutinized against the dimensions of the checklist. Reference was made to different lessons that were examined under each of the criterion set. A special focus was placed on making the data representative to ensure reliable results. Teama’s (Te'a'ma, 2004) Priori Coding was used in coding the data. The categories of analysis were chosen based on previous studies and peer reviewing of three experts. To answer the questions posed by the study, both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data analysis have been used in the present study.

Discussions and Results

With respect to the quantitative analysis of this textbook, Tables 1, 2, and 3 as examples, show identity percentages, while Graph 1 shows ethnic and national identity frequency by dimension.

Table 1 shared values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimension</th>
<th>Lessons</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Shared values      | Lesson(4), revision unit, page 9 ‘ Mustafa The Farmer’ | -He likes his farm very much  
-After that he says his prayers | The text focuses on valuing certain customs and traditions and tries to perpetuate them through the language and techniques used in it. |
|                    | Unit 3, Lesson 1 ‘People Who Help Us’ | A boy scout, Pupils *learn discipline, first aid and many other useful things.* | respect for all sorts of occupations and exaltation of the value of work |
|                    | Unit 3, Lesson 5, ‘Keep Your Home Clean 2’ | -They intended to keep it clean | -The texts try to inculcate the values of caring for the environment, self-hygiene and promotion of urban behavior  
- The texts enhance the sense of civic pride as well as civic duties and |
responsibilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 5, Lesson 9, ‘Sarah and Mona’</th>
<th>‘Would you ----?’ or ‘Could you ----?’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-promotes the practice of addressing other people tactfully.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-This lesson demonstrates the way people should request others to do things for them in polite ways by using certain structures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table .2 Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimension</th>
<th>Lesson Examples</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>symbols</td>
<td>Unit 2, Lesson 12, ‘Sports and Games’, page 45</td>
<td>Mohammed Ali Clay who has turned into a symbol for the blacks and his victories in boxing has placed him in high position and he turned into an idol amongst his fellow people not only in America but worldwide and for all coloured people let alone the blacks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unit 3, Lesson 2, ‘Great Men and Women’, page 54</td>
<td>talk about three figures who are real symbols. These people are: (1) Mohammed Ahmed Al Mahdi. (2) The great traveller Ibn Batutta (3) Nelson Mandela</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table .3 Traditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimension</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditions</td>
<td>Unit 4, Lesson 9 ‘Juha at the Chemist’s’, page 104</td>
<td>‘Amna, Amna, today I’m not feeling well’</td>
<td>A number of good traditions are presented such as the good relationship between husbands and wives, love between friends, hospitality and entertainment of guests, and the kind</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Psychological dimension

- **Internal or external enemies**

  There is a short text in unit 3 Lesson 2 titled 'Great Men and Women 1'. This text is about Al Mahadi. It speaks about him as a leader who drove away the Turks and who fought great battles against enemies to his people. *He did not want his country to be ruled by foreigners*. The *foreigners* here refers to the Turks. The word 'foreigners' itself connotes xenophobia and anti-colonization attitudes as well as nationalistic zeal.

  Folktales represent one of the richest sources for instruction. They are also rich as linguistic resources. Because they are intrinsically interesting, motivating and appealing to the young. That is, the moral a folktale teaches is believed to be in producing the required impact on the learners. SPINE 3 has made use of folktale in a trial to instill the dimensions of national identity in the learners' hearts and minds. Two examples of this are Lesson 10 and 11 in Unit 3 entitled 'Stories from the Past (1) and 'Stories from the Past (2)'.

  The former is an example of 'external enemy'. It talks about a king who was defeated by his enemies losing seven battles. However, at the end he managed to lead his army to victory. 'The king and his army fought against their enemies and this time they won'. The latter is an example of 'internal enemy'. It talks about a prince who was chased by his enemies. The prince was helped by some of his loyal subjects who sacrificed themselves for him.

  To sum up this sub-dimension is dealt with in a number of positive ways and is presented in different context and genres. The textbook relies a lot on the national history of the country and cites examples of how the Sudanese people and their historical leaders fought...
against all sorts of colonizers and invaders. In all of these instances a reference was made to the Sudanese people as one nation. The learners are addressed as one unified group who belong to one homeland. The sub-dimension is also treated through folktales and stories from the past. Such texts are neutral in nature and do not favour any group to others.

- **Belief in common ancestry**

  Here, SPINE 3 seems to adopt a method of avoidance behavior. It tries to give a broad hint about belief in common ancestry. It uses the theme of great men and women to inject the message and make it look more accidental than deliberate. No one would argue against including some great Arab people in this theme, since they are considered part of human heritage. However, the way they are presented may drop a hint. The two passages in Lesson 11, Unit 4, “Great Men and Women (2)” are examples. These two passages are fairly long and are both devoted to Arab scientists: Jabir Ibn Hayyan and Ibn al-Haytham. The topic sentences in the opening paragraphs in both texts read as follows:

  1. Jabir Ibn Hayyan is a famous Arab scientist.
  2. Ibn al-Haytham was a famous Arab mathematician and scientist.

  The writers talk about Jabir Ibn Hayyan and Ibn al-Haytham with pride, delight and appreciation. Moreover, the choice of a great man such as “the traveler of Islam” and the lesson about “across the sea” made it possible to mention the names of some Arab places (countries and cities). It seems that the writer has deliberately created an opportunity in this theme to evoke this belief. This might give readers the impression that they belong to one region and one race.

- **Cultural dimension**

  **Shared values**

  This sub-dimension is presented in a way that all learners are convinced to identify with. Common, universal and desired values are offered. Equal opportunities are offered to learners to position themselves within this system of values. As a result, learners will be apt to feel that equity prevail in their classrooms. An example of “shared values” appears in Unit 3, Lesson 5, “Keep Your Home Clean (2)”. The texts in this lesson talk about how pupils at Basic Level worked hard to keep their school and village clean and green. The texts try to inculcate the values of caring for the environment, self-hygiene and promotion of urban behaviour. The texts enhance the sense of civic pride as well as civic duties and responsibilities. This intersects with the political dimension as it stresses the duties of citizens and their responsibilities towards their own local communities.

- **Beliefs**

  The authors treated this sub-dimension wisely. They use themes from both Islam and Christianity. However, the presentation of Islam first in the list might be interpreted as a sort of bias against other religions or that Islam is the dominant religion. The authors did not intend to be biased in any way. All pupils may feel that their religions and cultures are respected and catered for. This has a positive impact on the entire group of learners. An example is from Unit 5, Lesson 7, “Hunein's Pair of Shoes”.

  (a) We went to the mosque.
  (c) We listened to the “Khutba”.
  (d) We said our Friday prayers.
  (d) We put on our best clothes.
(e) We picked up our bibles.
(f) We went to church.

- **Symbols**
  A whole unit beside other scattered lessons are devoted to encouraging learners to read about famous men and women and. Reading about such characters helps learners acquire good values and more positive attitudes towards the others. In this way, the authors can guarantee that the whole group of learners will identify with this sub-dimension. For example the three texts in Unit 3, Lesson 2, “Great Men and Women (1)” talk about three figures that are real symbols. These are:

1. Al Imam Mohammed Ahmed Al Mahdi, who freed the Sudan from the Turks.
2. The great traveller Ibn Battuta, who toured the world of his day and wrote about his travels.
3. Nelson Mandela, who was one of the greatest freedom fighters in the history of humanity.

- **Traditions**
  Traditions are presented through the popular character of “Juha”. In different units and lessons “Juha” encourages learners and focuses their attention on the importance of good relationships between husbands and wives; love between friends, etc. It is clear that the whole group of learners will identify with this sub-dimension. The traditions mentioned are common and are presented without reference to any specific creed or culture. Examples are in Unit 6, Lesson 5, “Juha at the Dentist's”, and Unit 6, Lesson 7, “Juha at the Cafeteria”. A number of good traditions are presented such as the good relationship between husbands and wives: “Amna, Amna, today I'm not feeling well”; love between friends: “All right. I'll give you the money”; hospitality and entertainment of guests: “Oh, Juha! You must eat something”; and the kind way of treating the elderly and showing them respect.

- **Food**
  SPINE 3 does not show great concern with “food” with which learners can identify. Some scattered parts of lessons talk about food, although some of them do not relate to the Sudanese way of cooking or traditional dishes. The texts focus on a few Sudanese ways of eating, and neglecting a great portion of dishes peculiar to some ethnic affiliations in the Sudan. Here, some students might feel that part of their traditions and customs are not catered for. For example in Unit 6, Lesson 2, “Cooking”, “[K]itchen utensils” are presented. The text shows the language of recipes through a dialogue between two Sudanese women. However, utensils are all modern ones and the meals the two women talk about have nothing to do with traditional Sudanese dish: “they had vegetable soup, tomato salad, aubergine, salad, okra stew, potato with minced meat”.

- **Clothes**
  The authors do not give a proper regard to “clothes”. Various ways of dressing are presented in different pictures and drawings. However, no tribal clothes, such as the laowo or the sidairi, are shown in the pictures.

- **Names of people**
  There are different names mentioned in the book, such as Kamal, Sara, Ohaj, Karlo, Arob, and Mansoor. The names come from various places and groups. In short, the authors succeeded in presenting this sub-dimension in such a way that all pupils can identify.

(c) **Territorial dimension**

- **The country**
  This sub-dimension is presented in all aspects of the notion of country (the Sudan). It is presented in a number of texts. In the Revision Unit, Lesson 1, Section B, there is a personal letter written by two girls to their friend. The senders’ address contains 'Omdurman' which is always referred to as the
'national capital' in contrast to Khartoum, the 'political capital'. Omdurman occupies a special place in the history of the Sudan and is considered to be the melting pot of many Sudanese who belong to different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. So, to choose it as part of the senders’ address has the advantage of representing the broad spectrum of the Sudanese diverse ethnicities. The text also talks about Khartoum and its beauty in winter and the two girls invite their friend to visit it. They also refer to Jebel Marra and the nice holiday they spent there. Talking about these places in such a context fosters the sense of belonging to one country.

In Section ‘D’ of the same lesson, the text talks about two friends from eastern and western Sudan, Aroma and ElObied, respectively. Ohaj goes to visit his friend Ahmed in El Obied in Kordofan. The text also mentions that when Ohaj went back to his home town 'Aroma', he 'told his friends about the two beautiful towns', which further consolidates the idea of spreading the notion of belonging to one homogenous national entity. The text, though short, capsulates a huge message. It tries to unify the different parts of the country as well as the different ethnicities and cultures. Another aspect that the language of the text implicates is the notion of taking pride in the homeland by speaking about its beauty.

In Unit 2 Lesson 7 'A Letter from Tom', Tom writes to His friend Mahmoud describing the Sudanese as 'very nice and friendly people.' He also mentions that he 'visited some historical places' and he 'shall never forget the beautiful green forests in southern Sudan.' This kind of discourse is sure to raise the learners' awareness of nationalism. The most important issue here is the neutrality of the language when no given group is referred to. All learners will feel that they are included the text.

In Unit 2 Lesson 9 'Farming and Industry' the reading text speaks about some factories that are national. They describe the textile factory in Hasahisa and other sugar and flour factories. The text talks about the top cash crop of the Sudan, cotton, and that it is grown in the oldest and most renowned project, the Gezira Scheme. It also mentions the Nuba Mountains as an area that produces cotton.

The text also mentions that 'your jalabya is made of cotton', a clever hint that uses the national costume as something that unifies rather than discriminates. In reference to the national factories, the text also uses the expression 'They produce different things which are made from what is grown on farms'. This highlights the potentialities of the homeland as having plentiful resources that can secure the basic needs of its people.

In Unit 4 Lesson 14 'Radio SPINE', and within the context of the 'Radio Programme for the Day', the text mentions the name of a Sudanese Professor who works in a foreign university and who was able to invent a substance that would help preserve the environment. One programme is about Hawa, a popular singer from Western Sudan and two famous footballers who play for two popular clubs in the Sudan.

In Unit 5, Lesson 2 'Port Sudan', the text talks about a very important city at the national level, Port Sudan the national port of the country. All the country depends on it for imports and exports. Most of the institutions there are national ones. Port Sudan is a cosmopolitan city. The people who work and live there belong to all parts of the Sudan. The text talks about 'big ships and tankers'. It talks about ships that are carrying goods and products from other countries for the benefit of the Sudanese people. It also mentions a ship 'with some Sudanese products such as cotton, cow hides, and dura loaded for export.'

The text mentions the sight-seeing tours that people can make in order to 'see the colored and other beautiful creatures in the sea. The passage itself is written in the context where a young boy travels by train from Khartoum to visit his sister and her husband in Port Sudan. This illustrates the ties that bond people in the Sudan and encourages the vision of being one nation.

Unit 5, Lesson 5 and Lesson 6 talk about an important city in the Sudan, Al Gedaref. This city is the centre for a big agricultural area which produces two important cash crops; sorghum and sesame.
They contribute a lot to the national economy. Besides, sorghum is the main cereal used as food for the Sudanese people. The text says that the two crops ‘provide our country with hard currency when they are exported’. By the phrase, ‘our country’, the text includes all groups constituting the population of the Sudan. It emphasizes the fact that ‘people from all over the country live in Al Gedaref’, which reflects the peaceful co-existence of the different cultures and ethnic groups. Moreover, the text stresses the role played by the network of roads and railways in the creation of national unity and identity (see the quotation below).

‘the railway line and the main road, which join the town with most parts of the country, make it easy for people to move to and from Al Gedaref whenever they wish.’

By and large, this sub-dimension is treated with great concern. Almost all of the units and lessons hint at fostering feelings of pride of and gratitude to the mother land, Sudan. Different cities which have significant roles in the history of Sudanese life are described. The notion of ‘country’ is disseminated in different genres. They cover a wide range of ethnicities in Sudan. The message the authors want to convey is that in spite of the diverse ethnic and cultural affiliations in Sudan, the country is wide enough to accommodate all of its sons and daughters.

- **Images specific to the homeland**

  Generally, the authors present a number of important images of Sudan. The images cover different parts of the Sudan reflecting the rich ethnic and cultural diversity of the country. For instance, in Unit 4, Lesson10, “Juha on a Sudan Airways Plane”, the authors have chosen the national carrier, Sudan Airways, as a setting for the demonstration of the language items be taught. Sudan Airways, one of the oldest airlines in Africa and the Middle East, is without doubt an image of the homeland. The choice of the national carrier here is really very successful. The planes with the famous logo and the distinctive colors are known worldwide and they have been flying through the skies for decades. Sudan Airways is the mobile image of the country.

- **Flora and fauna**

  Learners are sure to feel proud of the numbers of the country’s animal wealth. Two texts to reflect on this important sub-dimension are not enough to help the construction of national identity. For example, in Unit 2, Lesson 2, titled “At Dinder National Park”, the writer describes the national park and mentions some of its features. The text talks about the park and that it is “full of beautiful green trees and grass”. It also talks about the animals, which “are not in cages; they move freely among the trees”. On the whole, SPINE 3 raises learners’ awareness of wildlife and domesticated animals. The Sudan is famous for its wealth of livestock and wild animals. Any textbook that aims at enhancing the development of national identity should not ignore this. In fact, the national emblem of the Sudan in the past was the rhinoceros, a native of Sudan (enclosed by two palm trees). The present emblem is the secretary bird. Like the national flag and the national anthem, an emblem is one of the greatest symbols for the country.

(d) **Historical dimension**

- **Historic memories**

  Generally, “historic memories” are presented only in two places throughout the whole textbook. These presentations are not enough to identify with this sub-dimension. An example is in Unit 3, Lesson 2, “Great Men and Women (1)”, where there is a short text that talks about Al Imam Al Mahdi who devoted his life to fighting against the Turks: “He decided to drive them out and make Sudan free”; “Before he died in 1885 he freed all the Sudan from foreign rule”.

- **Sacred places**
With regard to sacred places, the only example is given in Unit 4, Lesson 2, and “Across the Sea (2). The text here talks about the two holy cities, Mecca and Madina, as well as Al Haram Al Shareef “the greatest Mosque in the world”. Sacred places are referred to in only one lesson in the textbook. The authors failed to mention places in Sudan which can be considered sacred places. For example, places such Shikan, where Sudanese heroes sacrificed themselves to free their people from the Turks; British and French colonizers. These places are sacred in the sense that they remind the pupils learners of historic battles and courageous heroes of the Sudan. Only Muslim learners identify with the above-mentioned sacred places.

People’s creeds and beliefs represent a special area of concern in ideology. Religion is a sensitive issue that should be tackled carefully. Omoniyi (2004) argues that religion has been established in recent times as an important variable in identity construction. The representation of the history of different religions in school textbooks minimizes the conflicts that can arise between learners in the classroom. The texts in SPINE3 were to some extent successful in presenting categories that identify students’ identities, self-image, cultures, and norms.

Heroes and historic battles
In a number of texts, the textbook refers to some characters as heroes. For example the text about Osman Digna in Unit 5, Lesson 3, a brief account of the life of Osman Digna is given. It shows his struggle against the Turks and the battles he fought as a soldier and a commander in the army of Al Mahadi and his Caliph. The text concludes by remarking that “Osman Digna was a real hero. He was brave, honest and adventurous”. The same text presents an example of “historic battles”. In Unit 3, Lesson 2, “Great Men and Women (1)”, the first text talks about how Al Mahadi fought against the Turks. It mentions an important battle in the history of the Sudan. It is the first battle he fought against the Turks in Abba Island. National heroes and historical battles are mentioned in a number of lessons. Bias is not felt towards any specific group of people. Hence, all learners can identify with the heroes and battles highlighted.

(e) Political dimension

The two sub-dimensions of ‘citizenship’ and ‘loyalty to the state’ are reflected here in a number of ways. Lesson 11 of Unit 2 is about ‘The Football Match’. This is a very important symbol for the nation, the National Football Team. In today's world football teams have turned into socio-political institutions. The great sports competitions that are held at all levels, locally, regionally and internationally stand as live examples of how people value these events. Winning or losing a football match – especially if the National Football Team is involved – has become almost equivalent to winning or losing a battle.

This text describes the Sudanese National Football Team as a very skillful team which wins matches against other teams that are not easy to defeat – such as the National Football Team of the Cameroon. It pictures the victory the team achieved as a hard won success, ‘(...)the two teams tried hard to score a goal’. The text refers to the Sudanese National Football Team as 'our' team. This makes the pupils view the team as a representative of all of them. In this sense, it helps the construction of national identity.

Another national institution mentioned in this area is in Unit 4, Lesson 3 ‘The Radio’ and in Lesson 4, ‘A Radio Programme’. These two lessons speak about the national radio station in Omdurman. Omdurman Radio Station, which started in 1943 has played a great role in the creation of a homogeneous Sudanese nation. It broadcasted different programmes that covered all of the traditions, folklore and heritage of the various groups.
Being the voice of the Sudan since its establishment, Radio Omdurman has acquired the status of being one of the greatest symbols of the country and ‘Hona Omdurman’ has been a call that represents the whole of the Sudanese people. SPINE Three devotes these two texts to inculcate the love of Radio Omdurman in the hearts of the young.

The first text starts with the famous announcement: ‘This is Radio Omdurman’. When a dispute arose about listening to Radio Omdurman or Radio Monte Carlo, it was firmly settled. ‘Let’s listen to Radio Omdurman’. Text two makes a comparison between Radio Omdurman and Radio Dubai. The comparison shows that Radio Omdurman is not in any way less than Radio Dubai, ‘Is Radio Dubai the same as Radio Omdurman?’, and the answer came as, ‘Yes it is’.

The two texts aim at making the pupils feel proud of their national radio station. As for the rest of the sub-dimensions in this category, SPINE 3 does not at all show any bias towards one culture or language. There is no a text that favors a specific language or misrepresents any culture. A special technique is evident in SPINE 3 which resolves the conflict between national identity and ethnic identity is juxtaposition of a number of texts and illustrations in one place.

The textbook does not devote any one text to one topic that talks about one ethnicity. It uses the technique of putting two to three short texts, sometimes with illustrations to create a balance between ethnic identity, national identity and international identity.

In short, a Great concern is devoted towards the positive construction of this dimension. National institutions which foster feelings of pleasure and satisfaction among the pupils are well catered for. These institutions play great roles in the life of Sudanese people and succeed in forming a homogenous community that include all learners. The learners find good opportunities realize their duties to preserve and respect these institutions as national symbols.

Furthermore, the authors succeeded to a great extent in maintaining a good balance between national identity, ethnic identity, and international identity in the textbook. No bias is felt towards one language or one culture. The authors follow a strategy of presenting more than one short texts in one lesson to ensure variety and reflect diversity. Everyone in the classroom can see himself/herself or his/her people presented in one of these texts. The successful technique adopted by the authors help learners to identify with this dimension.

The above findings in SPINE 3 go in line with what Parmenter (1999) came out with in a study in Japan. Parmenter found that the issue of constructing national identity through school education has become challenging in a changing world of internationalization and globalization. National identity can never be a static entity, it changes every minutes and second. Students go through different processes and possess national, international and hybrid identities.

The relationship between the other and self in the political dimension can clearly be supported by Nasir’s study (2003) in which he found that the other was essential for the construction of self. In both studies, this one and Nasir’s, the other is seen as a threat to the main stream nation. In the political dimension colonizers represent the other entity to Sudanese people.

**Ideological analysis**

The ideological analysis of SPINE3 was restricted to context, overall strategy, and meaning. The remaining elements, i.e. lexicon, syntax, format, rhetorical structures and action are not included in this section. This is because the level of language in SPINE3 does not enable the learners to express and appreciate any sort of ideology. SPINE 3 is an elementary level, if not beginner, and as such the language
used in it will not be so rich as to utilize lexicons, syntax or rhetorical structures beyond this level. It should be put in mind here that SPINE3 is the third book in the series used for teaching English to basic level students. This makes it very limited in its choice of language elements and discursive structures. For the same reason, the two other books (SPINE 1 and SPINE 2) have not been included in our sample.

• **Context**

In this textbook, the speakers are the authors of SPINE 3. They speak as members of a social group and address the recipients as audience. In their introduction to the series (Ismail and Helen, 1995:4, emphasis in the original), the authors state that the series is a national syllabus addressing itself to all Sudanese pupils and is based on the learner's environment; it contributes to the education of pupils towards their becoming good Sudanese citizens.

The authors pinpoint three important facts here:

(a) The target group of SPINE is the entire population of Sudanese pupils.
(b) SPINE is based on the Sudanese environment which necessarily includes all of the dimensions in the checklist.
(c) SPINE constructs good citizenship.

• **Overall strategy**

SPINE 3 adopts an overall strategy of Positive presentation of all groups and avoids Negative presentation of any groups. The overall strategy also avoids polarity in emphasis. This is manifested in the technique of providing texts that cover a wide range of daily life in Sudan including culture and history. It also presents more than one text in each lesson to avoid any tendency towards bias.

• **Meaning**

**Topics**

SPINE 3 selects topics that are fair to all groups. A quick look at the titles of some of them reveals this, for example “At Dinder National Park”, “Sending a Message”, “A Telephone Call”, and so on. Most of the topics deal with themes of a neutral nature. If and when a topic calls for any type of specification, the authors make every possible effort to include as many instances as they can in order to include some aspects of national identity. For example, in Unit 3, Lesson 1, “People who Help us”, the theme of jobs is used to cover names of people from different parts of the Sudan, such as Yasir, Nasir, Adrob and Mansoor.

**Local meanings and coherence**

SPINE 3 tries to avoid polarization of Positive/Negative meanings for us/them. It adopts a clear manifestation of the features which are common to most, if not all, of the Sudanese people. For example, in Unit 2, Lesson 2, “At Dinder National Park”, the writers present the park as a national institution. They give explicit details about it and the different features which makes it identifiable by all of the learners.

This textbook is very precise in presenting the different aspects of national identity. It uses specific examples from the history, geography and culture of Sudanese people. Examples are topics about cities in Sudan (such as Gedarif and Port Sudan), framing in Shendi and Industry in
Al-hasahessa. The authors also write about different activities and games, such as wrestling in the Nuba Mountains and everyday activities that include people from different parts of the Sudan, for example Unit 5, Lesson 8, which refers to Lima, Karlo and Deng from the south, as well as Sami and Haajir from other parts of the country.

Conclusion

A Critical Ideological Analysis (CIA) of SPINE 3 revealed the properties of discourse that signal the opinions, perspectives, position, interests, etc., of the dominant group. It showed that texts can make a significant change to learners’ knowledge. This is as Van Dijk (2006) puts it, texts affect learners’ beliefs, attitudes and values, actions, social relations, and the material world. Taking into account the fact that interpretation is a complex process, the CIA that has been carried out in the present study not only depends on what is explicit in a text, but also on what is implicit or what is assumed (Fairclough, 1995). The Analysis showed that the texts did not give voice to those who have been traditionally silenced or marginalized. Indigenous languages, others’ cultures, and minority groups of people are silenced, marginalized and not catered for in the textbook. This is done through language which plays an important role in establishing and maintaining ideologies. In SPINE 3 language creates an ideology that guides the way learners think by creating and reinforcing certain value systems. It also shows the role of discourse in shaping the beliefs and behaviors of the students. In short, language in SPINE 3 has the power to establish certain ideologies as common sense and norms. In other words, SPINE 3 enhances the mainstream dominant Srabic Islamic identity among the pupils and completely ignores the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds they belong to.

The study, therefore, recommends that indigenous languages, diverse cultures and ethnic groups in the Sudan should reflected on the schools textbooks at least at the basic level of education. Those who are keen about their ethnic group, cultures and languages should find equal opportunities in life to enact and negotiate their identities alongside with the national identity. By doing so, decision makers can set the floor for political, economic and social stability in a unified prosperous Sudan.

About the Authors:

Nada Sid Ahmed Eljack is assistant professor of Linguistics, Sudan University for Science and Technology. Nada has a number of publications in sociolinguistics as well ELT.

Abdelrahim Hamid Mugaddam is associate professor of Linguistics, University of Khartoum. Dr. Mugaddam has published intensively on issues related to language maintenance, language shift, and language attitudes.
References


Sudan Practical Integrated National English (SPINE) series: Book 3.


Appendix (1): SPINE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>National Identity</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimensions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Psychological dimension:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• internal or external enemy</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• belief in common ancestry</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cultural dimension:</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• shared values</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• symbols</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• traditions</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Food</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Names of people</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Territorial dimension:</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the country</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• images specific to the homeland</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• flora and fauna</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Historical dimension:</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• historic memories</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sacred places</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Heroes</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Historical battles</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Political dimension:</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• citizenship</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• loyalty to the state</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• promotion of a specific 'national' culture</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• promotion of a specific 'official' language</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• indigenous languages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Speech Act of Prohibition in English and Arabic: A Contrastive Study on Selected Biblical and Quranic Verses

Sawsan Kareem Al-Saaidi
College of Education, Al-Qadisiya University, Iraq

Ghayth K. Shaker Al-Shaibani
English Section, School of Languages, Literacies and Translation
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

Hashim A. Mohammed Al-Husseini
College of Education, University of Wasit, Iraq

Abstract
Speech act theory has played an interesting role in the philosophy of language recently and has drawn great interest among pragmatists, anthropologists, philosophers, linguists, and semanticists. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to investigate the speech act of prohibition as one of the most essential communicative uses of language. It is defined as a desire or a wish to forbid someone from doing something. The researchers attempt to show how the speech act of prohibition can be used in both English and Arabic at various levels of analysis. Specifically, a three-level analytical framework, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic, is suggested for textual analysis through a set of linguistic devices. This means that in performing a linguistic act, we often do further things. The data of this paper consists of a number of verses from the Glorious Quran and the Holy Bible. The main findings of this paper indicate that prohibition in English is most commonly realized by using a syntactic device, namely declarative sentences. Whilst prohibition in Arabic is expressed by the negative imperative “do not do”. In addition, prohibition can be expressed explicitly and implicitly in both languages. However, it was found that Arabic is distinguished from English by its heavy use of explicit and implicit devices expressing the speech act of prohibition.

Keywords: pragmatics, prohibition, semantics, speech act theory, syntax.
1. Introduction

Language serves different functions. One of these functions, termed “conative” by Jakobson (1980), is to persuade and influence others through commands, entreaties, and prohibitions. Allan (1986) stated that prohibition is a speech act whereby a speaker forbids someone from doing something. Prohibition has been listed under different categories by many scholars such as Austin (1962), Searle (1975), Bach & Harnish (1979) and Allan (1986) from different perspectives. Searle (1975) and Allan (1986), for example, classified prohibition under the category of directives which are defined as attempts to get the hearer to do something, therefore they show world-to-word fit, and expressed speaker’s wish or desire that a hearer does an act. Thus, a prohibitive sentence is classified as one of the chief varieties of sentence generally accepted as belonging to the class of request. Therefore, speech acts including prohibition “manifest the speaker’s intention (desire, wish) that his utterance or the attitude it expresses be taken as a reason for the hearer to act” (Bach & Harnish, 1979, p.47).

However, Austin (1962) and Sbisa (1984) listed prohibition within the “exercitive” speech acts which are “the exercising of powers, rights, or influence in the giving of decisions or in the advocacy of decisions in favour of or against a certain course of action” (Austin, 1962, p. 153). In line with Austin’s view, Haverkate (1979, p.39) contended that prohibition is an impositive speech act performed in order to prevent a certain state of affairs from being brought about. However, based on the literature reviewed, the researchers have found that there is a dearth in the study of prohibition. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of prohibition in English and Arabic in religious texts is scarcely studied.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Prohibition in English

2.1.1 Prohibition at the Syntactic Level

According to the syntactic point of view, there are various ways in which prohibition can be achieved. These ways are as follows:

2.1.1.1 Imperative Sentence

Syntactically, prohibition could be expressed by a number of devices, the most common of which is the imperative. Allan (1986) asserted that imperatives frame prohibition as in the following example:

Example 1: Keep out. [Prohibition]

The imperative can be used to forbid an action. It is simply a negative command, viz. “do not” that is used before the imperative to turn the command into a prohibition. According to Jawad (2012), the basic difference between a ‘command’ and a ‘prohibition’ is that the former indicates instructing the addressee to do something whereas the latter indicates instructing the addressee NOT [author’s emphasis] to do a given thing. Thus, it could be claimed that a ‘prohibition’ is a kind of a negative ‘command’. This view is supported by some scholars such as Zandvoort (1962); Geiring, Graustein, Hoffman and Kristen (1987) and Swan (2000), who denoted that prohibitive sentence is a negative imperative sentence usually with initial “do not” followed by an infinitive without “to”. It is used when we tell somebody not to do something and in accordance with the speaker’s intent underlying requests. For example,

Example 2: Don’t be such a nuisance.

2.1.1.3 Declarative Sentence

Allan (1986) confirmed that a declarative sentence can be used in performing any subcategory of speech act including prohibition to denote an actualization of the illocutionary act. This is done
either through clauses containing a performative verb, or through the meaning of the predicates in such sentences as the followings:

**Example 3:** I forbid you to speak to him. [Clause containing a performative verb]

**Example 4:** Adam must not be allowed out on the balcony. [Predicate]

2.1.1.3 **Negative verb be with to + infinitive**

Thomson and Martinet (1980) stated that prohibition can be carried out through another common construction which is the negative verb *be* with *to* infinitive.

**Example 5:** You are not to come into my room without knocking.

2.1.1.4 **Block Language**

Prohibition can be expressed by another construction that is of a block language. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik, (1985) discussed that block language appears in functions as labels, titles, (some) newspaper headlines, headings, notices, and advertisements. Hence, prohibitions often take the form of nominal phrases introduced by “no” and the understanding of the message is furnished by the context.

**Example 6:** No entry.

Quirk et al. (1985) and Swan (2000) agreed that a gerund is used with an ordinary determiner especially “no” in public notices against activities expressing prohibition.

**Example 7:** No playing loud music!

**Example 8:** No smoking is allowed in school.

2.1.2 **Prohibition at the Semantic Level**

2.1.2.1 **Modality**

Semantically, modality is one of the most important features of English; a great variety of meanings and attitudes may be conveyed through modalising and thus making the semantic truth value of a given sentence more flexible. Modality is the way in which a speaker can express his/her attitude towards a situation in interpersonal communication. Perkins (1983) confirmed that prohibition belongs to deontic modality which can be defined in terms of social or institutional laws. However, modality is exclusively concerned with the syntactic class of modal auxiliary verbs which constitutes the only formally coherent class of modal expressions in English (Perkins, 1983). The auxiliary verbs are called so because they cannot be used alone, but rather with other verbs in order to convey a particular sense or ‘mode’ such as permission, obligation, and prohibition. There are negative modal auxiliaries which can be used with prohibitive sentences such as (must not, may not, cannot, shall not, and have not got to). For example:

**Example 9:** Students must not use dictionaries in the examination.

**Example 10:** You cannot go abroad without a passport.

**Example 11:** You shall not ignore my wishes.

2.1.3 **Prohibition at the Pragmatic Level**

2.1.3.1 **Prohibitive Performative Verbs**

The most important constituent of an explicitly performative clause is the performative verb. On this line, Perkins (1983) affirmed that many verbs could be subsumed under the heading “performative verbs”, i.e. verbs that can be used to perform an act rather than merely describing or stating an act. Consequently, Allan (1986) argued that the verb spells out the illocutionary force of the performative clause effectively because the meaning of the performative verb presents the essence of the illocution, e.g. *I promise, I forbid, and I prohibit.*
To Haverkate (1979), the only specific verb that can be used in the explicit prohibitive performative sentences is the verb *prohibit*. According to Fraser (1975, p.192), the prohibitive performative verbs such as *forbid* and *prohibit* belong to the act of requesting, i.e. verbs expressing “the speaker’s desire for the hearer to bring about the state of affairs expressed in the proposition” and to the act of exercising authority which indicates “the speaker’s proposal to create a new state of affairs by exercising certain rights or powers”.

### 2.1.3.2 Hedges

Following Fraser (1980), some illocutionary acts can be effectively performed by a type of sentence which is called “hedged performative”. For example, to utter

**Example 12:** *I must forbid* you from saying anything

may count as an act of forbidding, though the literal interpretation of this is only a report of obligation.

Additionally, Fraser (1975) pointed out that the hedged performative sentence differs from the corresponding performative sentence in that it involves a modal or a semi-modal.

**Example 13:** *I must forbid* you from going out.

Fraser (1975) also said that ‘must’ is a strong performative modal that occurs most often with the largest number of verbs.

### 2.1.3.3 Prohibition and Illocutionary forces

Having believed that the act specified by the proposition is in the interest of the hearer, the speaker may attempt to diminish the degree of imposition. He/she can use the strategic device of presenting his/her own interest as being advantageous to the hearer. Nevertheless, prohibition speech act may be used to express various impositive illocutionary forces such as warning, forbidding, and threatening.

### 2.2 Prohibition in Arabic

#### 2.2.1 Prohibition at the Syntactic Level

##### 2.2.1.1 Imperative Sentence

Prohibition is considered as the demand of abstention from an act, hence it is a negative command (Syyibwiyah, n.d.; Ibn Manthoor, 1956). Accordingly, prohibition is “prevention from carrying out an act by a particular speech from a position of superiority” (Ibn al-shajeri, n.d., p. 271). Its form is “do not do” (لا تفعل) and “Let him not do” (لا تفعل). He mentioned that prohibition can be included in the field of command as in the following examples:

**Example 14:** Do not eat *لا تأكل* which is equivalent to the imperative

**Example 15:** Stop eating *توقف عن الأكل*

However, al-Subki (n.d, p.324) and al-Jurjani (1986, p. 135) agreed that prohibition is the opposite of command at which the superior says to the inferior “do not do” (لا تفعل). Generally, prohibition can be realized by the imperfect verb (in the jussive mood) beginning with the particle of prohibition (لا الناهية). There is agreement among grammarians and rhetoricians such as Syyibwiyah (1980, p.8-9), (al-Sakkaki, 1983, p.320) and al-Jurjani (1986, p.357) that prohibition has only one particle which is (لا) in the form of “do not do” (لا تفعل) . The prohibitive particle (لا) is used for the third person as well as the second person (al-Muberd, n.d). For al-Sueeti (n.d ) and Syyibwiyah (1980), this prohibitive particle is mostly used for the addressee and slightly with the first person such as “لا اريك هينه” “I don’t want to see you here.”

##### 2.2.1.2 Declarative Sentence

Scholars such as Ibn al-Shajeri (n.d), al-Qurtubi (1967), al-Maaini (1985) asserted that declarative sentences can be used to ask an addressee not to do a particular action.
Speech Act of Prohibition

Al-Saaidi, Al-Shaibani & Al-Husseini

Example 16: (2)

Abundance diverts you, until you come to the graves. (Ali, 1951, p.1204)

This example shows an implicit prohibition suggesting an indirect form of warning to the people (Muslims and non-Muslims) who indulge in worldly life neglecting good deeds that approach them to Allah then time flies to find themselves facing death where no more activities. However, prohibition in its implicit form which is expressed by the declarative form is more effective than an explicit prohibition expressed by the form of (ﻻ ﺗﻔﻌﻞْ do not do it) and (ﻻ ﻳﻔﻌﻞْ let him not do it).

2.2.1.3 Interrogative Sentence

Haruun (1979) mentioned that prohibition can be expressed by using an interrogative sentence. According to him, the questioner asks the listener to provide him with some information, to make him know a certain thing.

Example 17:

didst thou say to men, take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah? (Ali, 1951, p. 275)

A closer examination of this verse unveils an implicit prohibition indicating an indirect form of forbidding to Christians in the allegation of their worship of Jesus and his mother Mary. This verse shows that the notion of Trinity is an offence against the concept of the oneness of God (Allah) (Amer, 2010). In terms of heavenly religions, Islam is the last religion and the Holy Quran is the last Godly Book directed to all human beings and this universality is reflected in this extract.

2.2.1.4 Cognate Object

Prohibition can be carried out by the cognate object (henceforth CO). Ibn Aqeel (1964, p.557) defined CO as “the verbal noun in the accusative case, emphasize its regent or showing its type, or number.”

According to Hassan (1974), two conditions must be met for the explicit cognate verbal noun to be omitted. First, it should have the same lexeme as its regent. Second, there must be a word that substitutes the deleted verbal noun.

Example 18:

And you cannot do justice between wives, even though you wish (it), but be not disinclined (from one) with total disinclination, so that you leave her in suspense. And if you are reconciled and keep your duty, surely Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful (Ali, 1951, p.225).

In this example “كُﻞ ﺍﻟْﻤَﻴْﻞّ total disinclination is substituted for the deleted مفعول مطلق (cognate object), viz. مِلَا. However, this verse illustrates that there is a direct prohibition for men who are legally permissible to have more than one wife (up to four) because they are responsible for the sustenance of their wives, they have to provide a separate living accommodation for each wife, and they have to support and treat them all equally.

2.2.2 Prohibition at the Semantic Level

Semantically, there are a number of devices that can be used to express prohibition. They are as follows:

2.2.2.1 Would not and Ought not to

Prohibition can implicitly be expressed by the use of would not and ought not to. However, the use of “would not” may have the idiomatic meaning “must not” as in the following Quranic verse:
Example 19:
And a believer would not kill a believer except by mistake (Ali, 1951, p. 216)
This verse shows that life is absolutely sacred in the Islamic Brotherhood. Accordingly, the killing of some Muslims by Muslims is forbidden; however mistakes sometimes happen. This is apparently elucidated by the implicit prohibition in this verse indicating that when there is no intention for killing, there is no murder; however there is a punitive measure for such killing to ensure justice.

Example 20:
We have not instructed the (Prophet) in Poetry, nor is it meet for him: this is no less than a Message and a Qur'an making things clear (Ali, 1971/1951, p.810).
This Quranic verse is a rejoinder to the disbelievers, who slighted the Prophet and his message by branding him a poet when he preached and talked about the Hereafter, Hell and Heaven. This verse explains that the only thing taught to the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him and his family) by Almighty Allah is the message he was to deliver, that is the Quran. Thus, This Quran that he has brought is not poetry, rather, it is a remembrance, an admonition to clarify and manifest God’s (Allah’s) rulings (al-Mahali & al-Sueetti, n.d). Thus, the Prophet was not allowed to become an independent source of guidance, but merely to transmit guidance from Allah to the people. Thus, this verse expresses an implicit speech act of prohibition because the Prophet was only Allah’s messenger and the Glorious Quran represents the words of Allah, the Creator.

2.2.2.2 The Use of the act coupled with Threat of Punishment
(ذكر الفعل مقرورة بوعد)
This is one way of expressing prohibition. It is meant to threaten with penalty those who disobey (al-Zalami, 1991).

Example 21:
Woe to the defaulters Who, when they take the measure (of their dues) from men, take it fully. But when they measure out to others or weight out for them, they are deficient (Ali, 1951, p. 1155).
This verse elucidates that some merchants and retailers in Al- Medinah (where the Prophet Muhammed peace be upon him and his family settled) defrauded customers when selling in measurement (i.e. tricking them). First, Allah revealed وَيْلُ لِلْمُطَفِّفِينَ (woe to the defaulters), however, the word وَيْلُ woe is associated with the threat of punishment (Shuper, 1965). This threat was directed to the defaulters who are defined by the following verses: الأَذِينَ إِذَا أَكَتَلُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ (2) وإذا كَالُوهُمْ أوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يَخْسَرُونَ (3) when they take the measure (of their dues) from men, take it fully. But when they measure out to others or weight out for them, they are deficient. The word they take the measure means that they buy right measure without deficiency and the word they measure out to others which means those who sell food less than the due. Those defaulters tended to be stingy with measurement and weight, either by increasing it if it is due from the others, or decreasing it if it is a debt. However, they fulfil their right to full, and detract right to others; thus, they accumulated between stinginess and miserliness. This Quranic verse indicates that there is an implicit prohibition of making short measure or short weight. It also implies a person or group may seek respect and honour from people, but they are not willing to do the same for the others in similar circumstances.
2.2.2.3 The Negation of the Act

This structure is used in the Glorious Quran to express a strong prohibition ordering abstention and inhibition. Hence, the following Quranic verse may express prohibition implicitly (al-Esfehani, n.d)

\[(2/197) \text{فَمَنْ فَرَضَ ﻓِيهِ ﺍﻟْﺤَﺞَ ﻓَﻻَ ﺭَفَﺚَ وَﻻَ ﻓُﺳُﻮﻕَ وَﻻَ ﺟِﺪَاءَ ﻓَﯿْﻨَهُ}
\]

**Example 22**: So whoever determines the performance of the pilgrimage there in, there shall be then *no foul speech nor abusing nor disputing* in the pilgrimage (Ali, 1951, p.84)

As this verse prohibits the commitment of *foul speech, abusing* (insulting) and *disputing* during pilgrimage, it is recommended that pilgrims should come with provisions. However, this verse contains *(لا التافقة)* not of negation which is used to express prohibition indirectly.

2.2.2.4 It is not +Noun expressing a Good or a Bad Trait+ (i.e. present tense form with subject) *(بَلْ يَأْتُوا ﺍﻟْﺒُﻴُﻮﺕَ ﻣِﻦْ ﻟَﻴْﺲَ ﺍﻟْﺒِﺮﱡ ﻋَنْ ﺍﻟْمتازَ ﻣِﻦْ ﻋُﻬُﻮﺭِﻫَﺎ ﻭَﻟَﻜِﻦﱠ ﺍﻟْﺒِﺮﱡ ﻣَﻦْ ﺍﺗﱠﻘَﻰَو ﺃُﺑْﻮَﺍﺑِﻬَﺎ)*

**Example 23**: and *it is not righteousness that you should enter the houses at their backs, but righteousness is this that one should guard (against evil); and go into the houses by their doors* (Ali,1917-1951, p.86).

This verse prohibits the practice prevalent among the Arabs in the pre-Islamic period to come home from the back after performing the pilgrimage. This act violates the right course of life, while entering the house from the door is legally considered as acceptable and right. This verse expresses an implicit speech act of prohibition using the structural form of the negation of the good of bad acts.

**Example 24**: *It is not the disbelief to drink alcohol, but also to allow drinking it*. (The researchers’ translation)

According to the Islamic approach to health, anything that is mostly harmful is forbidden. Therefore, alcohol is undoubtedly harmful and adversely affects the mind and the body, causing diseases, wasting money, and spoiling the individual's social life. Thus, Muslims would know that alcohol is prohibited in Islam. Thus, Allah indeed dislikes those who would still deny the prohibition of alcohol or allow the others to do such a prohibited act.

2.2.3 Prohibition at the Pragmatic Level

2.2.3.1 Prohibitive Performative verbs

There are a number of performative verbs that are in the form of imperative denoting prohibition; they are as follows: *إِجْتَبَرْ (avoid), كَفَّ (withhold), دَرَكَ (relinquish), and إِنْثِبَتْ (prohibit)*. Al-Shwkani (n.d), al-Maliki (n.d), and al-Maaini (1985) argued that performative sentences containing one of these performative verbs are used as a metaphorical formula expressing prohibition.

2.2.3.1 Prohibition and Illocutionary Forces

It is not always easy to make precise distinctions between the illocutionary acts of certain utterances because these acts depend on the relative authority of the speaker and hearer. Nevertheless, situational contexts are helpful and appear to determine the illocutionary forces of certain utterances. According to some Muslim scholars such as al-Sueeti (n.d), al-Subki (n.d), Syyibwiyah (n.d), al-Sakkaki (1983) and al-Zalami (1991), the researchers found out that the
Illocutionary forces can be (forbidding) 2. (prayer) 4. (request) 5. (encouragement) 6. (expressing consequence) 7. (contempt) 8. (counselling) 9. (reprimanding).

3. Theoretical Framework

The researcher adopted Allan (1986) and Al-Awsei (1988)s’ models of speech act of prohibition in English and Arabic respectively.
Figure 3.1: The Proposed theoretical framework of prohibition speech act in English and Arabic

As shown in the above figure, there are three levels of analysis of the speech act of prohibition in English and Arabic. The first to start with is the syntactic level, then semantic level, and finally the pragmatic level. With each level, there are sub-categories that are slightly different due to different structures in both languages.

4. Methodology

With the aim of providing a contrastive investigation that may serve the purpose of analyzing the speech act of prohibition in English and Arabic, the Holy Bible and the Glorious Quran receive due attention. The verses have been chosen from the Book of Exodus, namely (20) and the sura (Chapter) entitled Al-Baqarah (The Cow) respectively to obtain adequate data of the speech act of prohibition. To achieve this aim, the researchers adopted Allan (1986) and Al-Awsei (1988)’s models of speech act of prohibition in English and Arabic respectively as mentioned in Figure (3.1) as proposed by the researchers which also highlights the procedures of analysis. This means that syntax, semantics and then pragmatics are analysed respectively in both languages, starting with the English text sampled and then followed by the Arabic one to see if there are any dominant patterns in the sampling.

5. Data Analysis

The data will be analysed according to the proposed theoretical framework (see Figure 3.1). The section is divided into English texts analysis and Arabic texts analysis.

5.1 English Texts

Text1: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name (Ex. 20:3-7).

In these verses, Allah talked to Moses giving him the Ten Commandments (Decalogue). The Decalogue is the core of the Mosaic Law; as instruction and deterrent it is valid in the New Law. The first commandment you shall have no other gods before me indicates that Allah to be the only true God, and to worship and glorify Him accordingly. Syntactically, the determiner no is used here to replace not with the modal auxiliary shall to express the emphatic prohibition. The expression before me, at the semantic level, has three possible interpretations in front of me, in addition to me, and over against. The meaning over against, the usual meaning of the phrase, is perfectly appropriate here as it suggests that all false gods are opposed to the true God, i.e. Allah. The worship of them is incompatible with the worship of Allah.

Moreover, these biblical verses prohibit the false swearing including the idea of profane or vain swearing i.e., the irreverent use of the name of Allah. Thus, all oaths are forbidden (Davies, 1971). Thus, these verses deal directly with modes of worship, i.e. the shaping of images to be worshipped and adored; it forbids the making of idols either in heaven above or on earth beneath (Walsh, 1966, p. 51). At the syntactic level, these verses have the structural form of shall not + verb to express an explicit prohibition. Pragmatically, this command intentionally conveys the illocutionary force of warning to express a speech act of prohibition. Hence, this verse involves...
more than simply a prohibition of swearing; it also prohibits the misappropriation of religious language to commit a crime or to blaspheme against places or people that are holy to Allah.

**Text 2:** *Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.* Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns (Ex. 20:8-10).

In this verse *remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy*, the imperative *remember* is used for the commandment for the Sabbath day (Saturday). The imperative here functions in place of the emphatic negative imperative *do not forget* to stress the basic verbal idea of the root-remembering of the Sabbath day to make it distinct from the other week days. This form shows that it was not now first given but was known by the people before. Consequently, the verb *remember* implies a mental process which involves recalling and pondering as well as the consequent actions for such remembering.

**Text 3:** *You shall not murder.* (Ex. 20:13)

**Text 4:** *You shall not commit adultery.* (Ex. 20:14)

**Text 5:** *You shall not steal.* (Ex. 20:15)

**Text 6:** *You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.* (Ex. 20:16-17)

The commandments *you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal and you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor* forbid suicide, murder, committing adultery, stealing and false testimony respectively. The syntactic form of these speech acts of prohibition is the modal auxiliary *shall* with the negative particle *not* resulting in the form of *shall not + bare infinitive.* This verse forbids the taking of life of a fellow man as Allah is the creator and owner of every life, and only He has the authority over it. Consequently, the commandment forbids unnecessary bodily mutilation (Walsh, 1966, p. 63). At the semantic level, the infinitive *murder* refers to the premeditated or accidental taking of the life of another human being; it includes any unauthorized killing (Yoder, 1980, p.394).

Just as human life is sacred and is not to be violated by killing, so is marriage which is considered as sacred and is not to be violated by infidelity. The verse *you shall not commit adultery* prohibits infidelity within the marriage relationship which is considered a very serious offense because Allah instituted marriage and blessed it as a means of proliferation on the earth. Expansion of this idea prohibits “not only the act of adultery, but fornication and impurity of any kind whether in an act, word, or thought” (Davies, 1971, p. 208). Thus, this verse conveys the illocutionary force of forbidding.

Similarly, the law of you shall not steal forbids Israelites from theft and the deliberate desires or plans to steal others’ property. Accurately defined, stealing is the appropriation of something belonging to another against the owner’s wish (Stahl, 2000:3). This law is followed by another command that you shall not bear false witness against your neighbour which has to do with giving testimony in a legal setting. It is directed primarily toward guarding the basic right of the covenant member against the threat of false accusation. The original commandment is, therefore, not a general prohibition of lying, but forbids lying which directly affects one’s fellow (Childs, 1974, p. 424).
The commandment *you shall not covet your neighbour’s house; you shall not covet your neighbour’s wife* governs private thoughts. It is, in fact, supplementary to the eighth commandment, for covetousness is the root from which theft grows. This commandment is a reminder that Allah looks at the heart while man merely looks at the outward appearance. This commandment is a staunch prohibition against taking something from a neighbour and/or thinking of having this neighbour's wife as someone's wife. Semantically speaking, the verb *covet* focuses not only on an external act but also on an internal mental activity behind the act, the intention of doing an act. This prohibition aims at curtailing the greedy desire for trying or thinking to possess something or the wife that belongs to a neighbor, and the repetition of the structure, you shall not, is to underline the prohibition.

**Text 7:** They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, “Speak with us yourself, and we will listen; but don’t let God speak with us, lest we die. Moses said to the people, “Don’t be afraid, for God has come to test you, and that his fear may be before you, that you won’t sin.” (Ex. 20: 19-20)

The verse *speak with us yourself, and we will listen; but don’t let God speak with us, lest we die* represents the people’s reaction towards what Allah has spoken to Moses giving him the Ten Commandments. At the pragmatic level, the context of this verse employs that it has more of the sense of a request than a negative command. The independent personal pronoun “you” emphasizes the subject who is Moses and forms the contrast with Allah’s speech. This illocutionary force of request can be realized in this verse by the negative imperative *do not +let* which reflects a direct device of describing a speech act of prohibition.

### 5.2 Arabic Texts

The sura entitled “Al-Baqarah” (The Cow) is the longest sura in the Glorious Quran. Some of the verses of prohibition that are included in it will be discussed as they exemplify kinds of prohibition and its various implicit and explicit forms.

**Text 1:**

Who made the earth a resting place for you and the heaven a structure, and (Who) sends down rain from the cloud then brings forth with its subsistence for you of the fruits, therefore *do not set up rivals to Allah* while you know (Ali,1917-1951,p.19).

This verse has different interpretations, one of which is that it is related to the command *do not set up rivals to Allah*. This is valid due to the fact that adoration is the act of the highest and humblest reverence and worship. When one gets into that relationship with Allah, Who is the Creator, his/her faith results in righteous deeds and this in turn leads to creating a real human being who benefits a society. Further evidence of Allah's goodness to human beings is given in this verse. Hence, the whole life, physical and spiritual, depends upon Him. Accordingly, this verse conveys the illocutionary force of forbidding and expresses a prohibition by using the explicit form of negative imperative to emphasize the worship of Allah alone because there are no other rivals to Him in worship (Al-Zamkhshari, n.d.).

**Text 2:**
And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits; surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits (190). And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out and persecution is severer than slaughter; and do not fight with them at the sacred Mosque until they fight with you in it, but if they do fight you, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers (191). But if they desist, then surely Allah is Forgiving Merciful (192). And fight with them until there is no persecution and religion should be only for Allah; but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors (193). The sacred month for the sacred mouth and all sacred things are (under the law of) retaliation; whoever then acts aggressively against you, inflict injury on him according to the injury he has inflicted on you and be careful (of your duty) to Allah, and know that Allah is with those who guard (against evil) (194) (Ali, 1951, p.86-90).

Although these five verses have different structures dealing with the subject of fighting an enemy, they express a speech act of prohibition. Verses (190) and (191) prohibit Muslims from fighting except against those who first take up the sword. Here and in the subsequent verses, the subject of fighting is clearly connected with that of pilgrimage. Muslims are forbidden to violate the sacredness of Mecca and make it a territory of fighting. This can be explicitly expressed by the form of negative command do not + bare infinitive. At the pragmatic level, verse (191) conveys the illocutionary force of forbidding. Whereas verses (190) and (191) denote the explicit prohibition, the form of the imperative expressing abstention in verses (192) and (193) expresses implicit speech act of prohibition. In these verses, Muslims are prohibited to fight and they should abide to Godly rules if the enemy desisted from fighting and also if the disbelievers declare their repentance during the fight (Al-Tussei, n.d). Verse (194) is similar to what is said in verse (191). This legal provision declares a permission to fight in the sacred months. If the opponents violated the sacred months by attacking the Muslims first, then the Muslims are permitted to fight against them in these months. Unlike verse (191), this verse is expressed by the declarative sentence which is more expressive than the explicit form of do not do. This verse is used here to fulfill the illocutionary force of threatening by saying sacred month for the sacred month. This entails that fighting is prohibited in these sacred months but it is permissible only to defend religion and uphold its rituals.

Text 3: And spend in the way of Allah and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands (Ali, 1917-1951, p. 90).

Text 4: And accomplish the pilgrimage and the visit for Allah, but if you are prevented, (send) whatever offering is easy to obtain, and do not shave your heads until the offering reaches its destination (Ali, 1917-1951, p.90).

Text 5: The pilgrimage is (performed in) the well-known months; so whoever determines the performance of the pilgrimage therein, there shall be then no foul speech nor abusing nor disputing in the pilgrimage (Ali, 1917-1951, p.91).
Verse (195) commands Muslims to listen to what Almighty Allah forbids. Pragmatically, this verse conveys the illocutionary force of warning; it is a prohibition about something harming Muslims rather than forbidding. However, this verse commands Muslims not to hug their wealth because this will help in their own self destruction. Rather, their wealth should be spent in the Cause of Allah and for the good of their brethren because such good pleases Allah. This speech act of prohibition is explicitly expressed by the form of negative imperative do not + verb i.e. do not put yourself in trouble ﻧَلْقُوا ﻭَﻻ.

Pilgrimage is also a sacred month in which the chief rites are done during the first ten days of the month of Dhu al Hajja. In these sacred days, the male pilgrims put on a simple garment of unsewn cloth in two pieces and female pilgrims wear their garment with a scarf to cover their head hair when they are some distance yet from Makkah. Putting on the pilgrim garb (ihram) is symbolic of renouncing the vanities of life. After this and until the end of the pilgrimage he/she must not wear other clothes, or ornaments, anoint his/her hair, use perfumes, hunt, or do other prohibited acts. The completion of the pilgrimage is symbolized by shaving the head for men, and for women cutting off a few locks of the hair of the head, putting off of the ihram and the resumption of the ordinary garment when they come back home. This legal prohibition has the structure of consisting of a verb preceded by not resulting in do not shave to express a direct speech act of prohibition. Verse (196) prohibits Muslims who are performing the pilgrimage to shave their hair until the offering reaches its destination (al-Qurtubi, 1967).

According to verse (197), the commitment of adultery and indecency during pilgrimage is prohibited. Pilgrimage represents the peak of spiritual progress, and hence the pilgrim is enjoined not to speak words which should be a source of annoyance to anybody. Syntactically, this verse involves (ﻻ ﺍﻟﻨﺎﻓﻴﺔ) not of negation which negates the verbs of the verse and hence the whole verse. In other words, it is an implicit speech act of prohibition using the implicit form of the negation of an act ﻧﻔﻲ ﺍﻟﻔﻌﻞ which is deeper than the explicit form of do not do.

Text 6: O you who believe! spend (benevolently) of the good things that you earn and of what We have brought forth for you out of the earth, and do not aim at what is bad that you may spend (in alms) of it (Ali, 1917-1951: 128).

Text 7: To make them walk in the right not incumbent in you, but Allah guides a right whom He pleases; and whatever good thing you spend; it is not your own good; and you do not spend but to seek Allah’s pleasure; and whatever good thing you spend shall be paid back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged (Ali, 1917-195, p. 129). Charity has a value only if something good and valuable is given which has been honorably earned or gained by the giver. Using the form of an explicit (direct) speech act of prohibition do not aim at, the verse (267) prohibits the Muslims from spending bad things which signify the charity in the cause of Allah. This verse has an especial occasion when Prophet Muhammad prohibits Muslims from spending bad kinds of date in the name of Allah (al-Qurtubi, 1967). In connection with charity, this means that we must alleviate those really in need with valuable things. Meanwhile, the prohibition of spending in verse (272) can be realized by using a declarative sentence, though, the phrase do not spend is paraphrased according to the context as this verse conveys the illocutionary force of consultation.
Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability; for it is (the benefit of) what it has earned, and upon it (the evil of) what it has wrought. Our Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake; our Lord! do not lay on us a burden as Thou didst lay on those before us; our Lord! do not impose upon us that which we have not the strength to bear; and pardon us and grant us protection and have mercy on us, Thou art our Patron, so help us against the unbelieving people (Ali, 1917-1951, p.135-136).

This is the last verse in the chapter of Al-Baqarah which expresses Prayer for Divine help. In this verse, the form of the negative imperative such as do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake; our Lord! do not lay on us a burden as Thou didst lay on those before us; our Lord! do not impose upon us that which we have not the strength to bear; and pardon us and grant us protection and have mercy on us, Thou art our Patron, so help us against the unbelieving people (Ali, 1917-1951,p.135-136).

6. Conclusion

Speech acts confirm the essential roles in which the intention of the requester, his/her utterance, and superficial form and function are interwoven within a context of situation, and all together can be successfully conveyed in any text. Thus, the conclusions will be drawn according to the three levels of analysis such as syntax, semantics and pragmatics respectively. At the syntactic level, the researchers have found that the Arabic texts under analysis reveal that syntactic markers which give the utterances the force of prohibition are more than those in English. To elaborate, the syntactic structure in the verses of Al-Baqarah including the themes of worshipping Allah, pilgrimage and charity have the forms of negative imperative and declarative. Meanwhile, analyzing the Ten Commandments in the Book of Exodus validates that the most typical strategy used to encode speech acts of prohibition is the declarative sentence.

At the semantic level, the researchers found that the implicit forms expressing prohibition are appropriately used in the Arabic verses under analysis, whilst the explicit forms are heavily used in expressing the Ten Commandments. In Arabic, there are five semantic forms can implicitly be used to express prohibition such as would not, ought not to, the use of the act coupled with threat of punishment, negation of the act, and it is not +noun expressing a good or a bad Trait+ المصدر +الأمر +المؤول (i.e. أن +present tense form with subject). This is possibly due to the sophistication of the Arabic language which is further intensified through the language of the Holy Quran. Therefore, the prominent semantic form used to express prohibition in some Quranic verses under analysis is the negation of the act. It is implicitly employed to deepen the act of prohibition. This is clearly shown in the verses of the prohibition of the commitment of adultery and indecency during pilgrimage. Meanwhile, the direct form of the modal shall with not can frequently be used to express prohibition relating to the fundamental rules in the Bible such as the worshipping of God (Allah), committing adultery, murdering, and stealing.
At the pragmatic level, the researchers have also discovered that the Quranic verses are used not only to prohibit someone from doing something forbidden but also to convey different illocutionary forces such as forbidding, warning, consultation, threatening and request which can be understood from their contexts in accordance with the semantic level. Thus, expressing prohibitions in the Bible and the Quran are not identical. This is manifested by the use of explicit and implicit devices in both texts. Therefore, prohibition fulfils the communicative function of a language through an interaction between syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Such a finding may be a contribution to the field of comparative studies with regard to the speech acts of prohibition in the English Bible and Arabic Quran as the researchers have not found yet a similar study in this respect. However, we cannot generalize these results because the data is not sizable enough due to space constraints.

About the Authors:
Sawsan Kareem Al-Saaidi is an instructor of English at the College of Education/ University of Al-Qadisiya, Iraq. Currently, she is a PhD candidate at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) doing research on the discourse of terrorism. Her research interests include contrastive studies, critical discourse analysis, discourse and politics.

Ghayth al-Shaibani is a senior lecturer in the English Language Section at the School of Languages, Literacies and Translation at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). He received his Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics/Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in 2011 from Universiti Sains Malaysia. His research interests include critical discourse analysis and media studies.

Hashim Al-Husseini is an instructor of English at the College of Education/ University of Wasit, Iraq. He published several papers on comparative studies and linguistics. Currently, he is a PhD candidate at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) doing research on the kinship terms in the Glorious Quran and the Holy Bible.

References


*Glorious Quran*


*Holy Bible, World English Bible Version.*


Investigating Saudi EFL Learners’ Vision of Future-self and its Relationship to their Self-regulated Learning Behaviour

Sara M Al-Otaibi
University of Nottingham, England

Abstract
The aim of this paper is twofold. Firstly, based on the assumption that the imagery component of the vision of future-self, particularly the ideal L2 self, has a powerful motivational influence on the learning behavior of learners, the paper aims to investigate the relationship between the learners’ vision of ideal L2 self (V-ideal L2 self) and their self-regulated learning (SRL) behavior. The second purpose was to explore the concepts of vision of future-self and self-regulated learning from the learners own experience in order to present a comprehensive picture of how Saudi EFL learners may envision their future-self and what factors have contributed in constructing their visions. In this study, data were collected by means of questionnaire and interview. Both quantitative and qualitative data indicated that learners’ self-regulated learning behavior are motivated by their V-ideal L2 self which highlights its motivational power in L2 learning. Furthermore, the qualitative data suggested that learners’ visions of future-self are varied due to the contribution of several factors that influence shaping their vision including learners’ self-efficacy, significant others, and learning experiences.

Keywords: Ideal L2 self, motivation, Saudi EFL Learners, self regulated learning (SRL), vision of future self.
**Introduction**

In the field of second language learning and teaching, the concept of self-regulation has attracted research interest recently, particularly in relationship to their motivation. Therefore, several studies have been conducted to identify the role of motivation in promoting learners' self-regulation in different: leaning contexts (Lamb, 2011) cultures (e.g., Arab students by Malcolm, 2011) learning settings (e.g., the independent learning setting of SAC by Murray, 2011) and distance language learning by Murphy, 2011).

Dörnyei’s (2005) framework of ‘L2 Motivational Self System’ has inspired several investigations on learners’ SRL. According to this framework, “if the person would like to speak an L2, the ‘ideal L2 self’ is a powerful motivator to learn the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our actual self and ideal selves” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 105). In other words, learners who envision themselves as L2 users (i.e., image of ideal L2 self) will be strongly motivated to attain this vision in order to reduce the discrepancy between their current and their possible L2 self as compared with other learners who may possess similar goals of L2 proficiency, but are driven by such motivators as obligation to others’ aspirations or merely out of fear of failure (i.e., ought to L2 self) (Lamb, 2009).

Among the studies that have employed this framework to interpret learners’ SRL in the light of the concept of the vision of future-self is Lamb’s (2011) study which investigated the future-self of Indonesian EFL learners and their motivation to learn. Murray (2011) also investigated the role of imagination in learning English in an independent learning context, but with Japanese EFL learners. Moreover, Malcolm (2011) considered the concept among Arab learners. Of these various studies which have been conducted in different learning settings and among different learners’ cultures, the concept of the visions of future-self has been highlighted to be a crucial source that can motivate learners’ learning behaviour and promote autonomy or SRL.

**Aim and Significance of the Study**

As “It is individuals’ motivation that explains their (learners) behavior. Why people decide to do something, how hard they are going to pursue it and how long they are willing to sustain the activity” (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 7), this study was motivated to investigate the visions of future-self as a motivational source for SRL to identify whether learners’ active and persistence to learn the language is related to the learners’ L2 self. In addition, Lamb (2011) noted that motivation, autonomy and identity are key elements of L2 learning and teaching, but there has been little attempt to fully identify the relationships between them because they are seen as different fields and each is considered separately with their own individual ontological approach. In the context of education in Arab gulf region, for example, only a few studies such as Malcolm (2011) have discussed learners’ future-self and SRL. Others have investigated the concept of self-regulation or imagination among Arab EFL learners but from different dimensions, such as the study on the relationship between visual learning style, imagination, ideal language selves and motivated behaviour by Alshehri (2009), and a study on the relationship between Saudi EFL Students’ writing competence in their L1 and L2 and their Self-regulation ability by Alsamadani (2010). Therefore, this paper is an attempt to address this gap by investigating Saudi learners’ vision of future-self and its relationship to their self-regulated learning behavior.

**Literature Review**
In research of individual learner differences, learning strategy has been one of the most investigated areas in an attempt to identify why some learners are more successful than others (Dörnyei, 2006). Findings have shown that in addition to learner aptitude and motivation, learners’ own creative effort in the learning process is important (Dörnyei, 2005), which in turn has attracted researchers to investigate learning strategies. However, because of theoretical issues regarding learning strategies, particularly the definitional problem and ambiguity, this area has been the centre of heated debate. For example, Dörnyei (2005, 2006) argues that the theoretical definitions on learning strategies are “fuzzy” and do not clearly differentiate between “normal learning activities” and “strategies”. Consequently, this has led researchers in the field of educational psychology to shift their focus to the new concept of “Self regulation”.

Self-regulation

Regarding the term of “self regulation”, the continuum of the interest in investigation of “learning strategies”, as highlighted by Dörnyei (2005, p. 191) is from a new dimension which focuses on the ‘process’ (self regulation) instead of the ‘product’ (strategies), was one reason for the emergence of this concept. Accordingly, the main difference between self-regulation and learning strategies is that the “proactive strategic learner is not necessarily the exact nature of strategies, tactics or techniques they (learners) apply, but rather the fact that they do apply them” (Dörnyei 2005, p. 190). Although the concept of self-regulation has attracted the attention of several researchers, it is still vaguely defined. In this regard, Tseng et al (2006), point out that the shift of focus from learning strategies to self-regulation has not provided solutions to the issues over learning strategies. In fact it has merely resulted in the development of a broader perspective to include goal setting, strategic planning, action plans, monitoring, control, self motivational beliefs, evaluation, etc (ibid).

Given the multifaceted interpretations of SRL, it has been defined in more general ways as follows. According to Pintrich (2000, p. 453) self-regulation has been defined as “an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features of the environment”. Schunk (2001, p. 125) adds that Self-regulation refers to “learning that results from students’ self-generated thoughts and behaviors that are systematically oriented toward the attainment of their learning goals”. In addition, Dörnyei (2005), more generally, defines self-regulation as “the degree to which individuals are active participants in their own learning” (p. 191).

From these definitions, it can be agreed that the learners’ proactiveness is a main component of self-regulated learners which is manifested by their creative engagement in setting goals, initiating actions, regulating these actions through controlling their meta-cognition, behavior and motivation with mentoring, and evaluating the outcomes of this engagement.

Who are Self-regulated Learners?

Zimmerman (1994, p. 5) gave an example of self-regulated student: “A Hispanic girl staying after class pleading to practice her word processing ‘just a little longer.” It is suggested that self-regulated students have certain characteristics that can distinguish them from other passive students, and in this vein, Zimmerman (1990) distinguishes self-regulated learners as those who “proactively seek out information when needed and take the necessary steps to master it” (p. 5). Zimmerman (1990) has also indicated that self-regulated learners seek
their goals by applying appropriate strategies, have high self efficacy beliefs towards their
capabilities, and these have an impact on their goal setting and their degree of commitment to
achieve them. In addition, Wolters (2003, p. 189) gave another description of self regulated
learners which highlights the psychological side of self-regulated learners. He points out that
“self-regulated learners are thought to hold a collection of adaptive beliefs and attitudes that
drive their willingness to engage in and persist at academic tasks”
While various different characteristics have been presented of self-regulated learners, one
common conceptualization of self-regulated learners is that they are motivationally, meta-
cognitively and behaviourally active in their learning process (Zimmerman, 1990). From
Motivational perspective, self-regulated learners perceive themselves as self-efficacious and
have positive attitudes towards the target language. From the behavioral side, self regulated
learners select and structure action for learning purposes.

Motivation and SRL
The relationship between self-regulation and motivation has been widely investigated. There is a
general consensus that they are positively correlated. In this view, Zimmerman (1990) contends
that self-regulated learners are “not only self-directed in a meta-cognitive sense but are self-
motivated as well. Their skill and will are integrated components of self-regulated” (p. 6).
Pintrich (2000, p. 467) points out that some cognitive and self-regulatory learning strategies are
more demanding for learners, and thus require a higher level of engagement with their studies
than might usually be expected. Therefore, to invest the extra time and effort required in self
regulated learning, learners must be motivated.

Accordingly, ample research has been conducted to identify what level of motivation
students need to have to be successful self-regulated learners. As highlighted by Zimmerman
(1990) researchers’ view about the motivational dimension of SRL are differ as behavioral
theorists claim that it is the external rewards which motivate self-regulation, whereas
phenomenologists claim that individuals’ positive sense of self-confidence and self image are the
primary motivates. Other such as Zimmerman (2002) suggests that achievements, goal
attainment and self-efficacy are powerful motivators.

The L2 Selves and SRL
As noted by Dörnyei (2005, 2009b), based on the theoretical literature of Markus and
empirical findings of the longitudinal study by Dörnyei (2009b) on Hungarian teenagers’
language learning attitudes and motivation, the model of ‘L2 Motivational Self System’ was
drawn. According to this model, there are three motivational sources for language learning (see
below) which, particularly the first two sources, result from the powerful impact of imagery on
learners’ motivation.

- Ideal L2 self, which is the L2- specific facet of one’s ‘ideal self’: if the person we would
  like to become speaks an L2, ‘the ideal L2 self’ is a powerful motivator to learn the L2
  because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves.
- Ought-to L2 self, which concerns the attributes that one believes one ought to posses to
  meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes.
L2 Learning Experience, which concerns situated, ‘executive’ motives related to the
immediate learning environment and experience.
Dörnyei (2009b, p. 29)
An important point that needs to be highlighted is the fact that the ideal L2 self can be instrumentality motivated. Dörnyei (2009b, p. 28) points out that ideal L2 self component in his model can reinterpret the integrative motive as “it is difficult to imagine that we can have a vivid and attractive ideal L2 self if the L2 is spoken by a community that we despise”. Yet drawing on Higgins’ (1987) distinction between the ‘promotion’ focus of the ideal self and ‘prevention’ focus of ought self, Dörnyei (2009b, p. 28) points out that instrumental motivation can be involved in the ideal self when “our idealized image is associated with being professionally successful” (e.g. to learn English for the of professorial/career advancement). It has instrumental motives with a promotion focus whereas when an individual want to learn English so he does not fail or disappoint his parents, it reflects his ought-to L2 self which has instrumental motives with prevention focus.

The Vision of Future-self and SRL
Here, we might start questioning how these possible selves can lead to self-regulation. Dörnyei (2009b) noted that one main advantage of the concept of possible selves is the imagery component, particularly of the ideal L2 self, which can be a motivational tool through creating and enhancing language learners’ vision. In this vein, Dörnyei (2005, p. 102) points out that:

Our idealized L2-speaking self can be seen as a member of an imagined L2 community whose mental construction is partly based on our real-life experiences of members of the community/communities speaking the particular L2 in question and partly on our imagination.

Therefore as Higgins (1987) claims that the discrepancy between ones’ current self and the ideal or ought selves can create discomfort which in turn can serve as a motivator for the individual behaviour to reduce this feeling. Markus and Nurius (1986) also contend that possible selves are important as they can act as a tool of motivation: “they function as incentives for future behaviour” (p.954). Accordingly, when an EFL learner envisions himself as a person who can speak the language fluently, for example, this vision which reflects a desired possible self that is different to the learners’ current self can influence the L2 learning process positively by shaping learners’ behaviour to become this desired future self.

This new concept of investigating learners’ motivation has attracted a number of researchers. For example, a study by Murray (2011) was conducted to explore the role of imagination in learning English among a group of Japanese EFL learners in their first year of university who were enrolled on a self directed learning course (independent learning setting) which mixed self-access language learning and classroom-based instruction. Students were required to take responsibility for determining their goals, choose the materials, decide the way of using the materials, and monitor and assess their progress which means that there were no teacher-based language lessons except short lessons at the beginning of the course on learning strategies. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were employed in this study of 296 students of whom 27 were interviewed. Findings showed that the learning context has contributed to the development of the learners’ future vision and enabled them to identify goals and actions needed in order to fulfill their future self. He also noted that a number of participants indicated that they envisioned themselves as international individuals which corresponds with Yoshima’s (2009) findings of ‘international posture’ in her study of how students in a FL setting such as Japan relate to the community of the target language. Yoshima
et al. (2004, p. 125) describe the “international posture” as “the interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partner…”

Another study, which investigates learners’ vision and autonomy but in a traditional classroom context, was the longitudinal study by Lamb (2011). He investigated the presence of ‘future-oriented components of the self’ among Indonesian adolescents learners motivation to learn English. Twelve junior high school Indonesian students, who were selected based on the results of a previous study, were interviewed over two years. Using learning resources outside school such as online chatting and private English courses were presented as evidence of learners’ autonomy. Results of the qualitative data showed that motivated learners have a high level of motivation to learn English, clear future vision of their selves and autonomous learning whereas the unmotivated learner showed less clear and vague vision and absence in autonomous learning. For the latter group of learners, the vagueness of their future vision was demonstrated through their frequent use of headings during describing their vision. He also noted that some learners were still motivated by a sense of obligating (i.e. to avoid failure) than by a real clear vision of future speaking self. Accordingly, Lamb agreed that ought to-L2 self as a source of motivation has a weaker motivational power and no link to autonomy compared to the ideal self. Therefore, He concluded that that there is a link between a clear future-self, the L2 identity of the learners and their motivation to learn and their level of autonomy.

Furthermore, studies highlighting the concept of learners’ future-self and self-regulation, particularly Arabic EFL learners, are still rare. One of the few is Malcolm’s (2011) small scale explanatory study on how the experience of failure can be a source of motivation to learner autonomy. A semi-structured interview was conducted with four Arabic students studying medicine. All of them were Arabic speaker from the Arab gulf countries including Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Also, they all experienced failure in the beginning of their study year which was attributed to deficiency in English ability, as the medium of instruction and learning materials and textbooks all in English for medical students. Findings showed that learners have taken actions to overcome failure and to reach their ‘desired future identity’. They manifested a degree of autonomy which was demonstrated by their own efforts to learn English such as reading stories, study grammar book and enrolled in English courses abroad. He noted that their vision of future self as competent doctors where English is an essential element for them has motivated them to become autonomous language learners. He added that learners’ motivation to learn English changed from studying merely to pass (extrinsic) to studying whilst recognising its value and contribution towards their success (identified regulation). From the results, Malcolm also noted that that the educational and cultural contexts as well as learners’ self-efficacy were influential factors in developing learners’ identity from unsuccessful to autonomous learners and competent user of English.

**Research Paper Questions and Hypothesis**

From the discussed literature above, it is clear that the way in which learners envision themselves in the future is connected with their motivation to engage in the learning process. Lamb (2011), for example, maintains that “the self-identity we wish for in the future can be a source of motivation to engage in self-regulated, or autonomous, learning, which will help us
achieve that identity” (p. 177). Therefore, this paper aims to; firstly, investigate the relationship of the ideal L2 self image to students’ self-regulated behaviour in order to identify whether learners’ SRL behaviour are motivated by their ideal L2 self image.

In addition, as clarified earlier, the investigation of the two concepts of learners’ vision of future-self and SRL have been conducted in relationship to the learning context and the learners’ cultural-context; therefore, the visions of future-self of Saudi students majoring in English, are worthy of exploration in order to gain insight from the learners’ real life experience. To achieve this aim, this paper will address the questions:

- Is learners’ self-regulated learning behaviour related to the motivation of their vision of ideal L2 self?
- What kind of vision of future-self do Saudi EFL learners have?
- What are the factors that have influenced its development?

**Methodology**

**Participants**

A purposeful sample of eight undergraduate students majoring in English from different academic years were chosen to take part in an interview based on their response to the questionnaire.

Initially, 39 Saudi female EFL students filled out the questionnaire but as 6 indicted their unwillingness to take part in a later interview these were excluded from the sample leaving only 33 participants. Then, the quantitative data collected from the remaining 33 participants were used to select the interviewees. Eight participants who reported different levels of motivation and SRL were selected for a subsequent interview so the vision of future-self could be investigated from a richer and more interesting dimension.

**Instruments**

Data were collected by means of questionnaire and interview. Several researchers who investigated learners’ motivation and SRL employed mixed methods so they could select suitable learners for the pursuant interview (e.g., Gillies, 2010) or based on the responses, can develop further questions for the investigation. In this study the use of mixed methods was employed for, firstly, validating some of the quantitative findings and to help in selecting the interviewees based on their responses to the previous questionnaire.

**Questionnaire**

To collect quantitative data of the learners’ motivation intensity, SRL and their V-ideal L2 self, a questionnaire was developed. In the questionnaire, three multi-item scales that were measured by a five-point likert scale were included. The three multi-item scales were as follows:

- Learners’ motivation intensity: includes (5) items.
- Learners’ self-regulated learning: includes (6) items.
- Learners’ vision of ideal L2 self: includes (6) items.

**Interview**

The qualitative data of learners’ visions of future-self were obtained by means of a semi-structured interview. By adopting a semi-structured interview, the interviewer can have a guide for the questions to ask and at the same time the interviewees are allowed and encouraged to
elaborate on certain topics (Dörnyei, 2005). Therefore, an interview guide was developed to include warm up questions, main questions that are related to the research aim of investigations.

Results and Discussion

1. The Relationship between Learners’ Visions of Ideal L2 self and their Self-regulated Learning

As discussed earlier, according to ‘L2 Motivational Self System,’ the power of imagination of future-self which creates discrepancy between a person’s current self and an ideal L2 self can be a great motivational tool in L2 learning process. Specifically, it is claimed that the motivational power of the image of ideal L2 self is greater than the ought to L2 self as the motive of the latter is derived from other people and not from the one own self, thus it less likely to promote autonomous learning. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that learners with a V- ideal L2 self would be motivated to self-regulate their learning in order to achieve this vision.

The quantitative data obtained from the Pearsons’ correlation analysis supports that learners’ self-regulated learning behaviour is related to the motivation of their V-ideal L2 self as a significant positive correlation between learners V-ideal L2 self and self-regulated learning \( r = .403^*, P<.05 \) was obtained. This is in turn supports that the ideal L2 self, in particular, is a powerful motivational source on learners’ learning behaviour; “if the person we would like to become speaks an L2, the Ideal L2 Self is a powerful motivator to learn the L2” (Dörnyei, 2005: 106).

The qualitative data obtained from the interview, when learners were asked about the relationship between their vision of future-self and their effort of SRL, most of learners who have a V- ideal L2 self demonstrated that the effort they make to learn L2 is in order to achieve their visions. P3 and p4, for example, indicated that their visions of ideal L2 self has played a primarily role for motivating them to become self-regulated learners.

P3: Honestly, very much because people without goals cannot do anything. But because I have it (vision of becoming influential figure working at the UNICEF) in my mind I have to learn more to reach it.

P4: Definitely becoming a successful language teacher is my dream. And I knew that improving my language and especially my speaking skill is very important and this (self-regulated learning) is the only way to achieve it.

One possible reason that may explain why learners with a future vision of their ideal L2 self are self regulated learners is the fact the motivational power of ideal L2 self stems from the learner’s own aspiration and desire to learn the language which in turn makes investing the time and effort to learn L2 more worthwhile and convincing whereas another motivational source such as the ought to L2 self, as noted by Dörnyei (2009a), is drawn from other external factors such as obligations and duties that are imposed by authoritative figures (e.g., parents and friends) which makes it a less interesting task.

This also can be more clearly interpreted according to the degree of internalization. As all learners, even those with a V-ideal L2 self (i.e. promotion-focused), demonstrated that their SRL
is embraced in order to achieve their visions, which are either based on career objectives or wanting to become excellent students, and not because they genuinely enjoy spending more time learning the language, their self-determined behaviour is instrumentality-motivated. Yet, according to the self-determination theory, it seems that when the learner’s actions are motivated by their V-ideal L2 self, the importance and personal value of SRL are more likely to be acknowledged ‘identified regulation’, since the motive is related to the individual’s own aspiration, than when the actions are motivated by the learners’ ought to L2 self (i.e. out of obligation to be similar to other people and thus improve their pride e.g. p7 & p.8) ‘interjected regulation’. Accordingly, when the extrinsic motive is internalised and the value of the actions are realized, this can positively influence the learners’ motivation to SRL. Therefore, learners’ self-regulated learning behaviour is related to the motivation resulted from their V-ideal L2 self which in turn supports that the ideal L2 self plays an important role in motivating L2 learning, and accordingly learners’ SRL. Learners who envision their future selves as L2 users and realized the importance of English for their personal or professional success are greatly motivated to invest their time to learn the language.

2. Learners’ V-Ideal L2 and Ought-to L2 selves
In Murray’s (2011) study, learners’ visions were noted to represent examples of an ideal L2 self-image with an L2 community focus (e.g., learners who have a vision of their future English-speaking self; becoming international individuals) as well as other examples of visions that reflect the learners’ ought-to L2 selves (career-oriented focus). Similarly, in the semi-structured interview when learners were asked about the person they would like to become, their answers (in table 1 below) manifested various visions of future selves reflecting ideal L2 self and ought to L2 self.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners’ Visions of Future-self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1 “I did use to think that someday I’ll be out there autographing the books that I wrote. Visiting bookstores and, during the launch of the book and, talking to other young novelists to encourage them”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 “ I imagined, I wanted to be an ambassador working in the embassy as a big figure in the society”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 “A beautiful image. I have an image that I will do something in the future, most importantly, my name to be known in any fields, to work at the UNCF, the united nation, because I like to help and I want to make change in the world I see” “my image is to be an influential person in the world and if I couldn’t influence people, at least help them”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 “the idea of teaching used to come to my mind so I imagined myself teaching beginners and not advanced learners at the university”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 “I used to dream of becoming an English language teacher. Though I used to dream of becoming a lecturer at the university, but I always thought it is difficult. So that made me see myself as a teacher and not a lecture”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6 “ I envisioned myself as a teacher at any school teaching either secondary or high school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on their answers, learners possess different visions of their future-self from an image that reflects the ideal L2 self (promotion focus) to others that reflect ought-to L2 self (prevention focus). Interestingly, most of the learners’ visions (n=6) reflect future career objectives which generally can be attributed to the fact that in a country like Saudi Arabia where English is not widely spoken by the majority, people who speak English are perceived to be privileged and always considered as special, clever people, therefore, EFL learners are aware of the importance of English on their professional level.

Starting with the V-ideal L2 self, it was mentioned earlier that the ideal L2 self can be instrumentality motivated when learning the target language is associated with success or advancement in profession or career, for example. Accordingly, the Learners’ image of future-self as a novelist, an ambassador, an influential figure working at UNICEF, and as an English language teacher reflects an ideal L2 self with a promotion focus as they want to learn and improve their language level to be successful in their future career. Yet, p2’s and p3’s visions seem to slightly differ as they represent a desire for working in a foreign country and interacting and dealing with L2 speakers along with promotion focus. Therefore, these visions, which combine learners ideal L2 self (promotion focus) with a degree on willingness to integrate with L2, reflect the concept of ‘international posture’ proposed by Yoshima (2009). His view is that EFL learners with a high level of international posture may envision themselves as an individual communicating in English, “pursuing an international career, working in a foreign country”. In addition, among of the eight learners, three (p4, p5, p6) had a similar image of future-self as English language teacher. This actually seems to represent the common visions that would be imagined by several female Saudi learners as it is a generally more plausible and favoured future career especially for woman in Saudi Arabia.

The other examples of learners’ vision such as to graduate at the top of their class and to be a fluent speaker present images of future-self that reflect the learners’ ought-to L2 selves (prevention focus). A sense of obligation is noted in these images as they seem to be not resulted from their own wish to improve their language ability level but to be similar to people around them (e.g. P7) or to meet others’ expectations (e.g., p8). For example, P7 and P8 who imagined gaining high grades and able to speak the language fluently, indicated that they want to be similar to her cousins, please their family, and meet the expectations of people around them (see the quote below)

P7: Even my family will be happy with me when I have a better GPA than my cousins because all of them graduated with a GPA higher than 4 so I wish to become like them and even better.
P8: Because people look at me as a student majoring in English language so I should be fluent to meet their expectations.

Accordingly, these different types of visions can represent three examples of how female Saudi EFL learners may envision their future selves. A challenging vision (e.g., P1, P2 & P3) that combines a promotion focus with a degree of interest in the L2 community, hence, English seems to be perceived as the path for such different and unique goals where Saudi Arabian speakers of English are always privileged. The other example represents a common future-self of Saudi female EFL learners as three learners revealed similar images of becoming a teacher; and this career is perceived as being the best for women as well as more available. Finally, there is another image of future-self which can usually be possessed by learners who are externally motivated to learn the language in order to satisfy certain demands or obligations created by others around them. Clearly, several factors should have contributed to the development of learners’ visions of future-self which will be discussed next.

3. Factors Influencing Learners’ Visions of Future-self Development

The various visions of future selves presented earlier, reflecting ideal L2 self and ought to L2 self, introduce us to some examples of what Saudi EFL learners’ may envision their future-self and most importantly, raises an important question about the possible factors that had influenced the development of their visions. Throughout the interview learners highlight a number of factors including self-efficacy, significant others and learning experience which are discussed below.

Learners’ self-efficacy

In Malcolm’s (2011) study, learner’s positive self-efficacy was found to have contributed in the transformation of their identity from unsuccessful to successful learners as a result of the example of people around them who succeeded to learn the language after initially failing, as well as the support from their family members that helped them to regain their confidence. In line with this, results in this study have shown that self-efficacy influences the development of learners’ visions of their future selves.

The best example of the influence of self-efficacy on learners’ visions is the contradiction between how some learners, particularly P4 and P5, who because of their lack of confidence, they envision their future selves as what they might become (more plausible and suitable image) instead of what they would actually like to become (to teach a certain level of learners and at certain places). For example, P4’s low self-efficacy made her to envision herself as a teacher though she would like to become a lecturer. This is illustrated in the following construct as P4 illustrates that her lack of confidence in her ability to deliver the lessons and about her general proficiency level made her to see herself as a teacher and not a lecturer:

I know the subjects but am not sure if I will be able to deliver them correctly and clearly or not. This has always been the thing that I keep thinking about.

According to Bandura (1994), social modelling is one source of self-efficacy which can help to create and strengthen people’s sense of capabilities. Therefore, individuals who are surrounded by successful people who are similar to themselves can help to raise their confidence in their capabilities and increase their efforts, whereas models perceived to be different do not
influence their beliefs and efforts (ibid). P5 in this study shows an example of this as she described having models (lecturers) with different levels of knowledge and proficiency, which has lowered her confidence.

Yes possibly my level is not perfect and not bad at the same time. But there are lots of difficulties in the learning process. And when I see them (lecturers) I say NO because there are other students better than me.

One the other hand, learners with a strong sense of self-efficacy have considerable confidence in their ability, which in turn can facilitate envisioning the person that they would like to become. To illustrate, one learner who envisioned herself as an influential person working at UNICEF indicated that she is quite positive and confident about her ability to achieve her vision and added that only external factors can hinder her from achieving that. When she, for example, was asked about the possibility of achieving her vision, P3 indicated:

Yes I think it is possible. For me, if there are no obstacles, illness for example. I also take into consideration other circumstances like getting married, and so if I don’t face such obstacles I will achieve it (her vision).

**Learning experience**

As discussed earlier, the L2 learning experience is a component of Dörnyei’s (2005, 2009b) L2 motivational self system. With regard to the learning experience and the development of a learner’s vision of his/her future self and autonomy, Kim (2009) argues that although an L2 learner may create an ideal or ought-to L2 self in the early stages of learning, that self image can easily change without later appropriate L2 learning experiences. In this study learners highlighted that teachers and friends have influenced the development of their future selves. For example, the experience of P2 and P3 with their teachers has provided them with support and encouragement to perceive their visions as achievable. For example, P2 attended a session at the university held by a psychologist (a teacher from the psychology department) and this promoted her vision as she indicated:

When she (the psychologist) came and read it (her vision) I was really proud. She is a successful person and she sees my dream and said yes why not? Since that time I believed in that idea more.

Likewise P3 said:

My teacher at high school, her name was x. She used to say x (P3) is American so that made the idea easy and possible for me.

In addition, the unsatisfied learning experience has led two of the learners to envision what kind of teacher they want to become in order to be different and better than the teachers who taught them. The first one envisioned herself teaching English grammar and using different materials and a lot of exercises and the second one developed her vision with a condition to be fluent, the reasons for that were clarified as follows:

P5: Sometimes I don’t like how teacher gives the lessons so if I were in her position, I would explain certain grammatical rules differently, and I will follow them with practice and explain why this is like this whereas the other is like this. I would give more than one examples.
P6: But I always associate this image with having a very high level of proficiency at speaking, to be the best skill I have.

**Significant others**

In Malcolm’s (2011) study, significant others, including the learners’ family members and friends have contributed to changing learners’ identities from unsuccessful to successful learners. In Lamb’s (2011) study, the role of significant others was also highlighted as it was noted that parental encouragement and the available examples of successful models of Indonesian EFL learners were instrumental for learners to create their future selves with confidence. In this study, throughout the interview, some learners kept raising the role of significant others in the development of their vision, both in constructive and deconstructive ways. For example, it was noted that a certain vision was developed as a result of the support or pressure created from people around them. One learner indicated that she was able to develop her vision due to the encouragement of her father:

P3: And what has supported it (her vision) is my father who keeps saying yes you can do it. It is easy just finish your study.

Accordingly, learners’ different types of visions indicates that different factors such as self-efficacy, learning experience and significant others can contribute and influence constructing learners’ images of future-self. Learners’ self-efficacy seems to be the tool to define the boundaries of their future self images, as those with strong self-efficacy manifested more challenging and diverse images than those with a weak sense of self-efficacy. In addition, learning experiences including teachers and significant others seem to be significant sources for encouragement or hindrance to the development of learners’ visions. Therefore, a learner’s vision is not only the individual aspiration of what that person would like to become, but it is the result of a dynamic process that can be influenced by different factors. Internal factors such as perceived self-efficacy as well as other external factors such as significant others and the learning experience, overlap to determine images for learners to possess.

**Conclusion**

This study focused on, firstly, identifying the relationship between learners’ V-ideal L2 self and SRL under the assumption that the image of ideal L2 self has a powerful motivational influence on learners’ behaviour to become self-regulated learners. Findings of the quantitative data supported this assumption as a significant correlation between learners V-ideal L2 self and SRL was obtained. This was also validated by the qualitative data as most of the learners with V-ideal L2 self indicated that their desire to achieve these visions motivated them to become self-regulated learners which in turn highlights its major contributor and motivator role in learners’ SRL.

The second focus was to deeply investigate both concepts of learner’s vision of future self and SRL among Saudi female students majoring in English, the qualitative data showed that that learners’ visions are varied, and include images of an ideal L2 self that reflects a promotion focus with a degree of willingness to integrate with the L2 community, images of an ideal L2 self that reflect only promotion focus and lastly, images of a future self that reflect the ought-to L2
self. Interestingly, it was noted that some of the females seem to consider English language to be the path towards their ambitious and unique future self (e.g., a novelist, an ambassador, an influential figure working at UNICEF) while other female learners shaped their visions more realistically in that they envisioned a more plausible and common self with regard to their culture (e.g., a language teacher).

A deeper analysis of the reasons behind the different visions revealed that there are a number of factors including learners’ self-efficacy, significant others, and learning experiences that have influenced the development of learners’ images of their future selves. Accordingly, it was indicated that a learner’s vision of his/her future self does not only represent the learner’s aspiration of what he/she would like to become, but it is also the result of a dynamic process where a number of factors overlap together and can accordingly determine and shape an individual’s vision.

Implications

As the findings revealed that the learners’ SRL behaviour is related to the motivation of their vision of ideal L2 self, which in turn highlights its major contributor and motivator role in learners’ self-regulation. This study, therefore, highlights the importance of promoting learners’ vision and particularly the ideal L2 self and suggests this would have a powerful motivational influence on EFL learners’ motivation to become self-regulated learners. In this vein, Dörnyei (2009b, p. 32) points out that the L2 motivational self system offers “new avenues for motivating language learners” which suggests that “an effective way of motivating learners is to create in them an attractive vision of their ideal language self” (Dörnyei, 2009b, p. 19). How can we then promote learners vision of ideal self?
The answer has been proposed by Dörnyei’s (2009b) motivational program which consists of six practical implications as motivational teaching methods and strategies for a language classroom as follows:

- Constructing of the ideal L2 self: Creating the vision.
- Imagery enhancement: Strengthening the vision.
- Making the ideal L2 self plausible: Substantiating the vision.
- Activating the ideal L2 self: Keeping the vision alive.
- Developing an action plan: Operationalising the vision.
- Considering failure: Counterbalancing the vision.

About the Author:

Sara Mhezal Al-Otaibi holds a master's degree in Applied Linguistics from the University of Nottingham, England. Currently she works at the English Language Institute of King Abdul-Aziz University. Her research interests include language learning motivation, self-regulation and learner autonomy in foreign and second language contexts.
References


The PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS Metaphor in the Financial Times

Maria Nader
School of Languages, University of Salford, United Kingdoms

Abstract
This paper is dedicated to show how metaphors are employed to conceptualise economy in terms of physical health and/or illness in economic newspaper articles collected from the Financial Times. The way conceptual and linguistic metaphors are mapped from the source domain of PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS onto the target domain of economy is discussed. One major question this paper is trying to answer is: How are the conceptual and linguistic metaphors used in the economic discourse, and what connotation they imply to portray the economic scene in general and to highlight certain economic events or phenomena such as ‘inflation’ or ‘deflation’ in particular? For this purpose, the conceptual theory of metaphor (CTM) will be applied. In addition, a rationalization of the meaning of specific examples and of the function of metaphor in those examples is involved in the examination process. This paper is based on an extended study that identified twenty three conceptual source domains in a number of economic newspaper articles compiled from the Financial Times, mainly the columns ‘opinion’ and ‘comment’ between the years 2007 and early 2011.

Keywords: Health/Illness Metaphor, Economic Discourse, Conceptual theory of metaphor (CTM), Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP)
1. Introduction

Metaphor is traditionally defined as a figure of speech in which one subject-matter in a certain field is used to denote another in a different field. For instance, *that idea died on the vine* is a metaphorical expression that likens a newly born idea to a dead fruit that is no longer edible. The reference in this metaphor is to the idea being inapplicable or unsuccessful. Metaphors involve an action of implicit comparison without the explicit use of words of comparison (*like*, *as* or *such as*). In other words, the resemblance is lucid in a sentence such as *He is like a pig* where ‘pig’ is a simile, but it is implied in *He is a pig* in which case ‘pig’ is considered a metaphor. In literature, metaphor is observed as a main feature of poetry because it enriches poems with untraditional literary images. Moreover, metaphors are significantly used in science and provide new explanatory mechanisms. In his article, Wu (2003, p. 74) defines metaphor as a figure of speech which brings a notion or an impression into mind in a non-literal way. So, a metaphorical expression is used to communicate the tenor of the metaphor through bringing an idea or an image to mind. As a matter of fact, “metaphor is everywhere in the language we use and there is no escape from it” (Goatly, 1997, p. 2). In the same context, Newmark (2001, p. 125) claims that metaphor is the concrete expression of the ability to see resemblance or differences as well as a sign of ‘innovation’.

In their seminal work, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) differentiate between the traditional and contemporary views of metaphor. In brief, they consider metaphor as part of our daily life and that human conceptual system is mostly metaphorical. They are against the old view of metaphors being just a matter of extraordinary language. The significant role metaphor plays in both linguistic communication and other forms of human/cultural interaction, including translation, has been recognised by theorists from different disciplinary backgrounds and with different research agenda. Johnson (1981: ix) states that “We are in the midst of a metaphormania” as the subsidiary role of metaphor has changed and become a vital problem. Only three decades ago the situation was just the opposite: poets created metaphors, everybody used them, and philosophers (linguists, psycholinguists, etc.) ignored them; but today all acknowledge the pervasiveness of metaphor in everyday language activities (Johnson, 1981, p. ix cited in Yu, 1998, p. 2).

In short, metaphor is considered one of the most essential tools to help audience comprehend (partially) what cannot be comprehended (totally) such as “feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral pictures, and spiritual awareness” (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). Kövecses (2002, p. 3-4) raised the question of why English speakers make extensive use of the concept of journey to reflect on the highly abstract and elusive concept of life. Drawing on cognitive linguistics, his interpretation of this phenomenon is that the concrete concept of journey facilitates the abstract concept of life. The same idea was discussed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who distinguish between the literal and the metaphorical use of language stating that: “we understand experience metaphorically when we use a gestalt from one domain of experience to structure experience in another domain” (p. 230). In addition, Cooper (1986, p. 140) declares that metaphorical talk creates a sense of ease or ‘intimacy’ between speakers, and between them and their work as well. More importantly, metaphor plays the role of a mediator in our understanding of things. In other words, conceptualising an abstract concept into a concrete one through the use of metaphor helps to communicate what is hard to explain (Knowles & Moon, 2006, p. 5). For example, George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* is an allegory of the socialist Russian revolution and its moral deterioration into the communist dictatorship under Stalin. In this novel, the political and social processes characterizing the entire Soviet nation are metaphorized by reference to animals in a
small farm in England. Each animal is characterised by a certain attribute such as idealism, greediness, ferocity, or gullibility. So, by the different interactions between characters, Orwell was able to develop a good understanding of the complicated issue associated with communism (Ashkenazi, 2006, p. 5). Besides, the implicitness of metaphors can be more effective and more interesting to audience than explicit literal expressions.

The main questions this paper is trying to answer are: How the conceptual and linguistic metaphors related to the physical health and illness of human beings are used in the economic discourse particularly in economic newspaper articles published in the *Financial Times*, and what are the connotations they imply to portray the economic scene? Do such metaphors work as a helpful device to facilitate comprehension of economy or pose a linguistic problem? In order to answer these questions, the conceptual theory of metaphor has been adopted as the theoretical framework.

2. The Conceptual Theory of Metaphor (CTM)

Classical metaphor theorists consider metaphor as a mere figure of speech which is only useful for rhetorical purposes. In contrast, contemporary metaphor theorists like Black (1962); Schon (1979); Lakoff and Johnson (1980); Johnson (1981); Lakoff (1987, 1993) and Kittay (1987) agree on the idea that, in essence, all language is metaphoric and all discourse is tailored with metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Schon (1979); Lakoff and Johnson (1980); Lakoff and Turner (1989) and MacCormac (1985) have investigated the influence of metaphor on people’s everyday thinking and came to the conclusion that it is pervasive in everyday language and consequently inescapable.

The central argument of the cognitive approach is that metaphors are not just decorative elements of language but rather vital resources for thought processes in human society. The cognitive approach to metaphor was first discussed in Lakoff and Johnson’s *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). It was later developed by other scholars such as Turner (1987), Gibbs (1994), Charteris-Black (2003, 2004), Kövecses (2002) and Deignan (2005). Moreover, the CTM refutes all the precedent theories that considered metaphor as a literary and rhetoric use of language by approaching metaphor as a process of thought more than language.

Conceptual metaphor is normally defined as a general principle that is neither part of the grammar of English, nor the English lexicon. It is part of the human conceptual system which comprehends the domain of love, for instance, in terms of a journey as suggested by Lakoff & Johnson (1980). Goatly (2007) argues that:

One of the most important insights of conceptual metaphor theory is that these concrete sources for abstract targets do not occur randomly but fall into patterns which we might call Conceptual Metaphor Themes, or Conceptual Metaphors for short. These are conventionally referred to by the capitalised formula X is Y (p.15)

For example, the conceptual metaphor theme LOVE IS A JOURNEY entails such set of lexical items as ‘way’, ‘far’, ‘turn back’ and ‘track’. LOVE IS A JOURNEY conceptualises love in terms of a journey in that lovers are travellers attempting to reach a certain destination that is their love life and goals. In this journey, several hindrances may encounter them so they have to take a decision of either stay together or separate from each other. Accordingly, LOVE IS A JOURNEY is the conceptual metaphor that generates linguistic metaphors in sentences such as: “Look how far we’ve come”; “We’ll just have to go our separate ways”; “We can't turn back now”; “This relationship isn’t going anywhere”; “We’ve gotten off the track” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 45). It is argued that the foremost purpose of a conceptual metaphor is to understand one
conceptual domain in terms of another. For example, ECONOMY IS NATURE is a conceptual metaphor where economy is the abstract target domain that is made comprehensible via the source domain of nature that is more physical and approachable. In other words, the metaphorical expressions or linguistic metaphors used to express such conceptual metaphor are the means by which we understand the mapping between the source domain of nature and the target domain of economy. Some of these expressions are ‘landscape’, ‘mountain’ and ‘plateau’. These linguistic expressions “help understand what concepts are implied” (Yasynetska, 2005, p. 50).

Charteris-Black and Ennis (2001) compare conceptual metaphors and linguistic metaphors in a corpus of English-Spanish financial reporting published in newspapers during the stock market crash in October 1997. In this study, Charteris-Black and Ennis distinguish between linguistic metaphors such as ‘storm’ and ‘hurricane’ and their main conceptual category BAD MARKET CONDITIONS ARE BAD WEATHER. In another work, Charteris-Black (2003) compares metaphors in two political corpora: the inaugural speeches of American presidents and party political manifestos of two British political parties during 1973-1997. Here, the researcher categorises metaphors according to their source domains creating conceptual subgroups like ‘conflict’, ‘journey’, ‘building’, etc. and then he relates the conceptual subgroups into appropriate conceptual metaphors. The deficiency of this study is that the conceptual metaphors SOCIAL PURIFICATION IS HEAT and SOCIAL CONDITION IS A WEATHER CONDITION are only found in the American corpus. Commenting on this, Yasynetska (2005, p. 32) argues that all conceptual metaphors in the two studies mentioned above were ‘identified intuitively’ and that the second study by Charteris-Black (2003) “does not explain what types and tokens exactly stand for the identified concepts” (Yasynetska, 2005, p. 32). Besides, Yasynetska criticizes both studies as not showing “how metaphors are preferably expressed—whether there is any difference in the frequency of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, or set-expressions” (ibid). In her own study, Yasynetska (2005) makes use of the theory of conceptual systems and prospects for comparative analysis of concepts across languages within the conceptual framework. She also argues that failing to observe “specific features of expressions within conceptual mapping can result in an assumption that any expressions of any discourse of any language are identical as long as they can be mapped onto the same concept” (Yasynetska, 2005, p. 33).

According to the advocates of the conceptual theory of metaphor, it is thought and not language that is the main concern of this theory where metaphor is regarded as an important phenomenon lying behind the surface manifestation of language. Moreover, supporters of this theory believe that few or even no abstract notions can be expressed without metaphor in the sense that there is no direct way of comprehending them unless they are interpreted in terms of concrete notions. For example, the conceptual metaphor A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff, 1993) is perceived linguistically through sentences like: “He’s without direction in life”, “I’m where I want to be in life”, “He got a head start in life” (Lakoff, 1993, p. 223). Deignan (2005) believes that it is difficult to find linguistic expressions about the development of an individual’s life which are not also used to talk about literal journeys. Likewise, it is hard to find expressions that are not metaphorical in some way to talk about a certain subject. The close examination of the expressions employed in the discussion of the different topics might be of much importance in investigating people’s mental processes during the construction of these abstract domains. Besides, the formation of conceptual metaphors
The PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS Metaphor in the *Financial Times*  
Nader

depends mostly on our experiences and knowledge of our bodies and our physical interaction with the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Lakoff and Johnson’s theory assists in observing “systematic semantic patterns, rather than random expressions” (cited in Yasynetska, 2005, p. 36). Furthermore, the theory of conceptual mapping facilitates conceptually more specific qualitative and quantitative comparative studies of metaphors in different languages and corpora (Charteris-Black and Ennis 2001; Charteris-Black 2003). In fact, this is a correlative relation as metaphorical expressions are tied to metaphorical concepts in a systematic way so that “we can use metaphorical linguistic expressions to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the metaphorical nature of our activities” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 7).

On the other hand, some other scholars believe that this theory has got a problem given that “simultaneously used metaphors can be believed to incorporate different concepts in a single statement” (Yasynetska, 2005, p. 30). In this case, the conceptual mapping does not explain, in Yasynetska’s (2005) words, which conceptual mapping is more emphasized or intended in a particular context. For example, *Medicine for Europe’s Sinking South* is the headline of one of the economic articles under investigation where two concepts, HEALTH represented by ‘medicine’ and SEA represented by ‘sinking’ are incorporated in the same sentence (Nader, 2013).

The above overview of the conceptual theory of metaphor is just an introduction to the main framework of metaphor categorisation adopted in this paper where specific linguistic metaphors are primarily grouped together provided that they belong to the same conceptual mapping.

3. Methodology

A number of methods and procedures have been pursued in order to identify and explain conceptual and linguistic metaphors from the source domain of PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS. The analysis involves methods for metaphor identification following the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), categorisation into conceptual source domains in the light of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Charteris-Black (2004) and Kövecses (2002) and the use of bilingual dictionaries. Taking the MIP into account, a manual search for linguistic metaphors within context has been conducted as follows (Pragglejaz, 2007, p. 3):

1. Read the entire text–discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text–discourse
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit. (b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be
   — More concrete [what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste];
   — Related to bodily action;
   — More precise (as opposed to vague);
   — Historically older;
Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.
(c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current–contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
Another method of investigating the health/illness-related metaphors in economic texts is to conduct a frequency count of the conceptual and linguistic metaphors involved, and later classify them into their appropriate mappings. In the following section, an overview of the frequency of the source domain in the fifty texts chosen for the study is presented in addition to discussing the usability of this particular conceptual metaphor in economic discourse.

4. Discussion: The PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS Metaphor

As far as frequency is concerned, the PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS metaphor is a quite common source domain in the language of economic newspaper reporting. It occurs in thirty articles out of fifty under investigation with a total of thirty seven (37) expressions that focus mainly on the state of health of economy. The metaphorical sense here lies in mapping the health domain of a living being onto the condition and function of economic institutions such as banks, or onto the economic situation in general using terms that refer to physical health or illness. Table 1 below shows the four most common conceptual metaphors with examples of the linguistic metaphors they involve.

Table 1: The conceptual and linguistic PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS metaphor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source domain</th>
<th>Conceptual metaphor</th>
<th>Linguistic metaphor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECONOMY IS A DISEASE</td>
<td>‘blindness’, ‘fever’</td>
<td>‘blindness’, ‘fever’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECONOMY IS A PATIENT</td>
<td>‘pain’, ‘injection’</td>
<td>‘pain’, ‘injection’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some expressions such as ‘recovery’, ‘healthy’, ‘contagion’, ‘operation’ and others which already belong to the medical field have been realised to be part and parcel of the economic terminology. In addition, PHYSICAL HEALTH metaphors are rather functional when it comes to expressing the process of restoring the health of the economic system. Strictly speaking, terms from the domain of medicine have enriched economic discourse. Metaphors in this category either belong to general health condition, a specific health issue, and medicine or medical practice, such as ‘contagion’, ‘anaesthetic’, ‘injection’ and others.

In medical terms, diseases usually attack living beings such as humans and animals. Likewise in economy, inflation or deflation can infect the economic system and cause malfunction. These diseases can be viral given that they proliferate rapidly and accordingly distress the performance...
of the system (the living being body and/or the economic system). There are levels in the concept of health so metaphors can be positioned anywhere on the scale of good and bad health according to the strength of the deliberate evaluation; for instance, ‘bout’ and ‘recovery’ are metaphors utilized to convey mild forms of evaluation (Charteris-Black, 2005, p. 100-101). While metaphors such as ‘wounds’ and ‘healthy’ express strong forms of evaluation, ‘robust’ and ‘paralysis’ communicate stronger evaluations (ibid 101). It is argued that “since most of us have experienced loss of health at some point in our lives this is an easily accessible conceptual frame” (Charteris-Black, 2004, p. 150).

The PHYSICAL HEALTH metaphors in the data examined cover the different stages of illness, symptoms of illness and treatment, including prescribing proper medicine and semi or full health recovery. The PHYSICAL HEALTH metaphors ‘contagion’, ‘diagnosing’, ‘eliminate’ and ‘recovery’ are some of many used to explain this gradation on the way of recovery. The conceptual metaphors ECONOMY IS A DISEASE (Charteris-black, 2005, p. 102) and ECONOMY IS A PATIENT (Charteris-Black, 2000, p. 156) are both identified in this study along with the conceptual metaphor ECONOMIC ISSUES ARE ILLNESSES AND/OR DISEASES which is accentuated through different examples. Some health conditions are conceptualised and represented by words like ‘headache’ which is used in the data to describe the implications of producing consolidated accounts, ‘blindness’ in reference to casual ignorance of economic issues and ‘fever’ to depict the persistent efforts and challenges between France and Britain on the economic level. In theory, a disease is caused by the spreading of a virus which is called in medical terminology ‘contagion’. This expression is the second most frequent metaphor after ‘healthy’ and ‘recovery’, as it occurs seven times in four different articles as a noun and only once in the adjectival form ‘contagious’.

Charteris-Black (2004, p. 151) suggests that “as illness can spread exponentially and at a very alarming speed” so can the Great Depression in the field of economics. Although the Eurozone has avoided another Great Depression, some European countries are still struggling hard with indebtedness. This problem is metaphorically portrayed as a ‘contagious disease’ that approaches one European country after another:

1) Credit is tight and contagion is spreading to all highly leveraged points in the global economy.  
2) The story of the other Eurozone stragglers is different in degree but not principle. All are highly leveraged - the fundamental source of financial contagion.  
3) The contagion throughout the Eurozone was severe. But globally, the incident was notable chiefly for the lack of contagion to other regions and markets.  
As some diseases can be fatal by nature like cancer, also some economic crises can be extremely severe. To express this notion, two metaphors have been used in the source texts, i.e., ‘malign’ and ‘benign’ which both conceptualise deflation as having a dangerous or less dangerous characteristic of a disease in example 4 below, and ‘pernicious’ which conceptualises private ownership, implicit public backing and inadequate regulation as a harmful combination in example 5:

4) A US economist, David Beckworth, has helpfully summarized the debate in the autumn 2008 issue of the Cato Journal. He distinguishes between malign deflation associated with a fall in overall demand and the benign kind associated with a productivity acceleration, the benefits of which are taken partly in the form of falling prices rather than entirely in rising wages.  
5) There is no need to look back far to observe how pernicious a combination of private ownership, implicit public backing and inadequate regulation can be.
In addition, terms such as ‘toxic’ and ‘noxious’ which come from the source domain of medicine are utilized in some examples and they are regarded metaphorical, because their use in the context of economics is unusual:

6) The banking system still needs to be fixed. As Dominique Strauss-Kahn, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, has warned, many banks are still hiding toxic assets.

7) The resulting noxious mix of large current account and budget deficits led to rising foreign debt.

Some metaphors like ‘dislocation’, which is defined in Oxford English Dictionary as “the displacement of a bone from its natural position in the joint”, refer to physical injuries that are less dangerous than a contagious disease. It is metaphorically used in the following example to refer to economic imbalances:

8) We have analysed data on numerous severe economic dislocations over the past three-quarters of a century; a record of misfortune including 15 severe post-second world war crises, the Great Depression and the 1973-74 oil shock.

As mentioned earlier in this section, the concept of health has levels and metaphors of PHYSICAL HEALTH vary according to the degree of good or bad health on an evaluation scale. Therefore, ‘paralysis’ is a metaphor that symbolizes a strong evaluation (Charteris-Black, 2005, p. 101). The metaphor ‘paralysis’ in the examples below is an accentuation of the conceptual metaphor ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN IS A STATE OF PHYSICAL HEALTH where bad or slow economy is conceptualised as an ill body which cannot move (paralysed).

9) The EU has a habit of getting there in the end, of making the right decision at one minute to midnight. You can see this trajectory during the past six months or so. Paralysis has given way to muddling through.

10) It has always been part of the recent history of Europe that integrationist leaps have been interspersed with periods of paralysis and of messy improvisation. Other physical health related metaphors detected in the economic discourse with the same meaning of paralysis are: ‘cripple’ and ‘disabling’.

In the process of metaphor identification, we have encountered some lexical items that belong to more than one source domain such as ‘emasculate’ which means the depriving of virility. This term can stand for two types of metaphors; PERSONIFICATION in conceptualising hedge funds as people and PHYSICAL HEALTH in reference to the dysfunctionality of the hedge funds:

11) So too, incidentally, does the determination to shut down tax havens and emasculate hedge funds.

Furthermore, symptoms of illnesses and diseases are represented in the English economic articles by such metaphors as: ‘symptom’, ‘disorder’, ‘addict’, ‘pain’, ‘throes’, ‘collapse’, ‘coronary’, ‘weak’, ‘ill’ and ‘distortions’. In the following example, the emphasis is on the notion that the financial crisis hitting countries of Europe is no more than a symptom of a bigger disorder in balance-sheet. The lexical item ‘disorder’ itself is not a metaphor but the existence of ‘symptom’ in the same sentence accentuates this health metaphorical sense:

12) Above all, the financial crisis is itself a symptom of a balance-sheet disorder. Feeling painful might be the first symptom of a disease or illness so it is normal to speak of pain in a medical discourse but it sounds novel in economic contexts. In the next example, slow economic growth is depicted as a source of pain where the conceptual metaphor ECONOMY IS A PATIENT is underlined:

13) In warning of a “choppy recovery”, however, Mervyn King, the Bank’s governor, signalled that Britain could be in for a painfully extended period of sluggish growth.
In addition, the process of restructuring the economy after the crisis, and the way to economic recovery are metaphorically conceptualised as an agonising progression in the next example:

14) It is at the early stages of a long and painful de-leveraging and re-structuring.

Also, some economic crises such as destroying short-sellers and the European Central Bank’s extension of its purchases of debt are portrayed as painful alarms for the European economies. Moreover, there are some expressions that emphasise the state of pain particularly prolonged pain such as ‘cry of pain’, ‘generation of pain’ and ‘throes’. In the next example, the metaphor ‘throes’ expresses the pains caused by economic and geopolitical disturbances:

15) Yet historians will record the summit as the moment when a world in the throes of economic and geopolitical upheaval took a first, hard look in the mirror.

By definition, ‘throe’ in the singular form, means “A violent spasm or pang, such as convulsions in the body, limbs, or face” (OED). The word is also used to refer to the throes of childbirth or the throes of dying. By the same token, economy has to go through throes of economic and geopolitical upheaval in order to be relieved afterwards and recover. Weakness is another symptom of an illness or a disease for if someone feels weak; it might be a symptom of an approaching illness or disease. This idea is accentuated in some of the articles investigated by the use of expressions like ‘weak’ and ‘weakness’ in reference to the flaws of economy.

Another syndrome of physical health deterioration is ‘collapsing’. Different authors of the articles collected have made use of the metaphor ‘collapse’ to conceptualise the collapse of economic growth, of the Euro and of the world trade which are all but symptoms of an approaching economic illness:

16) In particular, a collapse in financial intermediation can reduce the availability of loans.
17) Those who have predicted the collapse of the Euro are the same who 15 years ago, like Milton Friedman, predicted the Euro would never see the light of day: wrong.
18) The Fund is warning, too, of a potential financial crisis in eastern and central Europe. The collapse in world trade is a measure of how quickly bad news ricochets around the global system.

Etymologically, ‘collapse’ is a term of physiology and medicine; however, Charteris-Black (2004, p. 151-152) is inclined to treat it as a metaphor of DISASTER which highlights the conceptual metaphor ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE NATURAL DISASTERS. His argument is that words such as ‘collapse’ refer to “inanimate natural disasters rather than to animate processes such as war and illness” (ibid 152). Nonetheless, the textual and contextual functions of ‘collapse’ in the data examined suggest that this word can be categorised as a PHYSICAL HEALTH metaphor.

Moreover, in the case of a disease, there is a need to diagnose the problem in order to prescribe proper medicine and ensure a healthy recovery. This theme is metaphorically employed in the following example by using ‘diagnosis’ in addition to two more physical health related metaphors, i.e., ‘remedy’ and ‘ills’:

19) The final communiqué was replete with the linguistic fudges that speak to a difference of diagnosis and remedy for the world’s economic ills.

As doctors have different interpretations or diagnosis of a certain disease and consequently different treatments; likewise, the 20 world leaders gathering in the London summit have different opinions about the current financial crisis storming the world in general and Europe in particular, and also each one of them is suggesting a different way to rescue the economy.
The next stage after diagnosing the disease or illness is the treatment and this is again conceptualised by using the metaphor ‘remedy’ as shown in the following examples:

20) There is no magic formula that remedies all these defects. But I have long been in favour of a regime that would be a step improvement.

21) Mr Brown bought this remedy from top economists, who, again, exaggerated the efficacy of their ideas.

The remedy in the second example above refers to Mr Brown’s following up the professional opinion in making the Bank of England operationally independent in pursuing an inflation target, a method that might help curing the Bank’s crisis.

One of the ways to recovery is to inject liquefied medicine in the human body. Charteris-Black (2004, p. 165) argues that ‘injection’, which is a single intense action, is a “biological metaphor based on our knowledge of the medical treatment of an ailing body”. Once more the conceptualisation ECONOMY IS A PATIENT is accentuated by using the lexical items ‘inject’ and ‘injection’ to refer to injecting more purchasing power into the economy, injecting liquidity and injecting funds, e.g.

22) The new rules leave authorities with the same terrible choice should a systemically important bank again find itself on the brink of failure: accept financial and economic turmoil, or inject taxpayer money to keep it afloat.

Here, taxpayer money is conceptualised as medicine injected to rescue ailing banks which suffer from financial and economic turmoil. In addition to this, ‘medicine’ is evidently used in some examples in reference to treatment of economic illnesses:

23) But it is no cakewalk: Portugal has been deflating to boost competitiveness for a decade. Harsh medicine is best ingested quickly.

The harsh medicine in the example above is needed to rescue Portugal before it becomes indebted like Greece. Part of the suggested medicine is to have a credible austerity plan that can restore solidarity with EU countries that are adjusting. Also, “Greece's adjustment would ideally be backed by a large IMF programme to prevent a run on public debt and banks during the tough times ahead” (Roubini and Das 2010).

In some cases, recovery of a certain disease requires an operation and in economic terms such procedure is called ‘rescue operation’:

24) It is part of an unpleasant strategy that consists of avoiding the political drawbacks of using taxpayers’ money to recapitalise banks, while abusing the central banking system by forcing it to undertake a quasi-fiscal rescue operation.

The argument in the above example is about the banking crisis and the help banks need to rebuild their depleted capital through helping them to notch up a few years of large risk-free profits, i.e., implement a rescue operation.

On the other hand, some operations need an anaesthetic to alleviate the pain of the patient. This image is conceptualised in the following example by using the term ‘anaesthetic’ metaphorically:

25) Whoever is advising Mr Obama that the progressive base matters more for his prospects than the aspiring middle class deserves a reset, preferably without anaesthetic.

Here, the writer of the article is being critical of whoever advises Mr. Obama to take leftist positions in his policies. The author maintains that these advisors need some kind of surgery or rectification without anaesthetic, i.e. such advisers, according to the journalist, should suffer for their bad advice.
After proper use of medication, the stage of recovery and being healthy follows. This notion is represented by the use of such metaphors as ‘health’ and ‘healthy’ to refer to the health of either the economy, credit ratings, banks or general fiscal health:

26) Governments of wealthy countries have also put their healthy credit ratings at the disposal of their misbehaving financial systems in the most far-reaching socialisation of market risk in world history. 27) Should the housing market turn uglier, as it could, the US will get an extra lesson in the need for healthy banks.

28) Portugal urgently needs structural reform to restore economic dynamism and fiscal health. Also, the metaphor ‘recovery’ is extensively used in the data and it occupies the first rank in the frequency of PHYSICAL HEALTH metaphors with a total of eight occurrences in seven different articles. After undertaking several crises, the economy starts to recover. This restoration process is metaphorically represented by such words as ‘recover’, ‘recovery’ and ‘recuperate’:

29) All of these were examples of the challenge for 2010: to maintain the tentative progress towards economic recovery in advanced economies while trying to return policy closer to the normality of pre-crisis conditions.

30) The only difference is that lending is suppressed while the banks recuperate – keeping the rest of the economy in the recession that the banks made in the first place.

Some other physical health related issue mapped onto the domain of economics is the issue of drugs. The lexical item ‘drugs’ is used to conceptualise the transition from the state of being accustomed to extraordinarily fragile banking structures to raising the equity requirements in terms of the tough task of preventing an addict from taking drugs. Also, the term ‘distortion’ is utilized to explain the idea that financial flows can cause ‘distortions’ in the financial sector if there is no central financial regulation.

5- Conclusion
This paper has attempted to show the common elements between economy and physical health and how both fields can be related to each other through conceptual metaphors. Apart from the fact that the PHYSICAL HEALTH/ILLNESS metaphor is primarily used in the economic articles as a rhetorical choice, this source domain and its metaphorical entailments proved they are rather helpful in creating a better understanding of economic news reporting. Moreover, illustrating the process of economic recovery in terms of the cycle of a living being recovery from a certain disease or illness facilitates the comprehension of the real economic condition and sustains taking timely or even prompt actions to find a solution. In brief, the data identify several stages of economic recovery from the case of feeling ill and diagnosing the pain to prescribing appropriate treatment and eventually achieving a full recovery. The analysis above leads to the conclusion that HEALTH metaphors are strongly entrenched cognitively in the English culture due to the extensive use of such metaphors. Also, data analysis reveals the tendency to explain economic discourse in terms of human diseases and ailments.

Notes
1. Metaphor has two parts: the tenor and the vehicle. The tenor is the subject to which attributes are ascribed whereas the vehicle is the object whose attributes are borrowed (Richards, 1936)
2. Pragglejaz Group: is a group of researchers whose research focus on the study metaphorical language in everyday language and usage. The name Pragglejaz derives from the first letter of
the first names of the ten original members of the group: Peter Crisp (HK), Ray Gibbs (Berkeley), Alan Cienki (VU), Graham Low (York), Gerard Steen (VU), Lynne Cameron (Open Univ), Elena Semino (Lancaster), Joe Grady (Berkeley), Alice Deignan (Leeds) and Zoltan Kövecses (Hungary).

3. IMF is an abbreviation of the International Monetary Fund.

Examples:

Examples 1, 2, 7, 23 and 28 are taken from (Medicine for Europe's sinking south)
Example 3 is taken from (Pleasently positive signs emerge amid ugly week)
Example 4 is taken from (Deflation is the wrong enemy)
Example 5 is taken from (Don’t set Goldman Sachs free, Mr Geithner)
Examples 6, 15, 18 and 19 are taken from (A summit success that reflects a different global landscape)
Examples 8 and 16 are taken from (Beware those who think the worst is past)
Examples 9, 10 and 11 are taken from (An ever-fearful Europe risks forfeiting the future)
Examples 12, 14 and 26 are taken from (Why the ‘green shoots’ of recovery could yet wither)
Example 13 is taken from (Spectre of gloom haunts nervous Britons)
Example 17 is taken from (A spluttering Europe has its mojo back)
Example 20 is taken from (What comes after inflation targets)
Example 21 is taken from (The economic legacy of Mr Brown)
Example 22 is taken from (Follow the Swiss lead to avoid another Lehman)
Example 24 is taken from (There is no easy way out for central banks)
Example 25 is taken from (Lead from the centre, Mr President)
Examples 27 and 30 are taken from (We have failed to muffle the banks)
Example 29 is taken from (Central banks’ steps back to normality)

About the Author:
Dr. Maria Nader is a Tutor of Specialized Translation at the University of Portsmouth, UK and work as an interpreter in the medical sector. She has MA in Translation Studies from the University of Surrey and PhD in Translation Studies from the University of Salford. Her main research interest lies in the study of metaphorical language in business discourse and its translation into Arabic. She is also interested in the translation of political and literary discourse into Arabic.

References


References of the articles from the Financial Times


Hildebrand, P. (2010). Follow the Swiss lead to avoid another Lehman, Financial Times, 5 October, viewed 28 February 2011, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/6019e91c-d0b0-11df-8667-0144feabdc0.html#axzz1FI4WWiKU>


Stephens, P. (2009). A summit success that reflects a different global landscape, Financial Times, 3 April, viewed 26 February 2011, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e80f5686-1fe5-11de-a1df-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1F10oFwYq>


Perception and production problems: To what extent is Sudanese English intelligible to the native British and American listeners?

Ezzeldin Mahmoud Tajeldin Ali
Department of English Language, Faculty of Education
Gadarif University, Sudan

Abstract
This study addresses the pronunciation and perception problems experienced by Sudanese university learners of English. Specifically, the study examines how intelligible these learners are to British and American listeners. The whole work was done on the basis of segmental analysis of the English speech sounds, which included vowels, consonants and SPIN sentences in three different experiments. Single-item (word) stimuli were constructed on the basis of the Modified Rhyme Test (MRT) but with a few potential improvements. The target stimuli above were recorded from ten Sudanese-Arabic learners of English as foreign language (EFL). On the basis of a pilot test, one male speaker was then selected as the optimally representative Sudanese Arabic-accented English speaker. The same stimuli were recorded from a male native speaker of RP English. Results revealed that vowels are the most difficult sounds to pronounce and the English dentals produced by Sudanese speakers are strongly influenced by their L1 equivalents. Native English speakers are more intelligible to British and American listeners, while they are less intelligible to Sudanese speakers.

Key words: segmental measurement, intelligible, interference, merge
1 Introduction

Researchers need to test in a greater detail the ways in which non-native speech of English varies from that of the native speakers determining the extent to which such variation can impede or enhance intelligibility. A task such as this requires looking at the phonetic and phonological difference between L1 and L2 to find out which segmental variations are responsible for speech intelligibility problems. This is often necessary since phonemic variation between languages has negative effects on the learning of L2 speech. According to Jenkins (2000), (incorrect) habit formation is one of the major factors responsible for intelligibility problems where the muscular habits that are always operated to produce the L1 speech sounds, are automatically activated in L2 production. This process requires non-native speakers to pay more attention producing accurate speech. However, as soon as, these speakers release control to focus on the content of the message, they produce erroneous pronunciation. This situation continues until sufficient practice leads to the mastery of L2 sounds, which are phonetically different from those of L1. However, incorrect speech habits are not the underlying cause of the pronunciation problems in foreign-accented speech. The incorrect production of L2 speech sounds occur due to categorical differences between L1 and L2, where non-native speakers use incorrect perceptual representations (normally L1 sounds) for the production of L2 (Flege 1976). Many L2 speakers of English fail to distinguish between phonemic and allophonic sounds of English, or they often conflate or confuse some speech sounds as result of differences between L1 and L2. For example, Arab speakers of English conflate /b/ and /p/, because the latter has no phonological representation in Arabic (Cruttenden 2008, Flege 1976). Similar problems occur among Russian speakers who confuse clear /l/ as in leaf, black and lose and dark /l/ as in pool, full and milk, which form contrastive phonemes in Russian, but allophones in English.

This study attempts to investigate segmental intelligibility problems that Sudanese-Arabic EFL learners face. It reports an experimental analysis of the English speech sounds including vowels and consonants to test how intelligible Sudanese EFL learners are to British and American listeners. The study provides cognitive insights into the nature and the causes of error patterns detected.

2 Method

2.1 Intelligibility tests used

Intelligible speech is defined as speech that is understood by native speakers (Munro et al. 2006). This means that speech intelligibility is principally a hearer-based construct that depends on interaction in an appropriate context involving the comprehension of the message between the listener and the speaker. It is also possible to refer to speech intelligibility as any successful communication that involves both native and non-native speakers of English. Since the non-native listeners in this study are expected to have an incorrect conception of English speech sounds, focus will be on examining vowels and consonants. Priority is given to segmental properties, firstly because vowels and consonants form the basic sounds of the English language, the mastery of which is required for perfect learning of speech. Secondly, because the assessment of whether speech is intelligible or not is attributed to segmental factors, more than 50% of speech intelligibility is accounted for on the basis of speech sounds (Pascoe 2005, Fraser 2005). The Modified Rhyme Test (MRT) was used in the experiments. The MRT is considered to be the
most accurate and reliable measure of intelligibility (Logan, Greene and Pisoni 1989) at the phoneme level. Speech intelligibility measures involve word identification tasks in a closed-set of four-items, where the listeners are asked to select the response they think the speaker intended. The score is the number of correctly responded to items. Test items normally target phonemes and words. Phonemes refer to vowels and single consonants. The formal assessments of phonemes interpret the responses as either intelligible or unintelligible; put in figures, a score of (close to) 100% is interpreted as completely intelligible performance (Lafon 1966).

Word intelligibility, on the other hand, was established by having listeners recognise 25 keywords; each word was embedded final position in a short everyday sentence taken from the SPIN test. SPIN is an abbreviation of ‘Speech Perception in Noise’ Test (Kalikow, Stevens and Elliott 1977, Wang and van Heuven 2003, Wang 2007). An example of SPIN-test items would be ‘She wore her broken arm in sling’ (keyword underlined). Listeners write down the final word that they think they heard in each sentence. This part of the SPIN test proved to be efficient at assessing speech recognition abilities (Rhebergen and Versfeld 2005). Although the listeners’ performance is primarily quantified in terms of number of whole words correctly recognized, partially correct answers are also important since they give information about the perception of phonemes in onset, nucleus and coda position.

3. Participants

3.1 Sudanese speakers of English

The study participants were ten Sudanese University students in the Department of English at Gadarif University in the Sudan. The learners involved in these experiments specialized in English language teaching (TEFL). They had finished six semesters out of eight semesters of their studies when they participated in the listening test.

3.2 Selection procedure of a model Sudanese EFL learner

A Sudanese model speaker was selected by means of a quality sound test from among a number of 11 Sudanese speakers of English. The quality sound test was operated online and candidates of different nationalities were invited to listen to the test and then assess the sound quality of the speakers by clicking on one of the grade options provided. Assessment of the speakers’ sound quality depended on the computation of the total mean of the results of each speaker in the test wherein the speaker with the average mean was chosen as a representative learner.

3.3 Native speakers of English

In the control part of the study a single male native speaker of English (RP accent) was used as a model speaker of English.

3.4 Native listeners of English: British and American listeners

The group of native English listeners comprised ten British and ten American speakers of English preparing for BA or MA degrees at Leiden University. Listeners were recruited by means of online or poster invitation. The recruitments were asked to fill in short questionnaire before they started answering the perception test. In the questionnaires, they provided information about their nationalities as British or American speakers of English and their
linguistic backgrounds. Moreover, the listeners did not speak Arabic, which represents the first language of the Sudanese speakers involved in the experiments. So, they were expected to be unfamiliar with English spoken with Sudanese Arabic-accent. Distribution of male/female is not considered in this study since the final objective of the tests did not set out any gender specifications involving the results to be obtained; therefore, the experiments were right to any one who speaks English as a native language.

4 Overall structure of the test battery

The experimental stimuli include three tests. These are (i) a vowel test, which is composed of minimal quartets including short and long vowels as well as diphthongs, and (ii) single consonants in either onset or coda position. These target sounds were embedded in meaningful C*VC* words (where C* stands for one to three consonants). The third test comprised 25 sentences taken from the high-predictability set included in the SPIN (Speech Perception in Noise) test (Kalikow, Stevens and Elliott 1977). These are short everyday sentences in which the sentence-final target word is made highly predictable from the earlier words in the sentence, as in She wore her broken arm in a sling (target word underlined). Word stimuli in the first three tests were embedded in a fixed carrier sentence [Say...again], which insured a fixed intonation with a rise-fall accent on the target word. The vowel and the single consonant tests contained items on each individual vowel or consonant phoneme in the RP inventory. Inadvertently, the vowel test did not include an item targeting the vowel /a/ as in boat. Moreover, the consonant test targeted all the consonants in onset position and in coda position. All items in the tests were chosen such that they occurred in dense lexical neighbourhoods, i.e. there should be many words in English that differ from the test item only in the target sounds. These so-called lexical neighbours, differing from the target word in only the identity of the test sound, make up the pool of possible distracters (alternatives) in the construction of the MRT test. When selecting the three distracters needed for each test items, lexical neighbours that differ from the target in only one distinctive feature were preferably selected. For the target pit, we selected alternatives with vowels that differed from /i/ in just one vowel feature, i.e. pet (differing in height), put (differing in backness) and pot. The latter alternative differs from the target in both height and backness; we preferred this to the one-feature difference in peat (or Pete) as we decided to exclude proper names and low-frequency alternatives as much as possible, which may show a larger decrement in recognition than high-frequency words. The full set of test items is included in the Appendix.

4.1 Tests materials

The stimulus sentences were typed on sheets of paper (one sheet for each test), and then read by male Sudanese and native speaker of RP English (see 3.2.2). Recordings took place in a sound-treated room. The speaker’s voice was digitally recorded (44.1 KHz, 16 bits) through a high-quality swan-neck Sennheiser HSP4 microphone. The speakers were instructed to inhale before uttering the next sentence so that clear recording is achieved. The target words were excerpted from their spoken context using a high-resolution digital waveform editor Praat (Boersma and Weenink 1996). Target words were cut at zero-crossings to avoid clicks at onset and offset. Target words and SPIN sentences were then recorded onto Audio CD in seven tracks. The first track contained two practice trials for the vowel test and was followed by track 2, which contained the 19 test vowel items. Tracks 3 and 4 contained the practice and test trials for the single consonant tests. Track 5 comprised the 25 SPIN sentences with no practice items. In the
single consonant test, trials targeting onsets preceded the items targeting codas. Other than that, the order of the trials within each part of the test battery was random. Trials were separated by a 5-second silent interval. After every tenth trial a short beep was recorded, to help the listeners keep track on their answer sheets.

4.2 Test procedure

The stimuli were presented over loudspeakers in a small classroom that seated ten listeners. Subjects were given standardized written instructions and received a set of answer sheets that listed four alternatives for each test item. They were instructed for each trial to decide which of the four possibilities listed on their answer sheet they had just heard on the CD. They had to tick exactly one box for each trial and were told to gamble in case of doubt. Alternatives were listed in conventional English orthography. In the final test (SPIN), subjects were instructed to write down only the last word of each sentence that was presented to them. There were short breaks between tests and between presenting the practice items and test trials. Subjects could ask for clarification during these breaks in case the written instructions were not clear to them.

5 Overall results

5.1 Vowels

This section will present the results of the test battery in four sections, one for each test. Each section will first outline the structural differences between the sounds in the source language, Sudanese Arabic (SA) and in the target language, RP English. Such comparisons may help understand why certain English sounds are difficult for Sudanese learners and others are not.
5.1.1 Vowel results

Figure 1 Mean correct responses (%) of English vowel tokens of ten British and ten American listeners. The vowels were produced by one Sudanese and one native speaker of British English.

As Figure 1 shows, the perception level of the native listeners (British and American) is higher when they were exposed to English vowel tokens produced by the native speaker but low when the same vowel tokens were read by a Sudanese speaker. Overall mean correct for the British listeners is 67% and 93% against 65% and 91% for American listeners in the vowel tokens of English, respectively. A repeated measures analysis of variance (RM-ANOVA) with native language of the speaker (native, foreign) as a within-subject factor and nationality of the listener (British, American) as a between-subjects factor shows that only the effect of speaker type is significant, F(1, 18) = 152.3 (p < .001). The effect of listener and the listener × speaker interaction are insignificant, F(1, 18) < 1 for both main effect and interaction.

The confusion matrices in Tables 1 and 2 present details about the listeners’ performance on the vowel level. The tables show that listeners found the English vowels produced by the Sudanese speakers more difficult than those read by the native speakers. In Table 1, the British listeners totally misperceived the English front mid close /e/ as /ə/ and less often as /ʌ/. The English open /æ/ also proved to be difficult for the listeners. It was frequently misheard as /ʌ/ and less frequently as /ə/. Another type of perception error which also occurred frequently was the confusion of the English tense /iː/ for its lax counterpart /ɪ/. Moreover, the English tense /ɪ/ was replaced by /æ/ or /ɛ/ but less often. Important perception errors of the central and back English vowels included the replacement of the English /ɔː/ by /ʌ/ and less often by /ʌ/ or /æ/, whilst the back low /aʊ/ was substituted for /ɔː/. Other few miscellaneous errors were the misperception of /ɔː/ as /ʌ/ or /æ/ and /əː/ as /ə/. Interestingly, similar perception error patterns were made by the American listeners exposed to the same English vowel tokens, which were spoken by Sudanese speakers. More interestingly, most of these errors have to do with central and back vowels, which imply a systematic relation with the production of the English source vowels. This relation
will be described later. On the other hand, no serious problems were found when the English vowels were read by the native speaker. However, the English lax-tense pairs /u–u:/, /i–i:/ were often substituted by both British and American listeners.

Table 1. Confusion matrix of English stimulus vowels and diphthongs produced by Sudanese EFL learners and perceived by ten British listeners. Correct responses are on the main diagonal, indicated in bold face.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Perceived RP vowels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʌ</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɔ:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>œ</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɜ</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɪ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ą</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʌ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɒ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʌ:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʊ:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʊo</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arab World English Journal
ISSN: 2229-9327
Table 2. Confusion matrix of English stimulus vowels and diphthongs produced by Sudanese EFL learners (in the rows) and responded to by ten American listeners (in the columns). Correct responses are on the main diagonal, indicated in bold face.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>æ</th>
<th>ʌ</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>æ</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>ɪ</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>ɪ</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>æ</th>
<th>ʌ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʌ</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɪ</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1.2 Discussion and conclusion

Most likely many of the errors which were made by the British and American listeners identifying English vowels produced by Sudanese speakers, resulted due to linguistic factors. In more detail, the replacement of the English /e/ by /ʌ/ can be attributed to two elements. Firstly, it is probably triggered by L1 effect which permits only vowel sounds available in the Arabic vowel repertoire such as /i, a, u/, while it blocks /e/ which is not part of the vowel system (see Kopczwski and Mellani 1993). This assumption is less probable, however, since previous studies showed that Arabic speakers developed /e/ (Munro 1993, Dickins 2007). Actually, Sudanese Arabic also developed monophthongs. These include /e/ derived historically from the diphthong /æj/ as in /ʕajn/ ‘an eye’, which coalesced (merged) in dialects such as Cairene and Central Sudanese. In Sanani and a number of Peninsula dialects, the diphthongs are maintained in all phonological contexts. Moreover, among some Cairene speakers the monophthongs are shortened in closed syllables to give short /e/ or /æ/, hence they are not considered to be separate vowels (Watson 2002). Secondly, a replacement error of this type can most probably be referred to spelling/graphical differences between English and Arabic, where the Sudanese-Arabic speakers pronounce English /e/ in the way it is spelt as a transfer of the Arabic spelling system which maintains a direct letter-sound relation. Therefore, the English vowel /e/ in words such as enter, envelope, wet, let, etc., are often mispronounced as /ʌ/ by the Sudanese speakers which forms the major cause of confusion in this context. It is also possible to describe this phenomenon as an interlingual error, which results from faulty or partial learning of the L2 rule.

Similarly, the misperception of /æ/ as /ʌ/ or /u/ is due to an incorrect English vowel. That is, Arabic speakers almost always have problems with the pronunciation of the front open /æ/. They tend to pronounce the English /æ/ in the same way they produce their L1 vowel back open lengthened /a/; i.e., in Sudanese and Cairene Arabic /a/ is pronounced as in /ˈbæb/ ‘door’ (Kaye 1997). It is likely this is the reason that why native Arabic speakers are advised to keep the English short vowel /æ/ fully front (Cruttenden 2008). A similar conclusion was drawn by Bobda (2000) that Sudanese speakers of English fluctuate between /ʌ, ɔ, u/ due to interference from their Arabic linguistic background. The confusion of lax-tense /ʌ ~ i/ by the British and American listeners can also be attributed to an incorrect vowel production, which probably resulted from the wrong implementation of English vowel categories. It is less probable that these errors of substitution are the result of length element of the learners’ L2. This is because a vowel distinction in both English and Arabic vowel systems is based on short/long contrasts.
5.2 Consonants

5.2.1 Consonant results

Figure 2 Mean correct identification of English onset and coda consonants by 10 British and 10 American listeners of English. Stimuli were produced by one Sudanese and one native speaker of English.

As Figure 2 shows, the perception level of the British and American listeners in English consonants is very high. The overall mean correct of such listeners is 85.0 and 84.8 % when the consonants were produced by the Sudanese speakers and 99.0% and 99.2% when they were spoken by native speakers of English. The RM-ANOVA shows that the effect of speaker type is highly significant, F(1, 18) = 94.5 (p < .001). Moreover, the British listeners showed better understanding of the English consonants read by the Sudanese speakers, but the difference is insignificant, F(1, 18) < 1. Furthermore, the level of performance in the consonants read by the native speakers between the two listeners is almost the same, so that the speaker × listener interaction remains insignificant, F(1, 18) < 1. It is probably because both listener types are native speakers of English. However, few English onset and coda consonants were misperceived (see Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6).
Table 3  Confusion matrix of English stimulus onset consonants produced by a Sudanese EFL speaker (targets, in the rows) and responded to by ten British listeners (in the columns). Correct responses are on the main diagonal, indicated in bold face.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Perceived RP consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>b 10 b 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tf</td>
<td>tf 2 5 tf 3 tf 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>d 4 6 d 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>t 0 t 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>f 10 f 8 f 2 f 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>g 10 g 8 g 2 g 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>h 10 h 8 h 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>j 10 j 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>k 10 k 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>l 10 l 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>m 10 m 9 m 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>n 10 n 9 n 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>p 10 p 8 p 9 p 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>r 10 r 9 r 10 r 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>s 10 s 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td>ŋ 10 ŋ 5 ŋ 5 ŋ 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>v 2 v 5 v 7 v 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>w 10 w 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>z 10 z 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. **Confusion matrix of English stimulus onset consonants produced by a Sudanese EFL speaker (targets, in the rows) and responded to by ten American listeners (in the columns). Correct responses are on the main diagonal, indicated in bold face.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>tEnvelope</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>tEnvelope</th>
<th>ð</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>g</th>
<th>h</th>
<th>dEnvelope</th>
<th>k</th>
<th>l</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>ð</th>
<th>v</th>
<th>w</th>
<th>z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tf</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dEnvelope</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. *Confusion matrix of English stimulus coda consonants produced by a Sudanese EFL speaker and responded to by ten British listeners. Correct responses are on the main diagonal, indicated in bold face.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Perceived RP consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tf</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>δ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>η</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>θ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The numbers in the table represent the number of correct responses for each consonant pair.
Table 6. Confusion matrix of English stimulus coda consonants produced by a Sudanese EFL speaker (targets, in the rows) and responded to by ten American listeners (in the columns).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Perceived RP consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dʒ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʃ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɡ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʃ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>θ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Correct responses are on the main diagonal, indicated in bold face.

On the onset consonants, both British and American listeners totally misidentified the English /ð/ as /zl/, whilst frequent misperceptions of /θ/ as /sl/ and /d/ as /tl/ were also observed. It is worth mentioning that the American listeners totally misperceived /d/ as /tl/. These are probably the most serious perception errors experienced by the listeners involving the English consonants read by Sudanese speakers. Similar error patterns of the dental fricative consonants of English were made in the coda consonants read by the Sudanese speakers. These included the replacement of /ð/ by /zl/, /θ/ by /sl/, /ts/ was replaced by /sl or /θ/ whilst /θ/ was replaced /s or /δ/ and /ŋ –n/ mostly by both listeners. Other miscellaneous substitutions such as /k–g, f–v/ were made by the American listeners only.

The British and American listeners also made other miscellaneous perception errors, which included /v–p, j–tʃ, p–k/ in coda position. The error frequency made in the fricative consonants is higher for onsets but lower for the coda position.

In contrast to the above, the listeners showed nearly perfect perception of English onset and coda consonants articulated by the native speakers. On the onset consonants, the British listeners misperceived /ð/ as /θ/ and /θ/ as /s/, whilst the American listeners showed perfect perception. On the coda consonants, the most prominent type of error was an interchangeable substitution of /m–n/ by British and /n/ as /ŋ/ American listeners.

5.2.2 Discussion and conclusions

The conflation of /ð/ with /zl/ and /θ/ with /sl/ which were read by Sudanese speakers can be attributed to incorrectly produced English consonants. This conflation resulted to due interference of (L1) Sudanese colloquial Arabic (in formal Arabic these sounds are pronounced correctly) (Mohammed 1991). In the Sudanese consonant inventory the interdental /θ, ð/ merged with the apico-dental (often labeled as alveolar or sibilant) /s, z/ (Dickins 2007, Watson 2002, Corriente 1978). Thus, Arabic words like /hæða/ ‘this’, are mispronounced as /hæza/, whilst /θæbɪt/ ‘firm’ is mispronounced as /sæbɪt/, which influenced the production of the English dental and alveolar fricatives. Actually, in a number of Arabic dialects, the line separating dental continuants from sibilant (hissing) sounds is becoming blurred (see Watson 2002, Dickins 2007, Schmidt 1987). This change, therefore, has side-effects involving the perception of L2 dental fricatives. According to Kopczwski and Mellani (1993), to avoid these types of confusions, Arabic speakers (of different colloquial dialects) of English need to rearrange the distinctive features lying between inter-dentals and alveolar from those of Arabic. Furthermore, distinction between English /θ, ð/ does not always lie in their articulation since most EFL learners can perform them correctly in isolation. However, the problem aggravates when such dentals are combined with /s/ and /zl/, particularly in languages which contain no dental fricatives. All of /s, z/ and /θ, ð/ are produced nearer to the upper incisors, so that learners need to practice drills containing combinations involving such sounds (Cruttenden 2008).
In terms of international English intelligibility, the incorrect pronunciation of the English dental fricatives /θ/, /ð/ and /s/, /z/ represents a learning problem for second language learners across-language sounds. It is probably because /θ/, /ð/ are relatively infrequent phonemes in the sound patterns of many of the world’s languages. However, the assumption does not show consistency as such substitutions were also observed among EFL/ESL speakers descending from language backgrounds with similar dental fricatives, e.g. Arabic, etc. Intelligibility problems as such probably arise in interactions involving non-native and native speech participants of English due to factors like (i) the number of the minimal pairs the distinction of which is dependent on contrasts of such phonemes and (ii) the potential frequency of such pairs in interactions. This claim motivates the prediction that in an error hierarchy, contrast between phonemes such as /θ–s, ð–z/ may imply a high functional load due to their rare occurrence in many languages which in turn leads to intelligibility problems. Thus, the intricate learning nature of these phonemes, as both rare and highly marked across-language sounds, practically plays a major role in labelling them as a prominent issue of speech intelligibility problems (see Van den Doel 2006, Seidlhofer 2005, Jenkins 2000).

Other substitution errors of English /k–g/ coda consonants which were read by the Sudanese learners are likely made due to the lack of a clear voicing feature separating voiced from voiceless stops, which occurs across very narrow (VOT) boundaries.

5.3 **SPIN sentences**

5.3.1 Results

Figure 4 presents the mean correct scores on the SPIN test obtained by ten British and ten American listeners. The sentences were read by one Sudanese and one British speaker of English. Error bars (± 2 standard error, SE) are also shown. The figure also shows the correct identification scores on components of the SPIN keywords. Separate scores were computed for the onsets, vocalic nuclei and codas of the SPIN keywords. Also, a composite score was computed by taking the mean of these three component scores. Note that the composite score is always higher than the word-recognition score: for a keyword to be counted as correctly recognized all components had to be identified correctly by the listener. I will present and statistically analyse only the word-recognition scores. The component scores will be analysed in a later section when I will make an attempt to predict word recognition from the component scores.

As Figure 4 shows, the perception level of the simple predictable English meaningful sentences of the British and American listeners reveals nearly perfect performance of the SPIN sentences produced by the British speaker; total mean value are 93 and 95%, respectively. However, lower rates were obtained when the same sentences were read by the Sudanese speaker of English: total mean rates 65% and 69 % for the British and American listeners, respectively. Moreover, in comparison to the British listeners, the American listeners show a higher intelligibility level of the SPIN sentences irrespective of the speaker’s accent. The main effect of speaker type (Sudanese EFL versus native British) was highly significant by RM-ANOVA, F(1, 18) = 239.9 (p < .001). The effect of listener type (American versus British), however, is a trend at best, F(1, 18) = 3.3 (p = .085). The speaker × listener interaction is totally insignificant, F(1, 18) < 1.
Figure 4. Mean correct recognition of keywords by ten British and ten American listeners of SPIN sentences produced by one Sudanese and one British speaker of English. Error bars are ± 2 SE

Figure 4 provides details on the listeners’ performance in the perception of the SPIN keyword components produced by the Sudanese and the British speaker. The correct identification by British and American listeners of onset consonants in the keywords is 85 against 93% when the consonants were read by the Sudanese and British speaker, respectively, F(1,18) = 90.8 (p < .001). However, the listeners responded perfectly to the same consonants spoken by the British speakers; total mean correct 100% for both listener groups, F(1, 18) = 7.5 (p = .013) for both the main effect of listener group and for the speaker × listener interaction. The nucleus vowel results show a small difference of perception between the British and American listeners; total mean correct are 76 against 84% when the items were read by the designated Sudanese EFL speaker, and 97 and 100% when the items were read by the native speaker, F (1, 18) = 136.2 (p < .001) for the speaker effect and F (1, 18) = 10.4 (p = .005) for the main effect of listener nationality. However, the interaction between speaker and listener groups is a trend at best, F (1, 18) = 3.0 (p = .099). On the other hand, performance in the coda consonants proved to be the lowest of all and the British listeners had higher scores than the Americans when the sentences were read by the British speakers; total mean is 97 against 96%. However, both listener types showed a lower score when the same coda consonants were read by Sudanese speakers; total mean correct is 69 against 75%, respectively. Again, the effect of speaker type was highly significant, F (1, 18) =
191.2 (p < .001), whereas the effect of listener group was not, F (1, 18) = 1.3 (p = .271). The interaction between speaker type and listener group just fails to reach significance, F (1, 18) = 4.3 (p = .053).

5.3.2 Discussion and conclusions

Both British and American listeners had high perception of simple and predictable English sentences produced by the native speakers. However, the American listeners showed a slightly higher perception level than their British counterparts, from both Sudanese and native speakers of English; total mean evaluation of these two groups of listeners are 69 and 95% and 65 and 93%, respectively. The listeners’ performance is always better when they hear native speakers. Interestingly, the American listeners tend to have better scores irrespective of speaker type. Possibly, the SPIN sentences, which were developed in the USA, refer to American rather than to British everyday situations. The coda consonants proved to be a difficult area in which the listeners showed a low performance, in comparison to the onset consonants and nucleus vowels. The correlation tables 11 and 12 may provide more insight.

6. Correlations

Tables 11 and 12 present correlation matrices for vowels, single, and the component scores on the SPIN keywords: i.e. nucleus vowels, consonants, the mean of the latter three components, and the recognition scores on the entire keyword in the SPIN sentences. The correlation coefficients were computed for the mean percent correct scores of British (upper part of tables) and American (lower part of tables) native listeners, separately for the non-native Table 11, and native speaker Table 12. The tables present linear product-moment correlation coefficients (r) between the listeners’ perception scores for all tests and test components in the battery.

Table 11. Correlation matrix for scores on vowels, single consonants, and (components of the) SPIN test read by one Sudanese speaker of English.
The computation of the correlation of the SPIN results provided different figures with respect to listener and speaker nationality backgrounds (for an explanation of the concept of the correlation coefficient, see chapter three). With regard to SPIN test components read by the designated Sudanese EFL learner, a correlation between the onset consonants and nucleus vowels yielded a positive significant correlation at \( r = .692 \) \((p < .05)\) for the American listeners, whilst it shows a positive but insignificant \( r = .339 \) for the British listeners. These figures imply that the vowel nucleus is predictive of the onset correct perception, in particular, those of the American listeners. Moreover, the coda consonant components correlate with the onset and nucleus vowels positively at \( r = .375 \) and \( .552 \) for the British listeners and at \( r = .445 \) and \( .573 \) for the American listeners, respectively. These relations indicate that both British and American listeners identify the onset consonants well whenever they succeed in identifying nucleus vowels, coda consonants and vice versa. On the other hand, we find no useful correlation between vowels, consonants and their SPIN components, which we did not expect. There are weak relations exist between SPIN coda consonants and consonants at \( r = .222 \). This indicates that vowels and consonants have a negative association with the SPIN components, except the coda consonants, which have a positive relationship to consonants. Similarly, English vowels heard by American listeners showed a high positive correlation with coda consonants but not significant at \( r = .625 \).

Table 12. Correlation matrix for scores on vowels, single consonants and SPIN test read by one British speaker of English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listeners</th>
<th>SPIN sentences</th>
<th>MRT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>onset</td>
<td>nuc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>Nuclei</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Codas</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on C</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vowels</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consonants</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>words correct</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>Nuclei</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Codas</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on C</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vowels</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consonants</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>words correct</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual vowels and consonants show some kind of correlation. These figures help us predict that vowels, nucleus and coda consonants are the most decisive elements of correct scoring. They also reflect that more positive relations tend to occur more often within SPIN components than between the combination of vowels and consonants, which mean that the subjects’ better performance in the nucleus vowels does not indicate that they do better in vowels.
7. Conclusions

Errors made by British and American listeners in the perception of the English front, central and back vowels produced by Sudanese speakers were largely due to fact that the learners’ native language, Sudanese Arabic, distinguishes merely three vowel qualities. These English vowels are not part of the speakers’ L1 inventory so they represent learning difficulty. Moreover, the paucity of knowledge of the English sound-letter correspondence on the part of the learners often leads to the misperception of English vowels. Such perception errors often take place due to partial learning or insufficient practice.

Frequent confusions were made by the British and American listeners of English in the perception of the English dental fricatives /s/, /θ/, /z/, /ð/ read by the Sudanese speaker are probably due to interference from Sudanese –Arabic source consonant system; i.e., by the filter effect of the speaker L1 Sudanese Arabic (SA) consonant inventory.

British and American listeners showed no serious perception problem with English speech sounds which were produced by the native control speakers.

The results also reflect the effect of the linguistic backgrounds of speech participants on intelligibility. Native listeners are better equipped to interpret the speech of a native talker. On the other hand, non-native talkers may produce the L2 speech sound with a base of articulation that is typical of their L1 rather than of the target language which leads to misinterpretation of such a sound. This means that ESL/EFL listeners from the same native language background as the talkers will be more likely to access the correct phonemic category than ESL/EFL listeners and speakers who do not share the same native language.

Vowels and coda consonants rather than initial consonants of English proved to be the most problematical area of perception Sudanese Arabic-accented English for native British and American listeners.

About the Author:

Ezzeldin Mahmoud Taj eldin Ali obtained a BA degree in ELT from Gezira University in 1995, MA degree English also from Gezira University in 2001. A lecturer of English Gadarif 1997, assistant professor 2011. He obtained a PhD degree from Leiden University 2011, in Experimental linguistics and phonetics of English. Published papers and participated in many international conferences.
References


Appendices

Appendix 1. Vowel list: /hVd/ meaningful words in a fixed carrier phrase (say .....again); 19 different full vowels and diphthongs read by Sudanese EFL learners and native speakers of RP English. The stimuli were used in the perception tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Pet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Nut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Pit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Peat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Fool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Bard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Boat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 2. Onset and coda consonants list of meaningful words in a fixed carrier (say .....again). The stimuli were read by Sudanese EFL learners and native speakers of RP English. The stimuli were used in the perception tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Onset consonants</th>
<th>Coda consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Got</td>
<td>Sack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bang</td>
<td>Mash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Shut</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pin</td>
<td>Heath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fit</td>
<td>Sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Then</td>
<td>Pat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Thaw</td>
<td>Safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Zeal</td>
<td>Pub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Den</td>
<td>Rave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sip</td>
<td>Match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Job</td>
<td>Cop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Vest</td>
<td>Lace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>tame</td>
<td>Raze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>Cog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>With</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix (3) SPIN sentences presented part of the perception test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4- High predictability SPIN sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Throw out all the useless junk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- She cooked him a hearty meal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Her entry should win the first prize.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- The stale bread was covered with mood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- The fireman heard her frightened scream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Your knees and your elbows are joints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- I ate a piece of chocolate fudge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- Instead of a fence plant a hedge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9- The story had a clever plot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10- The landlord raised the rent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11- Her hair was tied with a blue bow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12- He’s employed by a large firm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13- To open the jar twist the lid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14- The swimmer’s leg got a bad cramp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15- Our seats were in the second row.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16- The thread was wound on the spool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17- They tracked the lion to his den.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18- Spread some butter on your bread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19- A spoiled child is a brat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20- Keep your broken arm in a sling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21- The mouse was caught in the trap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22- I have got a cold and a sore throat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23- Ruth poured herself a cup of tea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24- The house was robbed by a thief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25- Wash the floor with a mop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Pragmatic Suitability of the Algerian ELT Secondary School Textbooks: The Case of Requests and Apologies

Boudjemaa DENDENNE
Department of English, University of Constantine I
Constantine, Algeria

Abstract
The present study investigates the extent to which the Algerian ELT secondary school textbooks are pragmatically-suitable with regard to the speech acts of request and apology. The study aims at exploring the appropriacy and adequacy of the input at the pragmalinguistic and the sociopragmatic levels. It also aims to explore the metapragmatic information associated with it. All the requests and apologies that appear in these books have been identified, then coded and analysed. The findings show that although the textbooks provide a minimum of the linguistic forms used for the production of these two speech acts, they are rather limited when it comes to associating them with the relevant contextual and cultural factors. Also, there is a paucity in supplying the metapragmatic information. In this respect, the material used cannot lead to the acquisition of these two speech acts. It is, therefore, recommended that the textbook writers should address these shortcomings.

Keywords: Algerian Secondary School textbooks, apologies, pragmatic instruction, requests, pragmatic suitability.
Introduction

The textbook is a part and parcel of the teaching/learning process in foreign language (FL) and second language (SL) contexts. In communicative language teaching (CLT), the textbook is not only supposed to provide learners with the linguistic knowledge, but also with the contextual and the pragmatic aspect of it. In Algeria, English is taught as a FL. The new curriculum for teaching English, as reformed by the Ministry of National Education in 2005, has incorporated the CLT. The textbooks writers state that the syllabus and, thus, the textbooks are prepared on the Competency-Based Approach with the objective to enable learners to interact orally in English, interpret and produce oral/written texts (Riche et al. 2006: 4). This amounts to saying that the pragmatic development is at the heart of the newly introduced syllabus.

Since then, no comprehensive study has ever been conducted to assess the extent to which the stated objectives have been fulfilled by the proposed input in the material. The present study aims to contribute in this direction. Requests and apologies have been selected as they are among the frequent speech acts in the target language.

The paper addresses two main questions:

1. Does the provided input cover the production of speech acts in their pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic dimensions?
2. What kind of metapragmatic information related to the production of these two speech acts is provided and is it adequate?

Theoretical Background:

Linguistic proficiency and Pragmatic Competence:

The models of Communicative Competence (CC) which have been developed in the context of pedagogy sought to strike a balance between linguistic abilities that enable learners to produce grammatically acceptable sentences and the potential of being appropriate in a particular social context. Celce-Murcia (2007) proposed a model which includes the following competencies: the sociocultural, the discoursal, the linguistic, the formulaic, the interactional and the strategic. According to Celce-Murcia, this model gives importance to culture and discourse as well as strikes a balance between language as a system and as a formula (communicative means). It also focuses on the dynamic aspects of interaction as well as learners’ strategies (2007: 51-54).

There is a controversy in the literature on the issue whether linguistic proficiency helps in better pragmatic achievement, especially at the level of speech acts production. That is, some studies have proven that proficient learners are better able to approximate the native performance, while others have not proven marked advantage for the proficient learners over the less proficient ones. Maeshiba et al. (1996) suggested that the more proficient the learners the less likely they were to fail back on their native language ‘guidelines’ and, thus, were better able to emulate American apologies. The study of Šabaté and Curell i Gotor (2007) suggested that the increase in the proficiency level leads to the decrease in ‘non-L2-like’ pragmalinguistic performance, but exhibition of more sociopragmatic ‘non-native-like’ performances in L2 apologies.
All in all, such studies show that, oftentimes, even advanced learners in terms of grammar are likely to face pragmatic problems (Salazar Campillo 2007: 208). For this reason, researchers are investigating the possible ways of direct and explicit teaching of pragmatic competence.

**Teaching Pragmatics:**
Kasper and Schmidt (1996: 160) state that, “There is every reason to expect that pragmatic knowledge should be teachable,” especially in the FL setting where the chances of the full range of human interactions are very limited. To test whether pragmatic knowledge is really teachable, many studies have been conducted to realize the outcome of instructions on learners’ performance. Olshtain and Cohen (1990, cited in Cohen, 1998) dealt with the effect of explicit teaching on the performance of advanced EFL learners in apologies. The learners were first pretested to determine the state of their pragmatic knowledge, then posttested after exposing them to three 20-minute lessons on the strategies for performing the speech act sets of apology and the different modifications that go with this act. The researchers concluded that aspects like intensification and downgrading as well as differences between strategies and the situational features can really be taught. Esłami-Rasekh et al. (2004) exposed a group of Iranian EFL learners to twelve-sessions on metapragmatic instruction like teacher-fronted discussion, role play of the intended speech acts, discussion of the frequent pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic deviations of examples produced by students, then responding to a discourse completion task. The subjects were pretested and posttested regarding their comprehension of request, apology and complaint. The authors concluded that explicit metapragmatic instruction facilitates interlanguage pragmatic development. This, therefore, suggests that pragmatic competence does not seem resistant to explicit instruction. To put it in Cohen’s words “[d]espite the studies with mixed results, it would still appear that learners stand to benefit from explicit focus on pragmatics (2005: 287).”

Among the very likely ways to present learners with pragmatic input is through the textbook. The growing literature on studies which assess the pragmatic input reveals a shortage in pragmatic information in learning/teaching materials. Vellenga (2004) and Salazar Campillo (2007) are archetypal of such studies. Vellenga (2004) analysed eight ESL and EFL textbooks to determine the amount and the quality of the pragmatic information. As her findings indicated, there was a dearth in metapragmatic and metalinguistic information as regards the spoken language; the EFL textbooks included more information while the ESL textbooks had better quality regarding variety of the speech acts and the metapragmatic cues. Additionally, the included metapragmatic information was limited in the range of options. This led the author to conclude that the acquisition of pragmatic competence via these materials is highly unlikely. Salazar Campillo (2007) analysed request mitigation in ELT textbooks. The findings suggest the ignorance of a number of mitigators and the focus on a small number of them, namely the use of please and some other combinations.

**Producing and Analysing Requests and Apologies:**
The appropriate production of the illocutionary force requires sociocultural and sociolinguistic abilities (Cohen, 1996). That is, the skill to choose the appropriate strategies given the target culture, age, gender of the interlocutors, their social class etc. and the skill to select the appropriate linguistic forms to realise the speech act like the choice between sorry or excuse me in apology (p. 22-23).
To cope with the different semantic formulae/strategies used for realising these two acts, many models have been developed for analysing them.

Requests:

As defined by Trosborg (1995: 187), “a request is an illocutionary act whereby a speaker (requester) conveys to the hearer (requestee) that he/she wants the requestee to perform an act which is for the benefit of the speaker.” Requests can be divided into two parts: Head Act (HA) or core request and peripheral element.

Example 1:

\textit{Could you please lend me your dictionary?} [Core request] \textit{I just need it for a minute.} [Peripheral element]

Table 1 represents the taxonomy suggested by Trosborg (1995) for HA strategies.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Situation} & \textbf{Request Strategies (Increasing Directness)} & \textbf{Speaker Requests to Borrow Hearer’s Car} \\
\hline
Indirect & \textit{Hints} & \textit{I have to be at the airport in half an hour.} \\
& mild & \textit{My car has broken down.} \\
& Strong & \\
\hline
Conventionally Indirect & \textit{Hearer-oriented conditions} & \\
& Ability & \\
& Willingness & \\
& Permission & \\
& Suggestory Formulae & \\
& Speaker-based conditions & \\
& Wishes & \\
& Desire/needs & \\
\hline
Direct & Obligation & \\
& Performatives & \\
& Hedged & \\
& Unhedged & \\
& Imperatives & \\
& Elliptical phrases & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Trosborg’s (1995) Taxonomy for HA Strategies}
\end{table}

HA strategies are not often used alone; they are accompanied by mitigating devices so as to increase the probability of success of the requestive act. Modifications are classified into \textit{Internal} and \textit{External}. External modifications are also known as Supportive Moves (SMs).

Example 2:

\textit{I forgot my wallet at home and I need some money to make photocopies.} [External; SM] \textit{Do you think that} [Internal] you could lend me 30 cents?

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Type} & \textbf{Sub-Type} & \textbf{Example} \\
\hline
Internal Modification & Openers & \textit{Do you think} you would open the window? \\
& & \textit{Would you mind} opening the window? \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Peripheral Modification Devices in Requests (Alcón et al., 2005)}
\end{table}

Alcón et al. (2005) suggested this taxonomy for SMs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Softeners</th>
<th>Understatement</th>
<th>Could you open the window <em>for a moment</em>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtoner</td>
<td>Could you <em>possibly</em> open the window?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedge</td>
<td>Could you <em>kind of</em> open the window?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensifiers</td>
<td>You <em>really</em> must open the window.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtoner</td>
<td><em>I’m sure</em> you wouldn’t mind opening the window.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fillers</td>
<td>I <em>er, erm, er</em>– I <em>wonder</em> if you could open the window</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cajolers</td>
<td><em>You know, you see, I mean</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appealers</td>
<td><em>-OK?, Right?, yeah</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention-getters</td>
<td><em>Excuse me ..., Hello ..., Look ..., Tom, ...; Mr. Edwards ..., father ...</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Modification</th>
<th>Preparators</th>
<th><em>May I ask you a favour?</em> Could you open the window?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grounders</td>
<td><em>It seems it is quite hot here. Could you open the window?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarmers</td>
<td><em>I hate bothering you but</em> could you open the window?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanders</td>
<td>Would you mind opening the window? … <em>Once again, could you open the window?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise of a reward</td>
<td>Could you open the window? If <em>you open it, I promise to bring you to the cinema.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please</td>
<td>Would you mind opening the window, <em>please</em>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Apologies:**

Bergman and Kasper (1993: 82) define apology as a “compensatory action to an offence in the doing of which S [the speaker] is causally involved and is costly to the H [hearer].” The following strategies make up the speech act set of the apologising act (Cohen 1998: 386):

1. **An expression of apology** [IFIDs: illocutionary force indicating devices], a word, expression or sentence which contains a relevant performative verb like *apologise, forgive, excuse, be sorry*.
2. **An explanation or account of the situation** which indirectly caused the apologiser to commit the offense.
3. **Acknowledgement of responsibility**, the offender recognises his or her fault in causing the infraction.
4. **An offer of repair**, the apologiser makes a bid to carry out an action or provide payment for some kind of damage which resulted from the infraction.
5. **A promise of nonrecurrence**, the apologiser commits himself or herself not to have the offence happen again.

Each of the above strategies may stand by itself as an adequate apology, but often they appear in combination (Example 3). The expression of apology may also be intensified by means of adverbials like *very, so, terribly, awfully* and emotional expressions like *oh no!, oh crap!, oh my gosh, oops!!*

**Example 3**
I’m so sorry I forgot the book at home. Can I bring it by your office tomorrow morning? (strategy 1 + intensifier + strategy 4).

The Study

Data:
The data for this study incorporates speech acts of all the requests and apologies, whether spoken or written, that appear in the Algerian secondary school manuals. Both the textbooks and the Teacher’s Books are considered in this paper. Therefore, the pairs of textbooks and Teacher’s Books of the three levels are referred to as Book 1, Book 2, and Book 3 respectively.

Results and Discussion:

Requests:

As shown in Table 3, most of the requests appear in Book 1. The higher we move, the fewer requests we encounter. This is, most probably, due to the fact that learners are prepared step by step for the Baccalaureate exam which is of a written nature. The author and his collaborators state this explicitly in the third year’s Teacher’s Book, “the graded tasks are of the type to be found in the English paper of the Baccalaureate examination (Arab et al., 2006: 10).

Table 3: Number of Requests in the Three Textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requests No. (%)</th>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
<th>Book 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61 (62.50%)</td>
<td>23 (22.12%)</td>
<td>16 (15.38%)</td>
<td>100 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the HA strategies (core requests), we have got the following statistics:

Table 4: Use of HA Strategies in the Three Textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAs No. (%)</th>
<th>Sub-Types</th>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
<th>Book 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Hints</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>40 (61.54%)</td>
<td>7 (30.43%)</td>
<td>5 (31.25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness</td>
<td>6 (9.23%)</td>
<td>6 (26.09%)</td>
<td>1 (6.25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permission</td>
<td>3 (4.62%)</td>
<td>1 (4.35%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suggestory Formulae</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>4 (17.39%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional-Indirect</td>
<td>Speaker-Based</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wishes</td>
<td>2 (3.08%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desires/Needs</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51 (78.46%)</td>
<td>18 (78.26%)</td>
<td>6 (37.50%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Book 1, the use of conventionally indirect HAs outnumber the use of direct ones. The indirect HAs (hints) have not been used at all, though the author has encountered some utterances that can be considered indirect requests in the three textbooks. He has not been able to take them into consideration, because the interpretation of hints as such requires contextual information like the description of the situation, the intent of the speaker etc. that the textbooks do not offer. The conventionally indirect HAs found in the textbooks correspond, in terms of frequency, their presence in native production (e.g. Blum-Kulka et al, 1989). It is also shown in the table that the hearer-oriented HAs are more frequent than the speaker-oriented ones. This, we assume, is motivated by the use of modal verbs which is an interactive feature in English requests and, presumably, has nothing to do with context. In most cases, the contexts used in the textbooks are rigid where participants have not been specified, though in a number of cases they are, and their relationship could be inferred from the context like friend-friend, chairman-attendants, teacher-student, customer-secretary, phonecaller-answerer, interviewee-interviewer and pedestrian-passerby. It is obvious that ability is the most used sub-type (61.54%), then willingness (9.23%), permission (4.62%) and wishes (3.08%). In direct forms Imperatives (15.38%) are the most used than performatives (3.08%) and elliptical phrases (3.08%). The elliptical phrases need the teacher’s intervention to draw the learners’ attention to show that they function as requests. They are always dependent on the contextual factors to be interpreted as requests. They are always dependent on the contextual factors to be interpreted as requests. All in all, Book 1, disregarding the absence of hints, provides the learners, at this level, with common forms for realising requests. We recommend that teachers give enough attention to direct forms and highlight the cases when there is a taboo (i.e. impoliteness) against using them as presenting them with such high frequency might lead learners to think that they are a common choice in the target requests. These forms need not be analysed in a vacuum since they have been accompanied with mitigating devices that we will consider later.

Like Book 1, Book 2 offers the common linguistic forms for realising requests. The conventionally indirect strategies are more frequent than the direct ones while the indirect strategies are totally absent. We notice the decrease in the use of ability, the appearance of suggestory formulae and the disappearance of speaker-oriented HAs. As for the direct strategies, they are limited to some imperatives. Generally speaking, there is a reduction in the overall number of requests and an insertion of certain forms like suggestory formulae. The question that arises here is whether that is purposeful or haphazard?

Book 3 includes very few HA strategies. Here, the direct forms outnumber the indirect ones. Like Book 1 and Book 2, imperatives and ability are the most used forms, 30.43% and 21.74% respectively.
One important aspect of the requestive act in English is the use of modality since it has pragmatic consequence. In the three textbooks, a variety of modals have been employed as shown in Table 5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: Use of Modals in the Three Textbooks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modals</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book 3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Book 1, the modals *can* (74.06%) and *could* (31.37%) are the most used respectively. The high frequency of these two modals seems to be counterintuitive. The textbook writers may have done that to push learners to learn these two modals, but presenting them with such frequency may lead learners to over-learn them and, thus, open the door for induced errors i.e. errors resulting from the faulty presentation of a structure in the textbook (Stenson, 1974). *Would* has been used less frequently (13.73%), also *may* (5.88%) and *shall* (1.96%). In Book 2 and 3, fewer modals have been used, but their presentation is more balanced as no modal is noticeably overused. From a pragmatic standpoint, modals in English ought to be handled with care, because they have a pragmatic value; they are indicators of politeness and register. Some of them are more polite and formal than others; the past forms of the modals are more polite than their present counterparts (Palmer, 1979).

The above core requests have been modified by internal mitigators and SMs as presented in Table 6. *Openers, understatements, downtoners* and *attention-getters* are the internal modifications used in Book 1. The relatively frequent use of *openers* and *attention-getters* is a feature which really reflects the actual use of these mitigators in native requests as they are considered a common speech routines. *Attention-getters*, for instance, were the commonest modification in requests drawn from a sample of films in a study conducted by Martinez-Flor (2007). The absence of *hedges, intensifiers, hesitators, cajolers* and *promises* in Book 1 and some other mitigators in Book 2 and 3 reveal that they may not be the salient features to be included in an input directed to FL learners (Salazar Campillo 2007: 219), despite the fact that such categories, namely *cajolers* and *appealers*, are quite common in authentic data drawn, for instance, from films (Martinez-Flor, 2007). As for the SMs i.e. external modifications, apart from the over-presentation of *please* and the absence of the *promise of reward*, they seem to be balanced. The use of *grounders* is relatively higher and this is intuitively concordant with the fact that this mitigator is one of the typical sub-types of SMs (e.g. Trosborg, 1995 and Martinez-Flor, 2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: Internal and External Modification in the Three Textbooks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As for preparators and disarmers, they are equally employed (4.08%), whereas expanders and appealers are relatively fewer (2.04%). Pragmalinguistically speaking, exposing learners to the main external modifications at this level is considered an advantage. Yet, the more we proceed in the analysis the more we feel a lack in sociopragmatic and metapragmatic knowledge that guide learners to the appropriate use of such features and only suffice to knowing them. A very outstanding feature in Book 1, as well as Book 2, is the overuse of please (59.18% and 62.60% respectively). Using this category in such a high frequency may have counter-effects i.e. overlearning and overuse. The placement of this politeness marker within the core requests is, to a certain extent, concordant with its presentation in natural speech. It means, please has been found in initial (6.90%), middle (10.34%) and final (82.76%) positions. According to Sifianou (1999), its occurrence at initial position may best be considered as an attention-getter or apology for interruption. Please can fulfil other functions and can also substitute the core request itself in real interactions (Martinez-Flor 2007: 271). In our analysis, it has only been considered as a politeness marker due to the lack of the contextual clues that would guide us to other interpretations.

In Book 2, we notice the appearance of intensifiers and hesitators which are of the form I wonder if you could. Furthermore, we notice a relative increase in using grounders while please is still overused. In Book 3, there are only few modifications, and it is no surprise, as their occurrence is concordant with that of the core requests themselves. The reason behind that is once again, most probably, linked to the pre-set objectives by the textbook writers that prioritise the written language at the expense of the spoken one.

For further insights, the different combinations of mitigating devices spotted in each textbook have been considered. The combinations found in Book 1 are illustrated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Softeners</th>
<th>Understatement</th>
<th>3 (6.12%)</th>
<th>0 (0.00%)</th>
<th>0 (0.00%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtoner</td>
<td>1 (2.04%)</td>
<td>1 (2.70%)</td>
<td>1 (16.67%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedge</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensifiers</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>2 (5.41%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fillers</td>
<td>Hesitators</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>2 (5.41%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cajolers</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appealers</td>
<td>1 (2.04%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attention-getters</td>
<td>4 (8.16%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>1 (16.67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11 (22.45%)</td>
<td>7 (18.92%)</td>
<td>2 (33.33%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Modification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparators</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (4.08%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounders</td>
<td>4 (8.16%)</td>
<td>6 (16.22%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarmers</td>
<td>2 (4.08%)</td>
<td>1 (2.70%)</td>
<td>3 (50.00%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanders</td>
<td>1 (2.04%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise of a reward</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please</td>
<td>29 (59.18%)</td>
<td>23 (62.60%)</td>
<td>1 (16.67%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38 (77.55%)</td>
<td>30 (81.08%)</td>
<td>4 (66.67%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>49 (100%)</td>
<td>37 (100%)</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. **Can you do one thing for me?** When you bring the photocopy, *can you also bring the book you have promised to lend me?* (*preparator* + *expander*)
b. **Can you help me?** *At the end of every term at school, we have a thorough examination...Please, tell me what shall I do?* (*preparator* + *grounder* + *please*)
c. **Excuse me,** my name is Lydia Chenneb. *I’m doing a survey on high school students’ leisure time activities. Can I ask you few questions?* (*attention-getter* + *grounder*)
d. Could you **be kind enough** to speak more slowly, please? (*disarmer* + *please*)
e. **Right.** Can we start, *please?* (*appealer* + *please*)

In Book 2, the following combinations have been identified:

a. Can you **possibly** give me your pen, *please?* (*downtoner* + *please*)
b. **I wonder if you** could help me, *please.* (*hesitator* + *please*)
c. **Do you mind** giving me your dictionary, *please?* (*opener* + *please*)
d. Would you therefore **please** let us know about your wishes as soon as possible *so that we can serve the room you need?* (*please* + *grounder*)

due to the over-representation of the marker *please,* it appears in almost all the combinations. A close look at the data drawn from the native speakers’ production reveals that *please* does not often combine with such a range of mitigators (author’s data). In other words, the textbook input should be based on patterns and frequencies inspired by natural language [or imperially-validated data] so as to avoid the bias of being counterintuitive (Vellenga, 2004). As expected, there are no combinations of the mitigating devices spotted in Book 3. This is due to the fact that few HAs and modifications have been presented in this book.

Having dealt with core requests and peripheral elements individually, now we see them in combination. This allows us to identify the overall structure of requests in the three textbooks. Table 7 includes various structures found in the material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structures No. (%)</th>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
<th>Book 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HA Only</td>
<td>28 (43.08%)</td>
<td>9 (39.13%)</td>
<td>13 (81.25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HA + SM</td>
<td>28 (43.08%)</td>
<td>9 (39.13%)</td>
<td>2 (12.50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM + HA</td>
<td>9 (13.85%)</td>
<td>4 (17.39%)</td>
<td>1 (6.25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM + HA + SM</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>1 (4.35%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65 (100%)</td>
<td>23 (100%)</td>
<td>15 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in the above table, in all the three books, HA-Only category is widely used. This indicates the oversimplification that characterises the textbooks, something which is likely to hinder the learners’ pragmatic development than to foster it. It is quite understandable that the textbook writers might have opted for that considering the learners’ level which might not permit them to access natural or near natural data, but this should not be at the expense of their pragmatic progress. In terms of frequency, the table implies that all the categories are presented in the textbooks. In terms of content, these structures do not really reflect the requestive patterns in natural production since in most requests of the type HA + SM and SM+
HA, the SM stands for *please* and *attention-getter* respectively. In other words, learners are offered a limited range of pragmatic choices.

We still have some comments to make concerning the metapragmatic information that accompanies the requestive act. By metapragmatic information we mean “any information related to culture, context, illocutionary force, politeness, appropriacy and/or register” (Vellenga, 2004: 5). In this paper, we consider pragmatic information that is directly related to the requestive act as well as any piece of information that has a pragmatic consequence in its production. As for counting information, one instance of metapragmatic information is the bit of information which is mentioned at one go. In Book 1, as can be seen from table 8, there is a lack of metapragmatic information. This is concordant with the fact that the largest portion of requests is implicitly tackled. That is, they have not appeared in tasks specifically centred on requests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metapragmatic Cues</th>
<th>No. (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book 1</td>
<td>Book 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politeness: Appropriacy/Illocution Force</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register: Formal/Informal</td>
<td>2 (76.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture-specific</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation</td>
<td>3 (11.54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>19 (73.08%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for appropriacy, while dealing with *clarification-asking task*, learners have been explicitly offered strategies and shown how to use them in context. Furthermore, teachers have been asked to demonstrate how they are used in real spoken interactions. Though limited, such explicit metapragmatic cues may provoke pragmatic awareness of how linguistic forms fit the context. As for politeness, it has been explicitly dealt with the issue of the *voice tone* and its role in conveying pragmatic attitudes (e.g. *peremptory* or *polite*). This is pragmatically relevant request performance. Register is the pragmatic issue that has received most attention. That is to say, rich information has been included. It has been explicitly mentioned that requests are made formal and informal using *could* and *can* respectively. Somewhere else in the Teacher’s Book, teachers are recommended to draw the learners’ attention to formal and informal (colloquial) English and their most salient features. In addition, how the choice of the right register should be made to fit the situation has been tackled. In a *phone-conversation task*, learners are offered a description of situations and, thus, the contextual factors. This is pragmatically relevant because, in phone conversations, making requests is almost inevitable. On 19 occasions, the requester and the requestee have been specified. This helps in inferring their relationship, the context and the type of interaction (e.g. *customer-secretary*). However, no explicit discussions have been found as regards the relationship between participants and its impact on pragmatic choice. In, almost, all the cases these pragmalinguistic cues have been implied; it has not been explicitly stated that they are pragmatically relevant in the production of an utterance. All in all, these pragmatic cues are unlikely to motivate pragmatic awareness and development as the general presentation of input seems to link functions of requests to particular language forms and this would limit the range of pragmatic choices learners may opt for to make their requests (Vellenga, 2004), unless
the teacher intervenes to fill in this gap. By experience, teachers do not always indulge in such a problem as they are restricted with a tight deadline to finish the programme and faced with learners who keep asking about translating words into their mother language and thus making only grammatically-correct utterances.

Book 2 and 3 are rather limited in terms of metapragmatic information offered except from specifying the participants on certain occasions. Knowing the participants is never enough if learners are not aware that the relationship and the degree of familiarity between interlocutors have an impact on the requestive act. Actually, in the three textbooks little has been done to make learners aware of these factors.

**Apologies:**

In comparison with requests, the three textbooks contain very few apologies. The occurrence of apologies is far from reflecting the occurrence of the apologising act in real language use settings. Findings from interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatic studies have suggested that this linguistic act is frequently realised in speech act data gathered through various data collection instruments (e.g. Blum-Kulka et al., 1986). Book 1 includes 34.50% of the apologies; Book 2 includes 30.67% while Book 3 includes 26.09 %. It is worth mentioning that we have coded as apology not only the ones uttered for social offences, but also those that precede refusals, asking for clarification and those for hearing offence. On the whole, the distribution of apologies seems to be random and non-patterned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Apologies</th>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
<th>Book 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. (%)</td>
<td>9 (34.50%)</td>
<td>8 (30.67%)</td>
<td>6 (26.09%)</td>
<td>23 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 10, expression of apology is the most used strategy in the three textbooks. This really reflects its high frequency in real interactions, but the overuse may always be a source of bias. This can also be counted as an oversimplification of the apologising act which is realised with a cluster of strategies no less complex than those of request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apology Strategies</th>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
<th>Book 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expression of Apology (IFID)</td>
<td>7 (70.00%)</td>
<td>8 (72.73%)</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
<td>21 (77.77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation/Account</td>
<td>3 (30.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>3 (11.11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement of Responsibility</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>3 (27.27%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>3 (11.11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer of Repair</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise of Nonrecurrence</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
<td>0 (0.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10 (100%)</td>
<td>11 (100%)</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
<td>27 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table also indicates that the textbooks are rather limited when it comes to the other strategies. The explanation/account strategy appears just three times in Book 1 and the acknowledgement of responsibility strategy three times in Book 2 while offer of repair and promise of nonrecurrence strategies are not traceable in the three textbooks. Book 3 is always the most limited in terms of strategies since it contains only IFIDs. In terms of content, the textbooks...
do not offer varied strategies even for *expression of apology*; *(I’m) sorry* has been used 80.95%, *to apologise/apologies* has been used 9.52% and the verb *to beg* (pardon) has been used 9.52% too. The over-presentation of one linguistic form in the textbooks is likely to push learners to over-learn it and, thus, over use it later. Findings from interlanguage studies have supported this claim. In her study, Trosborg (1995) reported that Danish learners, including the proficient ones, used the expression *I’m sorry* with a very high frequency. She argued that this item was over-learnt. Textbooks are likely to interfere in shaping such apologetic behavior in learners’ interlanguage. The wide occurrence of one item at the expense of the others may also provoke overgeneralization in the learners’ performance when they are not sure about the other forms (Sabaté i Dalmau and Curell i Gotor, 2007: 300). So far as *excuse me*, the linguistic counterpart of *I’m sorry*, is concerned, it is worth mentioning that the occurred instances do not serve as real apologies, but rather as *attention-getters* used before the issuance of requests. For this reason, it has been considered only in the requests above.

In accordance with the number of apologies, few combinations have been spotted. Two combinations are dominant: *IFID* + explanation/account and *IFID* + acknowledgement of responsibility. Here are some examples:

**Book 1**

a. I am writing *to apologise* for the absence of my daughter Melinda from school yesterday *she had to take care of her little sister, because*…….* (IFID + Explanation).

b. I’m *sorry* I can’t. *I have to go to the dentist.* (IFID + Explanation)

**Book 2**

c. *Sorry. I should have asked for your permission first.* (IFID + Acknowledgement)

d. *I’m really sorry. I shouldn’t have said that.* (IFID + Acknowledgement)

Another important aspect of the apologising act is IFID-internal intensification. Table 11 shows types and frequencies of the intensifiers found in the three textbooks. It is obvious that the provided data do not conform to the naturally occurring data neither in terms of content nor frequency. In Book 1, *very* is used just once. In Book 2, *really* is used once and *sincere* twice, in written apologies. In Book 3, one apology was intensified by the emotional expression *Oh!* It is obvious that some frequent intensifiers have been overlooked like *so, truly, extremely*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensification</th>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
<th>Book 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Very</em></td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>1 (20.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Really</em></td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>1 (33.33%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>1 (20.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sincere</em></td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>2 (66.67%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>2 (40.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Oh!</em></td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
<td>1 (20.00%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
<td>5 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like in requests, the metapragmatic data relevant to the production of the apologising act is found to be limited in the textbooks examined. In Book 1, teachers are recommended to guide learners on how to *ask for clarification* using forms of apology. This might be helpful in raising awareness about the dynamics of the apologising act that is not only used for compensating social offences. Elsewhere, learners are supposed to transform a formal apology to a less formal
one through employing *sorry* instead of the verb *to apologise*. This is an attempt to make learners distinguish between registers. Unfortunately, this task has been dropped from the later editions of the textbook. As for intensification, learners are given cues how to intensify their apologies when expressing *sympathy*. They are explicitly guided to intensify their apologies using *very*, *really* and *extremely (sorry)*. No explicit metapragmatic cues have been given in Book 2. In Book 3, there is an occasion where degrees of friendship in the English culture are discussed. The teacher could illustrate through apology, as well as request, how this aspect influences language as used in context. This pragmatic cue gives the teacher a chance to shed light on the sociopragmatic aspect of language. To sum up, the provided metapragmatic cues are very limited and, thus, unlikely to provoke pragmatic awareness and/or development.

**Summary of the Results:**

The present study has revealed the following results which, in common, suggest that the acquisition of requests and apologies through the input presented in the Algerian secondary school textbooks is highly unlikely:

1. The distribution of input under question in the three textbooks seems to be, on the whole, random and non-patterned as the occurrence of certain forms does not seem to vary in accordance with the level of the learners while the occurrence of some others appears to be counterintuitive.

2. At the pragmalinguistic level, learners, generally speaking, are exposed to the minimum linguistic forms for producing requests and apologies. However, certain forms are overused like the modals *can* and *could*, the politeness marker *please*, in requests and *IFIDs*, in apologies. This may result in counter-effects i.e. overuse of these forms.

3. At the sociopragmatic level, the impact of the socio-cultural and the contextual factors on the production of these two acts, like the age and the participants’ relation, is hardly ever tackled and, thus, the three textbooks put learners’ awareness of the impact of such factors at stake.

4. As for the metapragmatic information, there is a severe shortage in the material. That is, learners may actually learn a linguistic form but miss to learn how to use it in context.

5. The general tendency in the three textbooks is towards linking functions of request and apology with certain linguistic forms and, hence, limiting the learners’ pragmatic choices (Bardovi-Harlig, 2002, cited in Vellenga, 2004: 12). Such a tendency hinders the acquisition of the pragmatic repertory by which a choice is made to convey the right intention with the right pragmalinguistic form.

**Conclusion:**

Concordant with the findings, the following recommendations are in order. Textbooks should be enriched with empirically validated data. Here, the textbook writers can benefit from the already existing bulk of studies on interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics to identify areas of instruction. Data can also be sought out in authentic and spontaneous speech. As regards this point, Martinez-Flor (2007) points out that films can be a source of rich pragmatic input. Once the data is selected, it should be boosted with explicit metapragmatic information so as to show how the socio-cultural and the contextual factors influence the pragmatic choice. We agree with Cohen (2005) that the appropriacy of data is not the only issue to consider; the focus on this data should be explicit without neglecting learners’ strategies in learning and performing speech acts. Cross-cultural awareness is also an inescapable factor for developing the communicative
potential of FL and SL learners. To put it in Celce-Murcia’s (2007) words, “[i]f the role of language instruction is communicative competence, language instruction must be integrated with cultural and cross-cultural instruction (p. 51).”

About the Author
Boudjemaa DENDENNE is currently working as a teacher of EFL in a secondary school in Algeria. The author got his BA and MA from University of Constantine I (Constantine, Algeria) and he is presently a PhD candidate at the same university. His research interests include interlanguage/cross-cultural pragmatics, translation studies and EFL teaching

References:


**Textbooks:**


L2 Motivational Selves of Saudi Preparatory Year EFL Learners: A Quantitative Study

Hamid Ali Khan Eusafzai
English Language Centre, Colleges & Institutes Division,
Royal Commission, Yanbu Al-Sinaiyah
Saudi Arabia

Abstract
The study examined the English language learning motivation of Saudi preparatory year EFL learners in higher education institutions in the western coastal city of Yanbu Al-Sinaiya in Saudi Arabia. The current study is significant as so far only one study, investigating the language learning motivational selves of Saudi students, exists. The current study used Dornyei’s L2 Motivational Self System as a theoretical framework. Data was collected through a questionnaire and subjected to principal component analysis (PCA) and regression analysis. PCA revealed seven salient components of motivation of the preparatory year students. Language learning environment and experience emerged as the strongest predictor of inducing English language learning effort.

Keywords: Attitudes, EFL, L2 Motivational Self, language learning, motivation,
Introduction

For more than five decades Gardner’s theory of integrative motivation has been the dominant approach to understanding second language learning motivation. However, due to changing global scenario and evolving multicultural identities, the theory was found lacking in explanation for English language learning motivation in a globalized world with English as its lingua franca. Dornyei (2009) tried to bridge the gap by presenting his L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). The system was validated through studies in several EFL contexts. However, more research is advocated to “clearly define what is appropriately conceptualized as a possible L2 self” and to discover “the different cross cultural meaning of the self” (MacIntyre, Mackinon and Clement, 2009, p. 50, 54). The current paper aims at presenting an attempt exploring L2 motivational self in Saudi context. The aim of the study, reported in this paper, is to investigate the L2 motivational self profile of the Saudi preparatory year students in L2MSS perspective. An additional aim was to discover strong predictors of L2 motivation for this population. Data was collected through an adapted questionnaire and was subjected to the statistical procedures of principal component analysis and stepwise multiple regression analysis. Factor analysis revealed seven salient components of motivation; namely, attitude towards learning English, attitude towards L2 people and culture, instrumentality-promotion, value of studying English, instrumentality-prevention, parental encouragement and English anxiety. Attitude towards learning English was discovered to be the strongest predictor of motivation among this group of research participants.

Literature Review

L2 Motivation is “the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (Gardner, 1985, p.10). The affective factor of motivation is “often seen as the key learner variable because without it nothing happens” (Cohen & Dornyei, 2002, p.172). Corder (cited in Dornyei, 2009, p.1) goes to the extent of saying, “given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data”. The implication is that motivation is the controlling power and impetus behind second or foreign language learning behaviour (Dornyei, 1998), and probably also that motivation can be the determining factor in successful or unsuccessful language learning. Oxford and Shearin (1994) suggest that actions required by the learners for success in L2 acquisition are directly influenced by motivation. The crucial role of motivation in L2 acquisition can also be highlighted by the fact that motivation has been termed as an indicator of learners’ future success in the language they learn. Probably, motivation can influence all aspects of the learning engagement and action. Dornyei (2005) sums up the significant role of motivation in the following way:

It [Motivation] provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in SLA presuppose motivation to some extent. Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement. On the other hand, high motivation can make up for considerable deficiencies both in one’s language aptitude and learning conditions. (p.65)
Thus, motivation can rightly be termed as a central factor influencing second language learning and one of the most important individual differences (Dornyei, 2010). Understanding this significant individual difference can lead to the teacher’s ability to enhance learners’ motivation and resultantly learners’ achievement in their language acquisition.

Owing to the abovementioned essential role of motivation in language acquisition, substantial research has been dedicated to investigating and developing the concept of L2 motivation (Dornyei, 2010), rather motivation has been a dominant research area in second language acquisition since 1960s (Ushioda & Dornyei, 2012). The research in the area, during these decades, can be divided in three phases (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011), and the researchers and theorists adapted different approaches to understand and explain the concept. The most influential of these approaches was the social-psychological approach of Gardner and Lambert. The approach placed motivation at the heart of second language acquisition. The main tenet of the approach is that one learns a second language to “come closer to the other language community” (Gardner, 2001, p5). The tenet has been termed as integrativeness. Gardner (2001) defined integrativeness as:

> Integrativeness reflects a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community. At one level, this implies an openness, and respect for other culture groups and way of life. In the extreme, this might involve complete identification with the community (and possibly even withdrawal from one’s original group but more commonly it might well involve integration within both communities. (p.5)

The definition suggests that learning a second language is directed by the learner’s need of a ‘psychological and emotional identification’ (Dornyei & Csizer, 2002, p.453) with the target language community. The process of identification may involve relinquishing previous identity by the learner that the learner possessed by virtue of being the members of his/her L1 community. The concept of integrativeness attributes attitude towards the target language community as an important factor in successful acquisition and learning of a foreign or second language (Ushioda & Dornyei, 2012). The learner is interested both in the target language group and their culture, and also their speech behaviour (Dornyei 2010). The willingness to learn the language springs from this interest and also from the desire to assimilate in the target language community. The attitude towards the target language community and their culture can influence the attitude towards learning the language of the target group. “The learner’s ethnocentric tendencies and his attitudes toward the members of the other group are believed to determine how successful he will be, relatively, in learning the new language.” (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p.3)

Despite its pioneering nature, Gardner’s social-psychological approach to motivation has not been without criticism. The studies, which were foundational to informing Gardner’s approach, had mainly been conducted in the Canadian socio-educational environment. The society has the existence of an L2 or target language community and any learner has ample opportunities to communicate with the members of the L2 community; the need for integrating in this community is quite distinct. However, these features of a society, where L2 community and wider opportunities of communicating and interacting with the members of the L2 community are present, do not exist in EFL situations. The situations are characterized by teaching a target
language to the learners ‘without any direct contact’ with the members of the L2 community (Dornyei, 2009, p.24), and if a need to integrate exists, it exists more for the teachers coming from the L2 community rather than the foreign language learners. For example, native teachers of English, living abroad and teaching their L1 as a foreign language to the learners in that country, are probably more in need to integrate with their learners and the society of the learners as the dominant community is the community of the learners. Then, in most of the EFL situations, the contact of the learners with the target language is limited to the boundaries of the classroom only, and they predominantly use their L1 outside the classroom. Hence, in such foreign language learning situations, the concept of integrativeness as a desire to “learn more about the language group” and “a willingness to be like valued members of the language community” (Gardner & Lambert, 1959 in Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009) does not hold any ground in the changing modern day global world.

Additionally, in the changing linguistic scenario of a global society, the idea of English language belonging to a particular group or people is changing (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009). English language has evolved as a global and international language, and associating or affiliating the language with a particular cultural group has probably lost its validity (Dornyei, 2005). Smith (cited in Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2006) opines that the ownership of English can lie with anyone in a global world, and to make this claim of ownership to the language one needs not to adopt the identity of the members of the Anglophone societies, and also that knowledge or understanding of the native speaker culture is no more an imperative for being a proficient user of English. The reason, for Smith’s claim, lies in the fact that due to the development of the international ownership of English, the distinction between L1 and L2 communities of English speakers is becoming extinct (Lamb, 2013). English can now be identified with ‘an amorphous imagined community of the international English language users” (ibid, p.1000) and not with a geographically or culturally distinct group. The perspective of globalization, in which English does not belong to any clear geographically or culturally restricted group, invalidates the concept of integrativeness as a desire to identify with the target language community. Coetzee-Van Rooy (2006) criticizes this concept of integrativeness as a simplistic view of identity and is of the opinion that such a view is based on “incorrect assumptions made about the sociolinguistic contexts of many learners of English as a second language across the world” (p.441). The phrase ‘incorrect assumptions’ is referring to the idea embedded in the concept of integrativeness that learners learn English because of their interest in the target language community or owing to their desire to be like the members of that community. The situation may be contrary. In a globalized world, with English as its lingua franca, the learners may learn English “to communicate to the rest of the world their identity, culture, politics, religion and way of life” without any intention “to be like a native speaker of English” (Smith cited in Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2006, p.441, 442). The interest and learning of English may be a result of the desire of the learners ‘to be identified with either more educated and cosmopolitan members of one’s own group” (Lamb, 2013, p.1000) or because of the learner’s “interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and… openness to non-ethnocentric attitude towards different cultures” (Yashima, 2002, p.57).

The perspective presented above necessitates reconceptualization of language learning motivation in a way as to account for the complexities existing in English language learning.
contexts in a global world. Integrativeness cannot, probably, be presented as a valid reason or motive for learning English language because there is an absence of interest in the target language community and also a lack of the desire to identify or assimilate in the target language community. Rather, the learner may be learning English language as a result of “an internal process of identification within the individual’s self-concept” (Ushioda, 2006, p.150). Dornyei (2009) tried to bridge this gap by presenting his model of L2 motivational Self System (L2MSS). The system also tries to account for the internal processes of identification of the learners. The underlying idea of the system is that “the motivationally important identifications are not with others but with future versions of the self” (Lamb, 2013, p.1000). Dornyei’s model is based on Higgins’ (1987) theory of self-discrepancy and Markus and Nurius (1986) concept of possible selves. Markus and Nurius (1986) described possible selves as a “type of self-knowledge” which pertains to how individuals think about their future. Possible selves are the ideal selves that we would very much like to become. They are also the selves we could become, and the selves we are afraid of becoming. The possible selves that are hoped for might include the successful self, the creative self, the rich self, or the loved and admired self, whereas the dreaded possible selves could be alone self, the depressed self, the incompetent self, the alcoholic self, the unemployed self, or the bag lady self” (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p.954). Higgins (1987) presents two aspects of possible self: ideal self and ought-to self. Ideal self is what people hope or wish to become, and ought-to self is what a person wish to become as a result of the influences of the “significant others” (Higgins, 1987, p.320) like parents, teacher, or friends and peers. These possible selves provide a reason for motivated behaviours, that is, a person may act either to achieve the hoped for self or to avoid becoming the dreaded self. Motivation results when a person tries to bridge the gap between one’s current self and the self the person wants to be or would avoid to become.

Dornyei (2009) based his model of L2MSS on these two frameworks of possible selves. L2 Motivational Self System has three aspects: the ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self and L2 learning experience. The ideal L2 self, in the case of foreign language learning motivation, is “the L2-specific aspect of one’s ideal self” (ibid, p.106). Ideal L2 self represents an internal image of the target language user which a learner aspires to be in future. Thus, if the image represents an L2 speaker, who is benefitting from the technological advances of the modern world because of the target language skills, the learner would aspire to learn the target language to be akin to the ideal or this internal image of a target language speaker, and this may result in motivation to learn the language. The second aspect of L2MSS, the ought-to self represents those duties, responsibilities and obligations which the learner has to fulfil in order to meet the expectations of the people around him/her. The learner, while aspiring to fulfil these duties and responsibilities, aims at preventing the negative outcomes like not meeting the expectations of parents or teachers. Simply put, this aspect represents the “attributes that one believes one ought to possess” (Dornyei, 2005, p.105). The third aspect of L2MSS is the L2 learning experience. The construct represents the attitude of the learner towards the target language, and the attitude is subject to influence by the learning environment or experience. Thus, the third aspect can also be termed as situation-specific motives rooted in the learning environment and experience (ibid).

Dornyei’s L2MSS has been praised for being a more education-relevant framework, having foundation in the already existing approaches to motivation, having the potential to explain the complex concept of language learning motivation, and at the same time
reconceptualising the concept of integrativeness for a multicultural and multilingual globalized world (MacIntyre, Mackinon and Clement, 2009). The model has also been subjected to empirical tests to validate it and also to find a correlation between the socio-psychological model of Gardner and L2MSS. Studies were conducted in diverse EFL environment. Taguchi conducted a study in Japanese context. Magid conducted an investigation in Chinese context, and Papi investigated the L2MSS of Iranian context. The findings of all three studies were reported in a joint paper (Taguchi, et al., 2009). Ryan (2009) conducted a research based on L2MSS in Japanese context. All these studies discovered evidence of validity for the model in their contexts. Csizer and Kormos (2009) validated the model in Hungarian context. They compared the motivational and attitudinal behaviour of secondary school and university students. They found ideal L2 self and language learning experience as the best predictor of motivated behaviour. Kromos, Kiddle & Kizer (2011) conducted a study in Chile on a diverse population of EFL learners including school students, university students and young adult learners. The study confirmed that self-related beliefs play a role in language learning motivation. The most important finding of the study was the students’ desire for integration in international culture and they looked at English language as a mean to this integration. The other important factors contributing to the motivated learning behaviour were immediate learning environment and family support. Kim (2012) investigated L2MSS of Korean EFL students and discovered that the model was more suitable for explaining the L2 motivation of Korean students as compared to Gardner’s model due to changing educational context resulting from globalization. Kim discovered that L2 motivation was significantly correlated to promotion and prevention based instrumentalities, thus, partially validating L2MSS model. Lamb (2013) investigated L2 motivation in Indonesian settings. Lamb discovered that positive learning experience was the strongest predictor of motivated language behaviour among rural group of participants, whereas among the urban group L2 self was the strongest predictor.

Most of the above mentioned studies discovered that Ideal L2 self can be taken as an:

equivalent to integrativeness, strengthening the argument that integrativeness is simply a local manifestation of a much more complex, powerful construct, [……]. What has been identified as integrativeness in numerous studies is simply one of a much greater whole. [……] Integrativeness may indeed exist in many contexts but it does so as part of a broader L2 self concept. (Ryan, 2009, p.137)

MacIntyre et al. (2009) is of the opinion that whereas L2MSS contributed to broadening the idea of L2 learning motivation and also has the potential to effectively predict motivated behaviour, there has not been enough research based on the model. The scenario is true of Saudi Arabia and especially of the research on the motivation of Saudi preparatory year students. Only one published research, by Al-Sheri (2009), could be discovered using L2MSS framework in the Saudi context. However, the participants of his study were not exclusively Saudi students. The participants were a mix of Saudi and non-Saudi UK-based Arab students. Further, Al-Sheri did not report the findings population wise; therefore, the study is not very helpful in deriving conclusions about the motivational orientations of the Saudi students (Weger, 2013). Thus, there is a need to investigate L2 motivational orientations of an exclusive group of Saudi students within the framework of L2MSS to explore how the Saudi preparatory year students conceptualize their L2 selves. Further, as MacIntyre et al., (2009) expressed the need for more research to help shaping a clearer approach to the meanings of possible L2 selves and how
culture affect these meanings, there is a need to understand how Saudi students conceptualize their L2 motivational selves in their particular educational, social and cultural context. The study is conducted with the aim of achieving these ends. The research questions for this study are:

1: What are the significant factors of L2 motivation self of Saudi preparatory year students?
2: Which of these factors are the best predictors of L2 motivation?

Method

Participants

The participants of the research were Saudi preparatory year students of three Saudi higher education institutions in a western coastal city of Saudi Arabia. Preparatory year students are higher secondary school graduates with an age range of eighteen to twenty, and they have to complete a foundational year study before embarking on their undergraduate study. The aim of the preparatory year study is to equip the students with academic and linguistic skills to enable them to cope with the demands of the university study. The main thrust of the preparatory year study is to enhance students’ English language proficiency as the medium of instruction in the undergraduate study is English (Yushau & Omar, 2006). Thus, the students have to undergo an intensive English language instruction generally for two semesters (in some cases for three semesters if the students’ proficiency level is too low). These semesters are labelled as English 000, English 001, and English 002. Students with beginners or low beginners level join English 000, and are expected to achieve elementary level of language proficiency at the end of the semester. Students with elementary level are placed in English 001, and are allowed to proceed to English 002 if they achieve pre-intermediate level at the end of the semester. Students in English 002 level are expected to achieve intermediate level of English language proficiency at the end of the semester, and are admitted to undergraduate study. The placement, in different levels and semesters of the preparatory year English language program, is dependent on an English language placement test in some universities. Hence, the general aim of the intensive program is to raise the general English language proficiency of the students to intermediate level. The students receive English language instruction for four hours a day and twenty hours a week. Each semester spreads over a period of sixteen weeks. It may be worth mentioning that education in Saudi Arabia is segregated by sex.

A total number of 500 preparatory year students were approached for participation in the research. As mentioned earlier they were from three higher educational institutes, and from different levels of preparatory year studies. However, only 434 participants’ data was selected for analysis as the remaining 66 questionnaires had substantial number of missing or patterned responses. Table 1 and Table 2 provide the demographic information of this final number of participants.

Table 1: Gender-wise Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>46.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Level-wise Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English 000</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>24.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 001</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>25.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 002</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>50.2 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instrument**

Data was collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, (2009). The questionnaire was originally used in Japanese context. As the Saudi context is similar to Japanese context in terms of English language instruction being a foreign language instruction in Saudi Arabia as well, thus the questionnaire was deemed suitable for adoption and use in the Saudi context. Then, a pre-existing instrument was also adapted because such instruments are more valid and reliable (Dornyei, 2010). The questionnaire had two main parts. Part 2 required the students to provide demographic information like name of institution, age, level of study, English language instruction in a native country and by a native teacher, and their self-perceived level of English. Part 1 of the questionnaire had 67 statement type and question type items. Forty-nine items were measured by six-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) and eleven items were measured on six-point rating scales ranging from not at all (1) to very much (6). The 67 items ranged across 16 motivational factors. The factors included criterion measure, ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self, parental encouragement, instrumentality-promotion, instrumentality-prevention, linguistic self-confidence, attitude towards learning English, travel orientation, fear of assimilation, ethnocentrism, English anxiety, integrativeness, cultural interest and attitude towards L2 community.

**Instrument Adaptation Procedure**

Appropriate permission procedure was followed to obtain approval for adapting the instrument. The instrument was translated in Arabic. Translation was necessitated by the limited English language skills of the participants. A questionnaire, in the participants’ first language, facilitates comprehension of the questionnaire items and facilitates acquiring accurate responses (Dornyei, 2010). Translation and back translation (ibid) technique was used to acquire an original-like Arabic version of the questionnaire. Additionally, the final version was again shown to three bilingual translation experts to ascertain the accuracy of the Arabic version. They gave a positive opinion about the accuracy of the Arabic translation.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The copies of the questionnaires were sent to the groups of the students through their teachers. The students were informed about the purpose and aim of data collection through the teachers and also through a prefatory note in the questionnaire. They were also informed of the
Data Analysis

Data was subjected to post-hoc analysis through statistical package SPSS (version 20). The decision of the post hoc analysis was led by the consideration that:

Questionnaires used as research instruments are developed following a theoretical frame-work and the item response pattern typically corresponds to some extent to this initial theoretical structure, particularly if the questionnaire has been properly piloted. However, this correspondence tends not to be perfect and therefore we need to conduct post-hoc item analysis and pattern verification before we can start working with the reduced set of variables. (Dornyei & Csizer, 2006, p.32)

As the original questionnaire had questions related to 16 constructs, and was designed for another context, thus it was decided to conduct factor analysis to reduce the number of variables and to cluster inter-correlated variables together. Therefore, the data was, initially, submitted to an exploratory factor analysis using principal component analysis (PCA) to discover the main constructs of the participants L2 motivation. Promax, a non-orthogonal method of rotation was performed. Factor loadings of .4 or higher were considered significant. Factor extraction criteria were based on Cattell’s scree test. Factors not loading more than two items, or items cross loading on more than one factor were discarded.

Table 3: Principal Component Analysis Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F 1</th>
<th>F 2</th>
<th>F 3</th>
<th>F 4</th>
<th>F 5</th>
<th>F 6</th>
<th>F 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Variance</td>
<td>19.94</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalue</td>
<td>13.36</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really enjoy learning English</td>
<td>.861</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find learning English really interesting</td>
<td>.763</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I always look forward to English classes</td>
<td>.632</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you like English?</td>
<td>.547</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like the atmosphere of my English classes</td>
<td>.487</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am working hard at learning English</td>
<td>.438</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like English magazines, newspapers, or books?</td>
<td>.736</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like to know more about people from English-speaking countries?</td>
<td>.733</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like TV programmes made in English-speaking countries?</td>
<td>.730</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like meeting people from English-speaking countries?</td>
<td>.650</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like people who live in English speaking countries?</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The things I want to do in the future require me to use English.</td>
<td>.791</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying English is important to me because, if I don’t have knowledge of English, I'll be considered a weak student.</td>
<td>.706</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying English is important to me because with English I can work globally.</td>
<td>.651</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying English can be important for me because I think I’ll need it for further studies on my major.</td>
<td>.620</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to study English; otherwise, I think I cannot be successful in my future career.</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using English.</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying English can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job.</td>
<td>.863</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying English is important to me because English proficiency is necessary for promotion in the future.</td>
<td>.766</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I make more effort, I am sure I will be able to master English.</td>
<td>.626</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Belief</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that I will be capable of reading and understanding most texts in English if I keep studying it.</td>
<td>0.526</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to study English because I don’t want to get bad marks in it at university.</td>
<td>0.802</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying English is necessary for me because I don’t want to get a poor score or a fail mark in English proficiency tests.</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study English because close friends of mine think it is important.</td>
<td>0.635</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning English is necessary because people surrounding me expect me to do so.</td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to learn English because without passing the English course I cannot graduate.</td>
<td>0.582</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to study English, because, if I do not study it, I think my parents will be disappointed with me.</td>
<td>0.576</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents encourage me to study English.</td>
<td>0.820</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents encourage me to take every opportunity to use my English (e.g., speaking and reading).</td>
<td>0.805</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents encourage me to study English in my free time.</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents encourage me to attend extra English classes after class (e.g., at English conversation schools)</td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I met an English native speaker, I would feel nervous.</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would feel uneasy speaking English with a native speaker.</td>
<td>0.789</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would get tense if a foreigner asked me for directions in English.</td>
<td>0.769</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class. .638

Based on the criteria, seven factors loaded 35 items explaining 44% of the total variance. The KMO measure of sampling displayed a strong value of .89 which indicates the suitability of the sample for running a factor analysis. Table 3 reports variance, eigenvalue and item loading for each factor.

The first factor loaded six items. In the questionnaire, four of the items were related to attitude towards learning; one was related to integrativeness, and one was part of the criterion measure. As the items loaded on this factor are related to positive and enjoyable learning experience and interest in learning English, thus the factor can be named as attitude towards learning English.

The second factor loaded five items. Three of the items probed students’ attitude to the target language community and one investigated their likeness or otherwise of the print media and one asked them about the TV programmes of the English speaking countries. The factor can be named as attitude towards L2 people and culture.

The third factor loaded six items. Three of the items were related to instrumentality-promotion, two to ideal L2 self, and one to instrumentality-prevention in the adapted questionnaire. The items were related to their future academic and career use of English- the academic and career instrumentality of English. Based on the shared theme of the future image of the students’ English using self for academic and career related objectives, the factor can be named as instrumentality-promotion as instrumentality-promotion is related to “goals and hopes of becoming professionally and personally successful in the L2” (Dornyei, 2009, p.29).

The fourth factor loaded four items. Two of the items were related to instrumentality-promotion and the other two were related to the construct of linguistic self confidence in the adapted questionnaire. Thus, the factor combines two themes: first, the theme of linguistic self-confidence of the learners in becoming proficient in English language; second, how this proficiency can help them in future. The apparently different looking themes can, by connotation, be taken as referring to the future results of studying English by the students: studying English may lead to proficiency in English language skills and subsequently also to future success in professional life. Studying English is the current self of the student and the linguistic and professional success resulting from the current self may be termed as linguistically and professionally successful future self of the student. The future is based on the value attached to the current studying of English language. Thus, the factor can be named as the value of studying English.

The fifth factor loaded six items. Two of the items were related to instrumentality-prevention and four of the items were related to ought-to self in the adapted questionnaire. The questions shared a common theme of learning English in order to avoid failure in future academic pursuits and displeasure and disappointment of parents and people around resulting from the failure. The factor can be given the name of instrumentality-prevention as the shared theme of the items loading on this factor was related to preventing the negative effect of failing in English.
The sixth factor loaded four items. As all items were related to the construct of parental encouragement in the adapted instrument the name of the construct from the original questionnaire, parental encouragement, was retained for the factor.

The seventh factor loaded three items. The items measured students’ anxiety in using English inside and outside the classroom in the adapted questionnaire, and therefore the factor was termed as English anxiety.

Reliability Measures/Mean Analysis

For further statistical analysis the 35 items loading on the seven factors were averaged in seven composite scales and reliability measures and mean analysis were conducted of the items and the scales. The 35 items loading on seven factors were subjected to reliability analysis which resulted in a Cronbach’s alpha of .85.

Reliability analysis was carried out for each composite scale. The Cronbach’s alpha of all the seven composite scales, resulting from the loading on factors, was within the acceptable limits (> .7) (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Criterion measure showed a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.6; however, the lower alpha value can be a result of lesser number (3 only) of items in the scale. Table 4 reports the reliability measures and mean analysis of the seven composite scales.

Table 4: Reliability/Mean Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale/Composite Scale</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha Value</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reliability of all items</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards learning English</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards L2 people and culture</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentality-promotion</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of studying English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentality-prevention</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental encouragement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mean analysis of the seven factors indicate the highest mean of 5 for both value of studying English and instrumentality-promotion. The highest mean score of these two factors is indicative of the prominence of the two factors for this set of research participants.

**Multiple Regression Analysis**

Multiple regression analysis was run to determine the best predictors of L2 motivation of the Saudi preparatory year students. The criterion measure was used as the dependent variable. Prior to running the analysis, multicollinearity, linearity, and normality assumptions were tested and no violations were discovered. Concurrently, any strong correlations (r=.07) were non-existent among the variables. The prediction model (Table 5) contained six of the seven independent variables. The prediction model is statistically significant, $F(6, 427) = 61.791$, $p<.001$, and accounted for 45% variance of the criterion measure. The strongest weight went to attitude towards learning English, followed by instrumentality-promotion, parental encouragement, value for studying English, instrumentality-prevention and attitude towards L2 people and culture. The unique variance explained by each of the predictors is approximately: 9% by attitude towards learning English, 0.3% by instrumentality promotion, 1.3% by parental encouragement, 1.82% by value of studying English and less than 1% by both instrumentality prevention and attitude towards L2 people and culture.

**Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE b</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Pearson r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.631</td>
<td>.349</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards learning English</td>
<td>.411</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.382</td>
<td>.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentality-promotion</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental encouragement</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of studying English</td>
<td>.281</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>.488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentality-</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
L2 Motivational Selves of Saudi Preparatory Year  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>prevention</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards L2</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people and culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent variable: CM, $R^2=.46$, Adjusted $R^2=.45$, $P<.05$, $sr^2$ is the squared semi partial correlation

Discussion

The study investigated the language learning motivation selves of the Saudi preparatory year students, and explored as to which motivational selves construct are applicable to this set of research participants. Factor analysis revealed that only seven motivational factors are salient for the group, whereas the adapted questionnaire had a total number of 15 motivational factors. The salient factors for the group are: attitude towards learning English, attitude towards L2 people and culture, instrumentality-promotion, value of studying English, Instrumentality-prevention, parental encouragement and English anxiety.

Factor analysis revealed that the first factor, attitude towards learning English, loaded all (n=4) items from the same scale in the adapted questionnaire whereas one item each loaded from integrativeness and criterion measure. One item loaded was loaded from the scale interest in English language in the adapted questionnaire but was discarded as it loaded on two factors. The factor also emerged as the strongest predictor of motivation in the regression analysis. The items in the factor mainly aimed at investigating the students’ attitude towards contextual, situational and environmental elements that play a role in English language learning. The emergence of the factor indicates that attitude towards learning English plays a vital role in motivating Saudi preparatory year students. The findings are in line with the studies conducted by Cizer and Kormos (2009), Kromos, Kiddle & Kizer (2011) and Lamb (2013). The findings confirm that in Saudi context students’ making effort does not necessarily depend on “inter or externally generated self images but rather from successful engagement with the actual language learning process” (Dornyei, 2009, p.29). The students’ effort towards learning English language will result from their feeling “positive about the learning process” (Lamb, 2013, p.1014). The findings, related to the emergence of the attitude towards learning English, also “suggest the role of the teacher is potentially important in converting generally positive attitude towards English into actual learning effort” (ibid). The importance of the role of learning environment is also proven by my personal observation resulting from teaching to Saudi preparatory year students for last five years. Students, with a lot of enthusiasm and drive, would lose interest in investing further effort as the semester proceeds. Informal chats with them reveal that they do not find the lessons very interesting. Invariably, the main reason explained is monotonous teaching routines. The students have to attend the English language classes for four hours of every weekday. Sustaining the learners’ interest during these hours for nearly sixteen weeks depends predominantly on teachers. Students in intensive preparatory year are already under a lot of pressure as they have to attend at least 7 hours of lessons daily. If the classes are not interesting, the students will not feel motivated to attend the classes or participate in the learning activities.
Thus, the responsibility lies with the teachers to make the learning environment pleasant and enjoyable in their lessons to help students sustain their motivation.

The second factor, attitude towards L2 people and culture, loaded three of the four items from the scale of attitude towards L2 community and two of the four items from the scale of cultural interest. The loading of the items indicates that students consider people and media as a representation of the L2 community. The reason can be that many students in Saudi EFL context do not come in direct contact with the members of L2 community. The minimal contact is either through the teachers or other professionals from the L2 community teaching or working in Saudi Arabia, or through the electronic media. The media in such case becomes representative of the L2 community. Attitude towards L2 community or culture is the main focus of Gardner’s model of integrativeness and “reflects a positive non-ethnocentric approach to other community” (Gardner, 1985, p.133). The factor indicates a positive outlook of the Saudi students towards the target language community. However, the regression analysis shows that the factor plays minimum role in inducing effort in learning English language by the students.

The third factor, named as instrumentality-promotion, is a blend of items from three different scales in the adapted questionnaire. The factor loaded items from the independent scales of ideal L2 self, instrumentality-promotion, and instrumentality-prevention. Majority of the items (three of six) were contributed by the scale of instrumentality-promotion in the adapted questionnaire. The main theme of these items is related to the instrumental use of English in future for two main purposes: academic and career/professional success. Students consider academic and professional success in future tied to the use of English. The factor is the second highest predictor of motivation in the regression analysis, and is linked to the utilitarian benefits of English language proficiency. Though only two of the items from the construct of ideal L2 self blended in this factor, the factor may be interpreted as the ideal L2 self of the participants, as ideal L2 self includes “internalised instrumental motives” (Dornyei, 2009, p.29). The factor has not loaded items related to integrative orientation and attitude towards L2 speaker, but certainly the aspect of instrumentality of the ideal L2 self blended in the factor. Thus, we can interpret that the ideal L2 self of the participants is more of a person speaking English and using English for instrumental reasons than for integrative reasons.

The next factor, value of studying English, blended items from the scales of instrumentality-promotion and linguistics self confidence. As mentioned earlier, the items loaded on the factor, make a current state of studying English and investing effort in learning English as a basis for some future gains, that is, the future gain of proficiency in English and professional gain in terms of a good job and better career prospects in future. Hence, the name value of studying English was given to the factor. The factor is not among the highest predictors of motivation in regression analysis. The factor is related to the internalized self of an effort making student with a future image of the efforts resulting in English language proficiency and career success.

The fifth factor, named instrumentality-prevention, blended items in equal number from the scales of ought to self and instrumentality-prevention. The theme of the majority of the items is studying English to avoid failure or under-achievement in English language tests. One item each is related to studying English for the reason of not disappointing parents, and one item to fulfill the expectation of the people around them. The factor can, probably, be taken as a
representation of the students ought-to self as “motives with a prevention focus - for example, to study in order not to fail an exam or not to disappoint one’s parents- are part of the ought self” (Dornyei, 2009, p.28). Apart from preventive stance, the ought to self also includes duties and obligation to ‘significant others’ (Csizer & Kormos, 2009, p.103). The factor loaded one item related to the duty of the students towards their parents. My personal observation, in Saudi preparatory year context, is that most of the educated mothers take a lot of interest in the academic pursuits of their children. The students often express their concern regarding disappointing their mothers by attaining low grades. Instrumentality-prevention is not among the best predictors of intended effort in the regression analysis, though preventing failure in English tests and exams is highly important for the students of preparatory year. The rule of the most of the higher education institutions is that any student scoring a low GPA on English is eliminated from the preparatory year program even if the student has scored well in other subjects. Thus success in English language course becomes mandatory for the student to stay in the university and continue his/her study.

The sixth factor, parental encouragement, loaded all items from the same scale in the adapted questionnaire. Parental encouragement is the next strong predictor of motivation in regression analysis, preceded only by the factors of attitude to learning English and instrumentality-promotion. The role of the parents can be taken as akin to extrinsic motive of learning English language for the students: “Parental encouragement also contributes to the students’ non-internalised L2 self-concept” (Csizer & Kormos, 2009, p.107).

Factor seven, English anxiety, loaded items related to the scale of English anxiety in the adapted questionnaire. The construct is the only one which did not appear as a predictor of intended learning effort in the regression analysis. However, English anxiety and attitude to learning effort are possibly related to each other. Anxiety may lead to a negative attitude and reduced anxiety may result in positive learning attitude. Thus, the teachers while trying to provide a conducive, pleasant and enjoyable learning environment should strive to reduce the level of anxiety resulting from linguistic tasks or performance for the learners.

The overall picture L2 motivational selves of the Saudi preparatory year students, emerging from principal component analysis and regression analysis can be summed up now. The motivational selves of these students are shaped by their immediate learning and societal environment. The ideal self appears to be of a learner investing efforts in learning English in order to gain proficiency in the language and the proficient English language user affording utilitarian benefits in future academic and professional career. The factors which can help in sustaining this effort are a conducive and learners’-friendly learning environment, the image of an academically and professionally successful proficient English language user, and parental encouragement.

**Conclusion**

The aim of the current study was to explore the L2 motivational self of the Saudi preparatory year students. The study revealed seven factors important to L2 motivation self of the group of students under research. The strongest predictors of motivation among these factors were attitude towards learning English and instrumentality-promotion. The findings of the study may be used to understand the motivational selves or the internalized and external factors related to L2 motivational selves of the students. However, generalizability claims would remain weak
as the sampling approached was based on convenience sampling technique and the participants belonged to one city only. It is also felt that a mixed method approach can be utilized to explore the L2 motivational selves profile of these students and the issues attached with it further and deeper. Concurrently, there is also a need of involving a larger and more representative sample of the population for generalizing conclusions of the future research.

About the Author

Eusafzai is in the field of English language teaching for nearly 14 years. He has initially taught in his home country Pakistan, and later joined the English language teaching faculty of a higher education institution in Saudi Arabia. Currently, he is working as Lecturer in Royal Commission English Language Centre at Yanbu, Saudi Arabia. His academic interests are classroom dynamics, role of technology in language learning, professional development and teacher cognition.

References


Abstract
This study investigates student perceptions of the English language assessment in terms of its effectiveness, reliability, validity and the students’ preference of its constituting instruments. It included 184 students from two Colleges in Oman who participated in responding to a questionnaire, of those 106 students participated in gender specific focus groups. The data obtained from the questionnaire was analysed for descriptive statistics and significant differences amongst the groups using Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis Test. Student views expressed in focus groups were analysed using thematic content analysis. The results suggested that the students perceived FP assessment as generally effective but they were ill-informed about its nature and contents. The data also indicated that there was a perceived need for more assessment instruments and an unexpected low social impact of FP assessment considering its high stakes.

*Keywords:* Assessment, English Language, Higher Education, Tests, Continuous Assessment.
Introduction

In Omani higher education, a level of proficiency in English is a requirement to access most higher education institutions (HEIs), and English is considered a vital tool to access the national labour market (Al-Lamki, 1998, 2006; Donn & Al-Manthri, 2010; Al-Issa, 2006). Al Shemli (2009) looks at the role of English in higher education in the globalised context, and argues that “the main effect of globalisation in the Sultanate of Oman is the need to diversify the economy and raise standards; and the concomitant pressure to supply skilled graduates for rapidly changing economic conditions” (p.10). In this context, improving the English language skills of students is identified as a major challenge in higher education, though reforms have been undertaken at both the school and university levels (Al Shemli, 2009). Reforms in school education that target improving proficiency in English language alongside skills in other subjects are highlighted by Alsarimi (2001), who calls for innovative methods to assess these skills and lessen the use of assessment tools that solely rely on memorising or rote learning.

The new educational system aims to strengthen student competencies in mathematics and science, to improve student proficiency in English, and to teach students to use scientific methods and problem solving … it is crucial that student assessment be reformed as well (pp. 27-28).

Changing the assessment instruments does not result in improving students’ English language proficiency per se. How these instruments are implemented and how students and teachers view these instruments participate in their effective implementation. This paper investigates the student perceptions of FP assessment and suggests a number of areas to enhance its effectiveness.

Literature Review

As graduates’ proficiency in English language is required by both the national and international labour markets, it has been identified as a vital asset in higher education. Though the internationality of English language as a lingua franca has also been emphasised as one of the reasons for this (Al-Issa, 2006; Al-Mahrooqi, 2012), the fact that the private labour market mainly operates in English has been seen by others as a more compelling reason. The need for graduates with an acceptable level of proficiency in English is clear in Al-Lamki’s exploration of the barriers to Omanisation (i.e., replacing expatriates by Omani nationals in the labour market).

Since English is the international language of communication and is also the medium for international business transaction, and since English is the operational language in Oman’s private sector, it is recommended that the level and standard of English taught in schools and colleges be improved (2011, p.395).

In response, the governing bodies responsible for education in Oman have set conforming goals. The Ministry of Education states that:


The Ministry of Higher Education proclaim similar views on the role of English language in CAS. English language teaching is associated with national development in Oman; the National English language Policy/Plan (NELP) states that:
the English language skills of Omani nationals must be seen as an important resource for the country’s continued development. It is this recognition of the importance of English as a resource for national development and the means of wider communication within the international community that provides the rationale for English in the curriculum (Al-Issa, 2005, p.2, emphasis in original).

Despite such stated intentions, plans and policies to promote the English language proficiency of the labour force, recent studies of graduates’ English skills have found that these are inadequate for the needs of the private sector (Al-Mahrooqi, 2012; Al-Lamki, 2006). Al-Mahrooqi asserts that “research and experience have proved that the majority of school and college graduates possess neither adequate English language skills nor communication skills to function effectively in the workplace, which is dominated by expatriates from around the world” (2012, p. 124).

A similar view has been reported by the graduates themselves who “felt that their communication skills were very poor. Even the students on the verge of graduation expressed this, with much regret and sorrow” (Al-Mahrooqi, p.129). The students’ consciousness of their lack of adequate language skills seems to have deterred them from applying for vacancies in the private sector; Al-Lamki reports that “students felt that the private sector discourages and disqualifies Omanis from applying because of the requirements for work experience and English language skills” (2006, p.392). She found that 72% of the 58 graduate students, in this study, considered English language a barrier to work in the private sector. All in all, the issue of employability is very complex; one can only speculate that factors such as motivation, proficiency in English language or possessing other skills might be relevant, but the magnitude of these roles is still under-researched.

A common concern that is raised about pre-sessional programmes in general is that they allow students to embark on academic study with an inadequate level of English proficiency (Allwright & Banerjee, 1997; Fox, 2004). Cotton and Conrow (1998) report that students expressed a need for extra EAP instruction even after they had reached the IELTS level required by their universities. Though most internationally recognised higher education institutions do not permit embarking on higher education before reaching a certain minimum level of English language proficiency, some others do allow students to start academic studies at lower levels of language proficiency and provide them with language support programmes (Fox, 2004). The Colleges of Applied Sciences (CAS) follow this approach: students are provided with two EAP courses in their first year and two English for Specific Purposes courses in their second (one each semester) to help them overcome some language challenges they might face when starting academic study. The role of assessment in enhancing language programmes and improving student proficiency has been highlighted (e.g., Alsarimi, 2001; Al kharusi, 2008).

This study was conducted in two Colleges of Applied Sciences: Sur and Rustaq. It is estimated that almost 80% of the students admitted to higher education in Oman require English language courses in the Foundation Programme (FP) before starting their academic study (Al-Lamki,1998). The FP is a pre-sessional programme that can be considered an integral part of almost all of the HEIs in Oman. Its general aim is to provide students with the English language proficiency, study skills, computer and numeracy skills required for university academic study.
The aim of teaching English language is stated to be “equip[ing] students with both the English Language and academic study skills they will need to succeed in their subject studies” (CAS, 2010a, p.33).

The FP consists of twenty hours per week of English language instruction, and two hours of mathematics and/or computer skills courses in each semester. The English language programme is divided into two major courses, the General English language (GES) and Academic English Skills (AES), the acronym (FP) will be used to refer to the English language components only of the programme.

The present assessment system in CAS uses both standardised tests and Continuous Assessment (CA) as the way forward for education and assessment reforms in Oman. In a description of the assessment used in CAS, it is stated that “academic regulations mandate the allocation of 50% of marks to a final examination and 50% to CA” (CAS, 2010a, p. 35). Assessment in FP also included tests and CA instruments. Table 1 shows that assessment in the GES course includes a mid-term test and a final test, whereas assessment in the AES course includes writing a report and presenting it orally (i.e., CA).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Assessment Instruments</th>
<th>% of Course Total</th>
<th>% of Foundation Programme Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General English Skills</td>
<td>Mid-term Test</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Test</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic English Skills</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to pass, students must obtain 50% of the total marks in each course; failing to achieve this means failing the FP and consequently being denied access to higher education.

**Study Questions**

This study investigates student views of FP assessment in terms of its effectiveness, reliability and validity, social and educational impact, and their preference of various assessment tools. It provides a preliminary, small case study that was used as part of a larger study conducted to fulfill the requirements of a PhD at the University of Edinburgh. This paper mainly looks into the following questions and triangulated data from two different data collection methods: a Questionnaire and focus group.

1. How effective was the process of assessing students' English language performance, through continuous assessment and tests, in the Foundation Programme (FP) as viewed by students?
2. How was the reliability and validity of FP assessment viewed by students and teachers?
3. How was the impact of FP assessment perceived by students and teachers?
4. What were the differences between the 'continuous assessment' model used in the Academic English Skills course and the ‘test’ model used in the General English Skills course in terms of effectiveness, accuracy, and preferences of students?
Methodology

The Questionnaire

A total of 220 FP students were invited to participate in this study, which was conducted over two academic semesters. Of those a total of 184 students participated in responding to the questionnaire; 127 (69%) of them were from Rustaq College and the other 57 (31%) students were from Sur College. The sample consisted of 119 female students (64.7%) and 65 male students (35.3%). At CAS, when the students were admitted to the FP, they had already selected their intended specializations. The participants were from four different departments: Information Technology (IT), Communications Studies (CS), International Business Administration (IBA) and English Language-Education (see Table 2).

Table 2. The distribution of participants by specializations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialization</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Studies</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Business Administration</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>46.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language-Education</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (N)</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 184 students who completed the questionnaire forms were invited to take part in the focus groups and 106 of them agreed to participate; 12 focus groups were conducted seven of which were female only groups and the other five were male only groups. The participants expressed their preference of gender specific focus groups.

Table 3. An overview of the participants in focus groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Length/minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Rustaq</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>53 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Rustaq</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Rustaq</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>Rustaq</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 5</td>
<td>Sur</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 6</td>
<td>Rustaq</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>32 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 7</td>
<td>Sur</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 8</td>
<td>Rustaq</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 9</td>
<td>Sur</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 10</td>
<td>Sur</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>Sur</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>34 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 12</td>
<td>Rustaq</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>51 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>106</td>
<td>418 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the groups’ discussions were carried out in Arabic and were video-taped. The recordings were translated into and transcribed in English.
Data Analysis

Questionnaire

Appendix 1 displays the number and percentage of the students who responded to each item by selecting a point in the five-point likert scale questionnaire. The points 1 to 5 respectively denote Strongly Agree (SA), Agree, (A), No Opinion (NO), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The appendix also shows the means of the students’ responses to the items including the recoded ones.

It is important to note here that the views of the students and teachers on assessment validity are actually a form of “face validity”, they are not evaluations of the “construct” or “content” aspects of assessment validity.

The questionnaire items were organised into groups for later analysis based on their themes. In some cases, shown in the table, this entailed recoding (i.e., changing responses to be 1=5, 2=4, 3=3, 4=2 and 5=1) so that semantically opposite or near-opposite items could be more directly compared. The expectation was not that the items in a group would be found almost totally equivalent, but that they might reveal broad trends of satisfaction, dissatisfaction and perhaps other feelings and perceptions, whilst anomalous response patterns might offer further insights.

These expectations were only partially met. In the large section on Perceived Validity, mean scores were fairly similar within and even between sub-sections: all were below 2.9 (3.0 = No Opinion), indicating broad but not overwhelming acceptance of FP assessment validity. In some other sections, however, means varied more widely and fell on both sides of the middle point (M=3.0). Some of these cases will be discussed below.

Focus Group

Though content analysis is sometimes linked to quantifying the elements of the content according to a set of categories in a systematic manner (Bryman, 2008), thematic content analysis is linked to qualitative data analysis. According to Bryman interpretation of Althiede’s analysis (1996), ethnographic content analysis involved an element of “constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situations, settings, styles, images, meanings, and nuances” (p.393). In this study, thematic (ethnographic) content analysis which focuses on “what is said rather than on how it is said” (Bryman, 2008, p.412) was used to analyze the transcripts of the student focus groups.

The term “coding” though is widely used; it usually entails different procedures that sometime authors do not explicitly describe (Richards & Morse, 2007). It is essential for the enhancement of the quality and validity of any study to delineate not only the procedures followed in data collection but also in data analysis (Creswell, 2011; Maxwell, 1992; Mishler, 1990). In this study, the transcripts were coded using topic coding which links the ideas to the data rather than labelling the data only (Richards & Morse, 2007). A list of 20 codes emerged from reading the transcripts and referring to the study questions. The codes were selected based on their re-occurrence of the ideas and relativity to the study questions. Once the list of codes was refined, the steps below, which were adapted from (Miles & Huberman, 1994), were applied to focus group scripts. These steps were:

a. Assigning codes to the appropriate extracts in all interview scripts or audio recordings.

b. Reading the extracts linked to each code and clustering them into groups.

c. Looking for possible themes.

d. Comparing and contrasting the themes within the same phase and between the phases.
e. Splitting or combining themes.
f. Building a logical chain of evidence.
g. Making conceptual coherence.

The codes were categorised into three main themes: uncertainty about assessment instruments’ weightings and scales, tests in students’ perceptions, and CA in students’ perceptions. The latter two themes were divided onto six subthemes that covered the students’ views on the reliability and validity of FP assessment.

Results

Students’ Responses to the Questionnaire

This section aggregates the average responses to the individual items and presents the Mean and Standard Deviation of the responses to each topic to obtain an overview of students’ perceptions of Perceived Reliability, Perceived Validity, Preference of Tests, Satisfaction with Current Assessment Practices, and Impact of FP assessment. Table 4 lists the questionnaire’s topics which are hierarchically ordered according the means of the responses to each topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Impact</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference of Continuous Assessment</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Construct Validity</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference of Tests</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Content Validity</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Reliability</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Impact</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Current Assessment Practices</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results showed that the students seemed to positively perceive the reliability and validity of the FP assessment as the mean scores were Perceived Reliability (M =2.83), Perceived Construct Validity (M=2.06) and Perceived Content Validity (M=2.73). It can be seen from appendix 1 that the students seemed to show less satisfaction with the content validity of FP assessment than they did with its construct validity. A closer look at the elements of the Content Validity topic reveals that the mean of one of its items was close to the disagreement range (i.e., M ≥ 3.1). The means for the four items were respectively item 1.1: M = 2.7, item 1.2: M = 2.4, item 1.3: M = 2.9, and item1.4: M = 2.3 (appendix 1). The students’ responses to the third item implied that their certainty level of how their achievement would be exactly assessed in the FP courses was not high. Actually, 41% of the students responded with Disagree or Strongly Disagree to this item, while 47% of the students responded with Agree or Strongly Agree. It seems that a considerable percentage of the students were ill-informed about how they would be assessed in their English language courses. The students’ lack of knowledge about the assessment procedures could have lowered the average mean of FP Perceived Content Validity.
Another interesting point in Table 4 is that the mean score of the perceived Political Impact of FP was lower than that of perceived Social Impact of FP assessment. The means of the responses to FP Political Impact and Social Impact topics are 1.8 and 2.85 respectively, both of which fall in the agreement range (from M= 1 to M= 2.9). There seemed to be a majority agreement with the statements that indicates that FP assessment could entail considerable political impact by affecting the job opportunities in the labour market and the country’s international status. Also, there seemed to be a moderate agreement with the idea that assessment in FP did not entail negative or drastic social impact on students’ lives. Though FP assessment could be considered high-stakes, most of the students felt that the assessment was relatively fair, not frightening, and did not depend on luck. It is worth noting that though most of the students felt that both Continuous Assessment (CA) and tests were not stressful, they seemed to believe that the tests (item 6.1: M= 2.26) were less stressful than the CA (item 6.2: M=2.1). Some of the reasons for this view were discussed in focus groups.

The topic of Satisfaction with Current Assessment Practices had the second highest mean (M= 3.17). This implies that most of the students were not satisfied with the FP assessment. Investigating the items under this topic shows that though most of the students seemed generally satisfied with the FP assessment (item 5.1: M=2.15), most of them also believed that the FP assessment should be changed (item 5.2: M= 3.42) and that the change should not include fewer assessment instruments (item 5.2: M=2.29). Interestingly, this response was found to conform to what most of the students said in the focus groups about increasing the number of assessment instruments. In general, it could be concluded that the students seemed to be satisfied with the assessment practices, but they tended to believe that there should be more assessment instruments.

The last point about the means of the responses to questionnaire topics is that the respondents seemed to prefer AES continuous assessment (item 4.2: M= 2.23) more than the GES tests (item 3.1: M=2.46). This preference resonated with their opinions as expressed in the focus groups as discussed below.

**Comparing Perceptions amongst the Groups**

This section further explores the students’ responses to the questionnaire by investigating significant differences in responses to the items of each topic amongst the groupings by gender, college, specialization and self-evaluation. This exploration aims at identifying any clear pattern of consistent differences in the groups’ responses that might shed some light on the participants’ perceptions using filters such as college or gender.

Before looking at the results of these tests it is important to clarify the rationale for using non-parametric tests. First of all, the data generated by a likert scale is an ordinal and sometimes categorical type of data that is best investigated using non-parametric techniques (Pallant, 2007). Second, these two tests were selected because the data set was found to be not normally distributed, so non-parametric tests are ideal in this situation (Fielding & Gilbert, 2006). The data set of students’ responses was tested for normality of distribution using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, skewness values, histograms and box plots. The results showed that the distributions of students’ responses to each topic violated the assumptions of a normal distribution. Thus, Mann-Whitney U Test was used to investigate significant differences between two groups and Kruskal Wallis Test was used amongst three groups or more.
Differences between College Groups

In the college groups, a significant difference was found between Sur College’s students (Mean Rank= 95.49, n= 56) and Rustaq College’s students (Mean Rank= 79.45, n= 124) in their responses to Perceived Reliability, U= 2,853, p<.05. This indicates that the students at Sur College were significantly different in their perception of Perceived Reliability than the students at Rustaq College (see Figure 6.1). Sur Students viewed the assessment tools as more reliable than did their peers in Rustaq College. This can be deduced from the Mean Rank values presented above and Mean values in Table 5.

Table 5. Means of students’ responses to questionnaire topics by colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Rustaq College’s Students</th>
<th>Sur College’s Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Impact</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference of CA</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference of Test</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Impact</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Reliability</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Construct Validity</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Content Validity</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Current Assessment Practices</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure1. Students’ responses to perceived reliability by colleges

Differences between Gender Groups

The results showed that the male and female students differed in responding to two topics namely Preference of CA and Political Impact. The Mann-Whitney U test revealed a significant difference between the female students’ responses (Mean Rank=80.61, n=116) and male students’ responses (Mean Rank= 106.13, n=62), U= 9,351, Z=-3.2, p=.001). The female students showed more Preference of CA than did the male students. Likewise, the male students’
responses (Mean Rank=102.52, n=62) and female students’ responses (Mean Rank=84.18, n=118) were significantly different on the Political Impact of FP assessment: the female students seemed to believe that FP assessment had higher Political Impact more than did the male students, U= 2912, Z=-2.3, p=0.21. All in all, this means that the female students seemed to prefer CA more than did the male students and they seemed to emphasise the political impact of FP more than did the male students (see Table 6 & Figures 2 &3).

Table 6. Means of students responses to questionnaire topics with gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Male Students</th>
<th>Female Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Impact</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference of CA</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference of Test</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Impact</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Reliability</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Construct Validity</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Content Validity</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Current FP Assessment Practices</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Responses to preference of CA by gender

Male (n) = 62
Female (n) = 116
However, the difference between the female and male students’ Preference of CA was not matched by a significant difference in their AES continuous assessment scores as shown by the results obtained from using Mann-Whitney U test. Actually, the female and male students’ mean grades in both of the FP assessment instruments (i.e., AES continuous assessment and GES tests) showed no significant differences (see Table 7).

Table 7. Mean and quartile of scores in GES and AES courses by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>GES</th>
<th>AES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Differences among Self-Evaluation and Specialization Groups**

In the first section of the questionnaire the students were asked to self-evaluate their language proficiency by selecting one of five levels to represent their language proficiency levels (i.e., 1= poor, 2=average, 3= good, 4=good, and 5= excellent). Kruskal Wallis was used to explore the differences, and the results showed no significant differences in the students’ responses to the questionnaire topics with regard to their self-evaluation groups. Similarly there were no significant differences in responding to the questionnaire’s topics among the specialization groups.
To summarise, it could be concluded that the responses of participants to the questionnaire’s items were not significantly different between the specialization and self-evaluation groups, but they were between the college and gender groups. The college groups showed a significant difference in responding to Assessment Reliability, and the gender groups showed a significant difference in responding to both Preference of CA and Political Impact topics.

**Focus Groups**

This section presents the results attained from the student focus groups which are intended to partly answer the questions of the study stated above.

**Uncertainties about GES and AES Assessment Instruments**

The majority of the students in seven focus groups tended to express uncertainty about how the scores were distributed on the main FP assessment instruments. Though, all of them seemed to be aware that the assessment of the General English Skills (GES) course included a midterm test and a final test and the assessment of the Academic English skills (AES) course included essay writing and a presentation, many of the students seemed uncertain about the scores distribution. The following extracts reveal this uncertainty as demonstrated in the students’ discussion of the weightings of the assessment instruments. This extract comes from Focus Group 9.

Student 3: In the GES course, there will be 50% of the total scores on the presentation and 50% on the essay.

Student 7: It is still not very clear how the scores in the AES course are divided. Some teachers say the project is allocated 50% of the total scores while other teachers say that it is worth 20% of it only, so we do not know yet…

Student 3: It is not clear. In the GES course, we have a speaking test and in the AES course, we have a presentation. So are they accumulated and how many scores each is awarded?

In addition to the uncertainties about scores distributions, many students seemed ill-informed about the criteria used in marking scales to evaluate their language performances in the essay and presentation. When asked about how scores would be given, most of them were aware that their teachers would be using marking scales but seemed oblivious of the scales’ criteria. Few students, in three groups only, mentioned several criteria of the scales such as: eye-contact, posture and grammar with regard to the presentation marking scale; and grammar, organization and content with regard to the essay marking scale. The following extract manifests the lack of clarity of the marking scales as experienced by many students.

**Group (3)**

Student 1: This semester the way we are going to be assessed is not clear. No one explained to us. The course plan seems not stable and the teachers seem not sure of how and what the assessment will look like

Students’ uncertainties were not limited to the distribution of scores and marking scale criteria, there were also uncertainties about the test sections. In one group, few students stated their confusion about whether grammar would be included in the midterm and final tests or not. In another group, the students’ discussion suggested that they were not aware of the fact that grammatical rules were actually tested in a section in the test titled “Language Knowledge”. They kept on speculating whether the grammar rules would be tested or not.
GES Tests in Students’ Perceptions

The presentation of students’ views of FP assessment categorises the views into two main sections: views about GES tests and views about AES assessment. In each of the categories, examples of students’ discussions were provided.

The Content of GES Tests

In the focus groups, issues about the content of the midterm test and forthcoming final test were raised and debated. One of the issues was the difficulty of the reading tasks in which they faced new topics. One instance mentioned was that in the midterm test the reading test task was about “human cannonball”. They said it was a new type of sport that they had never heard of before, thus they found it difficult to respond to the task questions. Group (11) discussed this issue saying:

Student 3: The reading passage was incomprehensible without the picture.
Student 6: True, it was about an unknown kind of sport.
Student 1: We have never heard of such a thing so comprehending what the passage was about, was so difficult.

It was discussed that in the midterm test, it was not only the topics that were new to them, but also the vocabulary of the reading task and length of the writing task.

The second issue raised was about the lack of proper preparation for the grammar test tasks. Though the midterm and the final tests allocate only 10% of the total mark to the Language Knowledge task (i.e., grammar and vocabulary test items), almost in all focus groups, the students expressed their need for additional grammar tutorials. In several groups, it was reported that even though the textbooks included activities on grammar rules, the teachers tended not to teach them. This was because they, as many students believed, seemed to be unqualified to teach grammar rules or because the teachers expected the students to study the rules by themselves as a form of autonomous learning. The students felt that more grammar lessons were needed to succeed in their future academic study and to pass the GES tests as manifested throughout the following extracts.

Group (9)

Student 1: We did the midterm exam and it was very difficult. We had not been given any practice quizzes before it. It was a shock.
Student 2: Our teachers do not explain grammar and we found the grammar part of the test very difficult. None of the teachers discuss grammar with the students.

The listening task, on the other hand, seemed to be considered by almost all groups as the most difficult task of the GES tests. Likewise, it was claimed that the listening activities undertaken in classroom were simpler than what was in the tests and fewer than what was needed to be able to perform well in the listening test tasks. The difficulty of the listening test task was conveyed in the extracts below.

Group (11)

Student 2: The listening (part two) was so difficult. We are not used to such a thing. We need a book on listening to practice listening.
Student 5: It was very quick; we could not answer the questions in the pace that we were supposed to.
The Consequences of GES tests

When asked about the fairness of the assessment instruments and importance of passing the FP assessment, the students’ responses varied from arguing that the assessment was very fair and passing was very important to claiming that assessment was unjust and passing FP assessment was unimportant. In almost all of the focus groups, FP assessment seemed to be regarded as unfair because of the distribution of scores on test tasks, type of test tasks, or inappropriate curriculum. It seems that the meaning of the concept “fairness” did not only include tests’ qualities but was stretched to include course curricula.

Group (3)

Student 12: Tests are not fair; they test grammar more than the other skills. Most of the scores are on grammar and since we are weak in grammar we lose a lot of scores in the tests.

Student 13: I felt that the test let me down. I was depressed because of my low scores.

The significance of passing the FP assessment was considered differently in the focus groups. Most of the students believed that they would definitely pass the FP and refused to consider the possibility of failing. For few students, considering the consequences of failing triggered negative social and psychological connotations such as: shame and depression.

Students’ Perceptions of AES Continuous Assessment

Like the previous section, this section presents the results of the student focus groups on AES assessment categorised into sections. Categorizing the evidence from the focus groups is intended to facilitate understanding the students’ views on FP assessment effectiveness. These categories were not used to imply a view of distinct types of validities rather they were used to present validity evidence on a clearer way.

What AES Continuous Assessment Measures

Though the report and presentation were considered as good assessment instruments per se, many students seemed to believe that CA was not suitable for everybody and it did not fully reflect their language skills. Two main reasons for this belief recurred in the focus groups. The first reason was that writing and presenting could result in a performance inhibition caused by students’ personal traits (e.g., low confidence and shyness) or learning styles (e.g., auditory, visual, and kinaesthetic). The second reason was the lack of proper guidance, training and practice on writing and presenting (e.g., different criteria sets used by different teachers). The intertwining of the students’ opposite feelings of appreciation of CA’s role in FP assessment and worry of its shortcomings are apparent in the following discussion.

Group (1)

Student 3: But if you were a silent student by nature, presentations and other oral means might not be just in terms of assessing students levels.

Student 8: I think it should be looked at as a comprehensive thing, I mean assessment. The tests with the presentations complement each other in terms of assessing students English language levels and showing their abilities. Some students are more capable of undertaking the exams while the others are more capable of presenting so the various ways of assessing the students give a fair chance to all.

Student 5: Still presentations influences confidence and does not show the real level.
The Content of AES Continuous Assessment

Few students in three groups doubted the content of the AES assessment (i.e., essay and presentation) and said that the essay was too complicated for their English language levels and research skills; and that they sometimes intentionally plagiarised or cheated in other ways. These discussions went as follows:

**Group (7)**

Student 12: They [the teachers] teach us steps on how to write an essay but never ask us to practice. We need to practice in class or out but the teacher always says that he will not mark our work. How do they know that the end result is my own work if they do not see samples throughout the semester? Last semester I asked my sister to write the essay for me and I will do the same this semester because I simply cannot write it though I know the steps.

Consistency in Implementing AES Marking Scales

As has been pointed out earlier, most of the students seemed to be aware of the fact that the marking scales will be used AES assessment but not of how they will be used. It was apparent from most focus groups that many students felt that the marking scales were inconsistent in how they were implemented or interpreted.

**Group (7)**

Student 12: But teachers differ in terms of the criteria they use to assess the students. We know that other groups are told different things about how they will be assessed in the essay. This is wrong, we are not assessed equally. All students should be given the criteria at the beginning of the semester before starting to write the essay or preparing for the presentation.

The Feedback Given in Continuous Assessment

A recurring theme in focus groups was the lack of teacher feedback offered in the essay and presentation. Generally in most of the groups the students expressed dissatisfaction with the amount and nature of feedback provided; and argued that the appropriate feedback could improve their language skills. It was claimed that sometimes the feedback imparted was ambiguous, negative, delayed or non-existent. The subsequent extracts display some of the students’ comments on teacher feedback.

**Group (8)**

Student 2: there is no feedback at all, we do not see our scores and we do not know how we are doing so far, we just wait until the end of the semester and wait to see the result at the end. We should have been given some feedback to lead us on what we should be learning and how we should do things right.

Student 6: we need more quizzes more things to tell us about our levels and guide us in learning. But most importantly we need feedback on the tools.

The Consequences of Continuous Assessment

The essay and presentation were described as subjective and unfair by most of the groups. Teaching styles, marking scales, scores distribution and availability of resources were all considered factors that participated in characterising CA as being unfair.

**Group (8)**

Student 3: The fairness of assessment depends on the teachers. Some teachers are unfair in marking the exams. For example sometimes we cannot revise the exam results with the
teacher or discuss any concerns some of them get angry when you try to discuss the scores with them.

Discussion

**FP Assessment Effectiveness in Student Perceptions**

Most students seemed less satisfied with the GES assessment (i.e., tests) than they were with the AES (i.e., presentation and report). The content of the GES tests was severely criticised by students. The students emphasised the difficulty that they faced in the grammar, reading and listening sections of the mid-term test. They elaborated that the reading topic was new; the grammatical rules were not all covered in the course; and the listening genre had not been introduced to them before.

Though AES assessment was generally positively viewed by the students, they both made comments signalling its problematic content and construct. They raised three concerns about the essay: (1) high difficulty level, (2) plagiarism, and (3) variability in implementing marking scales. In focus groups, some students admitted to committing plagiarism because they found the essay very difficult for them to write using their own words. Students’ interactions with the assessment tasks have been identified as a parameter in understanding students’ performances and difficulty of assessment tasks (Bachman, 2002). Hamilton (2003) discussed a number of studies that investigated cheating in tests; one study (Jacob and Levitt, 2003) found that the cheating instances increased when the tests were high-stakes. Another study on students’ perceptions of plagiarism in higher education found that students sometimes perceived plagiarism as “a strategy for coping with the demands of higher education level work and the pressure to succeed” (Ashworth, et al., 1997, p. 194). A similar perception was documented in other studies in the field of second language learning and assessment (Currie, 1998; Pecorari, 2003). The findings of this study conform to the findings of the studies that have recognised task difficulty as a contributing factor that influences students performances (Bachman, 2002); and considered it a principal factor in resorting to plagiarism (Hamilton, 2003).

Furthermore, the difficulty level of the essay task was not the only element of AES assessment criticised; the students expressed their apprehension of the inconsistency in implementing the marking criteria. This concern seems to match similar concerns documented in several studies on performance assessment (Brindley, 1998, 2001; Hay & Macdonald, 2008). Brindley (1998) reviewed a number of articles and identified numerous problematic issues with the validity of the scales used to mark students’ performances; he categorised them into political, technical and practical. He asserted that “subjective judgements of language performance are likely to show a good deal of variability” (p.65). Addressing this concern, Gipps (1999) advised that rater inconsistencies should be minimised to reach a better reliability especially in high-stakes assessment tasks. Given the high-stakes nature of FP English language assessment, and the concerns raised by the students about inconsistency in implementing marking measures, there seems to be an urgent need for implementing the standardization and moderation procedures discussed.

**Uncertainties about the FP Assessment Elements**

In the focus groups, most students seemed uncertain about specific aspects of the AES and GES assessment instruments. Some of these aspects were: the weightings of the assessment...
instruments and the criteria of the marking scales. Empirical evidence have suggested that the students’ understanding of assessment requirements might well be different to that of their teachers’ as Green (2007) indicated in reference to Weir and Green’s study (2002). In line with this suggestion, this study found that indeed students expressed a less certain understanding of what was required by the assessment activities than that of their teachers’. In AES assessment, for instance, most students complained about the lack of information on some aspects of which their teachers seemed very well aware.

Students’ uncertainties about aspects of FP assessment could be also referred to the unavailability of sample or mock tests. It was reported that past exams were not accessible for them and consequently they were not completely aware of the exams’ structure and contents. Rea-Dickins (1997) asserted that in centralised systems where teachers were not involved in assessment development, they could be not “prepared sufficiently for the task of implementations” (p.308). In the context of the current study, though GES tests were written by individual assessment coordinators from different colleges, the tests were not distributed to the rest of the teachers several of whom were novice in the Colleges and had never seen these tests before. Understandably, several teachers and many students seemed ill-informed about FP assessment.

**Perceived Need for More Assessment Instruments**

Regardless of the previously mentioned concerns about the effectiveness of FP assessment, students tended to express the need for more assessment instruments. The students’ declared a request for more assessment tasks can indicate and be linked to the need for more feedback. Administering additional assessment tasks and feedback might appear unrelated but they actually are when considering the findings of the studies conducted on feedback suggesting that summative assessment provides less feedback than formative assessment. Brindley (1998), in a comparison of summative and formative assessment, stated that the former was more suitable for the purposes of policy makers and educational bureaucrats for its skinned aggregated details, while formative assessment provided detailed and elaborated feedback. Broadfoot (2007) identified the purpose of summative assessment as to “sum up to progress of an individual in relation to some given criterion” (p.110), and the purpose of formative assessment as to provide “information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities they are engaged in” (p.111). In the higher education context, there seems to be a move towards less formative assessment and more summative assessment with late or insufficient feedback (York, 2003). Revisiting the findings of this study, it could be noticed that both GES and AES assessment instruments might be considered as summative with regard to the time and type of feedback with which the students are provided. Though the students received some sort of feedback on the first and second drafts of the essay; this feedback, as considered by the students, was occasionally detrimental, late or insufficient. Even, the few students who seemed to believe that feedback on the essay was appropriate attributed their satisfaction of the feedback provided to having a good teacher.

Hamilton (2003) reviewed a number of studies that provided evidence of better students’ performance when more feedback on how to improve performance was given to them. Likewise, reviews on the effectiveness of feedback showed that it varied based on different aspects (Bangert-Drowns, et al., 1991). Recent reviews that focused on what the feedback was about (i.e., task, processing, regulatory) found that feedback was most effective when it attended self-
regulation (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). A conforming finding was reported by Black (2003, as cited in Broadfoot, 2007), who asserted that ‘task-oriented’ feedback enhanced the ‘learning power’ of the students and enabled them to take control of, and encouraged them to get involved in their own learning.

**Tests vs. CA in Student Perceptions**

Most of the students preferred CA over the tests according to their questionnaire’s responses, although, both were considered useful. These results differ from those of a recent study by Cheng, et al. (2011) which explored students’ and parents’ perceptions on the traditional examinations compared to a currently applied School Based Assessment (SBA) system in China. They found that no significant difference in how students viewed SBA and exams. They also reported that the students differed in how they perceived the SBA and exams items based on their self-reported language levels; “students with high perceived language competence responded more positively to the items relating to the external examinations while students with low perceived language competence responded more positively to the items relating to SBA” (p. 238). The results of the current study did not report any significant difference amongst students’ self-evaluations of their language proficiency levels in their perception of CA compared to tests. Actually all self-evaluation groups responded more positively to CA than they did to the tests.

Similar to the results obtained from the questionnaires, the students’ views in focus groups seemed to generally prefer CA more than the tests for several reasons. The students’ preference of CA seemed to be propelled by their appreciation of the process of learning that takes place in the evaluation process of the students’ language proficiency. This apparent students’ appreciation of learning through assessment is in line with and reinforces the voices calling for “assessment for learning” as a way forward in assessment for its ability to improve students’ performances as supported by empirical evidence (Broadfoot, 2007).

**Student Views of FP Assessment Impact**

Interestingly, students’ responses to the Social and Political Impact topics in the questionnaire were similar in rating the political impact higher than the social impact and in implying that FP assessment entailed political but not serious social consequences on students, teachers and society. They seemed to recognise the “prestige” and importance of the English language assessment for future national employment and international status of the country, as well as its role as a gatekeeper to higher education; this finding conforms to previous studies (e.g., Shohamy, 1996; Ross, 2008). However, the students disagreed with the view that FP assessment had drastic social consequences. The social impact was not considered great in the students’ responses. Their responses showed a majority agreement with the items that suggested that FP assessment was fair, not frightening and not stressful.

This finding is substantiated by the findings obtained from the focus groups. An unexpected result obtained from the focus groups was the relatively moderate to non-existent social impact of FP assessment considering its high-stakes nature. Failing in FP could mean that students lose their scholarships to study at CAS or become suspended for one academic year during which an accredited proof of a specific language level should be attained from a recognised private language teaching institution. However, not only very few students expressed that failing in FP assessment could entail a negative social stigma, most of them seemed to be confident that they would pass and did not show any concern of failing in FP. Shohamy (2001) explained that there
are a number of factors that could contribute to understanding the consequences of a test like language status, purpose of assessment, format of assessment and low/high-stake nature of tests. Though all of these factors when considered in the context of FP assessment predict a strong negative social impact, the findings of this study arrived at a different conclusion. A possible logical explanation for this finding is what the students indicated about inconsistent implementation of FP assessment marking criteria.

When the students were asked whether the tests and CA were not stressful in the questionnaire, their responses were positive. But they agreed more with the statement “tests are not stressful” than with the statement “CA is not stressful”. This finding is in line with the argument that performance based tasks involve communication stress or anxiety which may well influence students’ performance along with other factors (Bachman, 2002; Philip, 2011). It was also found that performance assessment did not produce better results than test in terms of the writing skill (Hamp-Lyons, 1997); therefore, if AES assessment, which includes performance based tasks, against common expectations (e.g., of teachers), did not provide a less stressful environment than tests, and did not result in better performance, the advantages of using this type of assessment in FP assessment should be reviewed.

The results showed that the students seemed to be very confident of passing the FP assessment which indicates a low educational impact of FP assessment. However, the students revealed their concern that their language level would be lower than what is required for FY Study. The FP results in 2011 showed that more than 90% of the students in both colleges passed to the first academic year, though, the teachers generally expected less than 80% of their students to pass (as another part of the PhD study suggested). In Sur College 92% of the FP students successfully passed and in Rustaq College 97% of the FP students passed. The students’ and teachers’ view of FP assessment inability to fulfil the role of filtering the linguistically able students to study in FY, could pose a threat to the validity of FP assessment.

Conclusion

This study investigated students’ views of FP assessment. There are some limitations and recommendations that can be deduced from the results obtained. One limitation is using focus groups in this study as it posed some challenges. These challenges included training participants in this method of sharing views, re-coding all opinions, transcribing and analysing generated data. The other two main challenges were the “no shows” which is a common and documented disadvantage of focus groups (Bryman, 2004), and ensuring free and equal expression of views.

There are several recommendations that can be inferred from the findings, two of them are discussed here. First, there are uncertainties about the assessment content and structure. Assessment details should be shared with both the students and teachers at the beginning of the academic semester to eliminate any underperformance due to uncertainties and increase the validity of FP assessment. Second, the students shared that they received a lack of feedback that could be attributed to the summative nature of FP assessment. Instead, formative assessment instruments that provide enough feedback to students and that show a high degree of validity should be considered. This could be achieved by incorporating smaller units of classroom assessment early in the semester to allow enough time for feedback. These units should be validated prior to use and teachers should be trained to mark them as consistently as possible, preferably using a similar marking scale to that used for other performance assessment tasks.
About the Author:
Fatma Al Hajri is a lecturer at the Colleges of Applied Sciences – Sur. She attained her PhD from the University of Edinburgh in Language Assessment and Programme Evaluation. She did her MA in Applied Linguistics at the University of Queensland. She worked as an English language lecturer for several years before being appointed as the Deputy Director for the English Language Programme at the Colleges of Applied Sciences in the Ministry of Higher Education, Oman.

References

Cotton, F., & Conrow, F. (1998). An investigation of the predictive validity of IELTS amongst a group of international students studying at the University of Tasmania. IELTS Research Reports, 1, 72-115


Negotiation for Meaning and Feedback in ESL Writing Class

Samah Elbelazi
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA

Abstract

Teacher and peer feedback may appear as a controversial aspect in ESL writing classes. Many researchers have studied the effects of teacher/peer feedback on second language writing. However, very few have discussed the impact of negotiation meaning when feedback is provided. This paper attempts to find out whether negotiation for meaning improves second language writing. In doing so, a number of studies are examined. Although the findings of the studies support negotiation for meaning while feedback is given, research is still needed to consider the role of negotiation for meaning with grammar and writing style. The aim of this paper is to give an overview of whether learners’ use of social interaction and negotiation for meaning facilitates learning and improves ESL writing.

Key words: Feedback, sociocultural theory, negotiation for meaning, attention, peer training.
Introduction

Second language learners face many challenges when learning English. Parts of these challenges are influenced by their cultural and environmental backgrounds. For instance, one of the most important cultural artifacts of countries [with a highly oral culture] is their sense of orality (Bigelow, 2010). That is to say, they are more powerful when they speak than when they write. Ong (1991) maintained “The shift from orality to literacy and on to electronic processing engages social, economic, political, religious and other structures” (p. 3). Therefore, the need for interactional feedback has increased as one of the methods that might assist ESL students in their understanding of the target language (Lantolf, 2000; Gass, 2003, 2008; Foster and Ohta, 2005). However, I believe misunderstanding or vague feedback can be a drawback in this process and lead to negative results. Consequently, interaction and discussion can be favored as one approach to improve ESL students’ writing during the feedback process. Thus, because second language students are coming from different backgrounds, negotiation for meaning is used as a good technique, which is encompassed, by interaction and discussion to diminish the confusion in writing and produce better essays.

Negotiation for meaning (NFM) is a technique that can be used while giving feedback through interaction that may facilitate learning and produce better writing (Foster and Ohta, 2005). This paper attempts to highlight the importance of adopting sociocultural theory in second language writing classes by exploring Gee’s (2012) concept of negotiation for meaning and Long’s interaction hypothesis (Gass, 2003). Furthermore, this paper will define peer reviewing in relation to these theories by examining NFM in a number of studies dating from 1999 to 2011. In conclusion I will demonstrate some problems associated with peer/teacher review and NFM.

Theoretical Background

Sociocultural theory

Vygotsky claims “[H]uman behavior results from the integration of socially and culturally constructed forms of mediation into human activity” (Lantolf, 2000, p.8). This claim shows that humans are ingrained within their cultures and societies. As they produce the language they are directly or indirectly influenced by their societies and cultures; therefore, for sociocultural theory, learning a language is a social process in which students mainly rely on social interaction within a given social practice. For example, Foster and Ohta (2005) state that sociocultural theory “view[s] mind and learning as something inter-mental, embedded in social interaction” (p. 403). In other words, people are part of their environment and they cannot be separated from these environments. In this way, knowledge is not generated by the learners alone, but by the interaction between the learners and the social context (Foster and Ohta, 2005). Students learn the language through their interaction with the social context in their classroom, when they interact with their peers, a new social context appears. For example, second language learners usually think in their first language and they write in the target language, which is also influenced by the new set of social practices. Lantolf (2000) states that even if the students in the same class are doing similar tasks they do not respond equally to those tasks because students have different motives, desires and goals that make the classroom interactions more significant and valuable.
Furthermore, one of the fundamental concepts in sociocultural theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is defined as the differences between what learners can do alone and what can the same learner do with the help of other learners (Lantolf, 2000). Vygotsky (as cited in Foster and Ohta, 2005, p. 414) defines the ZPD as “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.” Foster and Ohta (2005) state “ZPD is used to understand how assistance is related to language development” (p. 414). In other words, the ZPD according to Vygotsky is evidence for utilizing peer reviewing in ESL classes (Vygotsky, 1971). As mentioned in Vygotsky learners at certain stages need some kind of assistance (scaffolding) and they can receive this assistance from their peers (ibid). Scaffolding occurs when students adjust their roles and type of assistance according to the student who needs that assistance. In writing class the social interaction and the cultural clashes may improve the students’ writing when discussion is provided. Some students for example, who come from oral societies, prefer speaking to clarify their ideas (Bigelow, 2010). Therefore, according to Gee (2012) meaning is not stable; it is negotiable and shared within cultures and societies. He argues that it is better to study writing and speaking within their social context because both speaking and writing are inseparable and complete each other.

Negotiation for Meaning

When speaking or writing meaning is significant in order to send correct messages. Gee (2012) argues that meaning is not fixed in the mind like any other concept rather “meaning is primarily the result of social interaction, negotiations, contestations and agreements among people. It is inherently variable and social” (p. 21). When using a second language, many students think that words have fixed meanings so they can always use them to imply the same concept. When writing like you speak the meaning of the words are changed according to the context in which the words are used. Let’s consider the following example from Gee (2012) about the meaning of a simple word like coffee:

“If I say, “The coffee spilled, go get a mop”, I am talking about a liquid. If I say, “The coffee spilled, go get a broom”, I am talking about beans or grains. If I say, “The coffee spilled, stack it again”, I am talking about tins or cans. If I say, “Coffee growers exploit workers”, I am talking about coffee berries and the trees they grow on” (p. 21)

Gee (2012) adds, “All words vary their meanings in different contexts. All words can take on new meanings in new contexts. And all words are open to negotiation and contestation” (p. 14). In other words, meaning is what students have in minds and try to put into words as well as being what they are looking for when they read their peers comments. Ibid argues that meanings are bounded by negotiation between different people in different social contexts. The fact that students are coming from different backgrounds may make classrooms a new social context that could provide them with various social practices allowing them to negotiate different meanings. According to Gass (2003), negotiation between native speakers and second language speakers and between two or more second language students is very important in developing second language skills. That is to say “conversation is not a medium of practice, but also the means by which learning takes place” (p. 234). When giving feedback, negotiation and discussion are
required in order to understand what the student wants to write and what the reviewer wants to ask.

Additionally, Long (as cited in Gass, 2003, p. 234) defines negotiation for meaning in the Interaction Hypothesis as follow:

“Negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustment by the NS or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive way. It is proposed that environmental contributions to acquisition are mediated by selective attention and the learner’s developing L2 processing capacity . . . Negative feedback obtained during negotiation work or elsewhere may be facilitative of L2 development, at least for vocabulary, morphology and language – specific syntax, and essential for learning certain specifiable L1-L2 contrasts”

According to Long, negotiation for meaning is significant in learning a second language because it enables students to get feedback to facilitate understanding. Moreover, Long claims that attention is another required act during negotiation. Attention may help students figure out their mistakes and learn not to make them again. That is to say, during negotiation the learner’s “attentional resources” may be focused on the new language that he/she knows nothing about and his/her old native language (Gass, 2003, p. 235). Gass maintains that during this interaction and attention preliminary learning takes place. When the input (feedback) is available, attention should be central during the negotiation. This might help learners focus on their mistakes and their language production. Consider this example about “reading glasses”:

From Mackey (as cited in Gass, 2003, p. 135):

“NS: there’s there’s a pair of reading glasses above the plant
NNS: a what?
NS: glasses reading glasses to see the newspaper?
NNS: glassi?
NS: you need to wear them to see with, if you can’t see. Reading glasses.
NNS: ahh ahh glasses to read you say reading glasses.
NS: yeah.”

From the example it is noticeable that the nonnative speaker is confused about the meaning of the phrase (reading glasses) until the native speaker explains it. The learning experience from this phrase comes from the negotiation being offered to the NNS, who is paying attention to the conversation. Jungmi (2003) states, “The negotiation of meaning in NNS’s interaction is a very important part of conversation because it shows that learners could offer the numerous interruptions to receive comprehensible input and to produce appropriate output, which could facilitate second language learning” (p. 206). Therefore, during negotiation second language learners have the chance to ask as many questions as they like in order to understand the writing task. The following figure summarizes the input process while giving/receiving feedback:
Peer Feedback and Negotiation for Meaning

Peer feedback, also referred to as peer review, peer editing, peer response and peer evaluation is commonly used in L1 and L2 writing classes, it is an activity where students have a chance to help each other by giving comments on their writing (Lundstrom and Baker, 2009). It also means students working together to improve, edit, rewrite and revise (Mi-mi, 2009). Peer feedback provides students with the opportunity to experience different knowledge through reading each others’ assignments, and help students to work with different types of errors. According to Gass, (2008) interactional feedback is an essential source of information for learners (p. 329). Gass also points out that “through interaction, the learners’ attention is drawn to some element(s) of language with possible consequence that that element/those elements will be incorporated into a learners’ developing system” (p. 330). That is to say, through peer feedback students learn from each others’ mistakes and ideas. Thus, whether the feedback is positive or negative it still provides a learning experience that L2 students are pursuing. One example of adopting feedback strategy, as suggested by Tsui and NG (2000,p. 152), is as follows:

**Figure 2. Writing Cycle**
Figure 2, the writing cycle presents an outline of how interaction in the writing class might take place. Although this process might take a longer time during class, it gives an opportunity for students to discuss their ideas with the teacher’s supervision. According to the figure, after the brainstorming the first outline should be written. The idea of beginning with brainstorming engages students in an interactional process where they can generate as many ideas as possible. Immediately after the first outline, peer review takes place in order to help students gain comments and discuss their topics with their peers. Hence, the first real draft should be ready, then another peer feedback is required. At this point students will have more focused negotiation and assistance from their peers about content and grammar. When the second draft is ready, the teacher would provide his/her comments. These comments should be associated with negotiation and oral discussion. Finally, when the final draft is written, both peers, and teacher provide further comments on the final draft.

The following section argues the relationship between teachers/students feedback and negotiation for meaning in order to clarify how students view negotiation for meaning during feedback.

Teachers/Students Feedback and Negotiation for Meaning

Although students prefer working with their peers, different studies report contrary findings. On the one hand, some of these findings report that students favor the teacher’s feedback because they think that the teacher never presents a wrong a comment (Tsui and NG, 2000; Bitchener et al 2005; Yang et al 2006; Zhao, 2010). Some students believe that their writing has improved only when they have a chance to negotiate their mistakes, whether or not these comments are provided by the teacher (Zhao, 2010). To find out whether negotiation for meaning improves second language writing during peer/ teacher review, the following studies are examined as below.

Tsui and NG (2000) investigate whether students prefer teachers or peers feedback. They examine groups of students in a secondary school level by conducting questionnaires, interviews, and writing analysis methods. The findings show that even some of the groups report similar results about the preference of teachers and peers feedback; higher results favor the teacher’s feedback. The students comment that they have more confidence in the teachers’ comments than their peers because they believe that teachers are more experienced and authoritative than their peers, so their feedback is more important. Other comments are that teachers can explain the writing problem and that may help them more. Therefore, negotiation with teachers is what the students look for. This study shows that students prefer discussing and explaining their problems than just correcting it. The study also suggests that students prefer talking about their topics while writing. Similar findings are reported by Miao, Badger, and Yu (2006), who examine two ESL writing classes, the findings reveal that students adopt more teacher feedback than peer feedback. In the interview, students report that the teacher was more “professional,” “experienced,” and “trustworthy” than their peers (p. 188). The main complaint about their peer feedback is that their peers do not give accurate responses to the writing and they do not know how to explain the problem. Both studies indicate that students favor oral discussions and negotiation about their writing problems over written comments about these problems.

Another study by Zhao (2010) distinguishes the learners’ use of comments from their understanding of peer and teacher feedback (p. 3). Eighteen ESL learners participated in the study to find out whether students understood their teachers’ feedback or if they apply it without
understanding. The findings report that students use the feedback comments without understanding their purposes because negotiation is not provided. Also, the teachers discover that their comments are not delivered accurately. Consequently, students’ writing has not improved. The following example presents what kind of feedback the teacher provides and how the student responded to this feedback:

The original sentence: Virtually, there is boundless love hidden in fishbone.
The revised sentence: Actually, there is boundless love revealed by fishbone.

This example shows that ‘Jin’ applies the teacher’s comments without understanding because she does not discuss the comments with him when she is asked to look up the word virtually. However, during the interviewing, Jin explained to the researcher how she responded to the feedback as follow:

Researcher: Do you need help with the feedback received in the first paragraph?

Jin: Yes, this one. What is the difference between ‘virtually’ and ‘actually’? I was suggested by Art [the writing teacher] to look up ‘virtually’. In our meaning, Art suggested actually. But could not virtually be used in this way? I’ve used it in this way for a long time. I used ‘virtually’ and ‘actually’ interchangeably. I feel they have the same meaning. I used them as alternative to each other to avoid overusing one word. I still feel they are the same.

R: We’ll, let’s look them up in the Oxford advanced Learners’ Dictionary. [ . . . ] You see, virtually means almost, or very nearly. For actually, there are four meanings. Do you want to read them through?

[Jin read for 45 seconds and looked at me]

R: You see, actually is used to emphasis what is true, similar to in fact, right?

Jin: Yes. They are different. Thank you. (p. 9)

In her comment about the second part of the sentence, Jin said: “I felt if I used hidden in fishbone, if you translate it into Chinese, it is more meaningful. It does not make that sense in English. I think Art’s suggestion was right” (p. 10).
Negotiation for Meaning and Feedback in ESL Writing Class

Teachers and students should have focused their discussion on meaning, as the written feedback is not adequate, allowing students to improve their writing.

Another study by Bitchener, Young and Cameron (2005) investigates whether the type of feedback (directive, explicit or conference feedback) has any effect on writing improvement, in particular on the grammatical level such as: prepositions, past tense, and definite article. The study was conducted on 53 migrant students, who are divided into three treatment groups. Two types of feedback are given to the students: direct written feedback and conference sessions. The conference sessions are provided so that students understand their errors and they have opportunities to ask and negotiate with their teachers about their mistakes. The findings of the study indicate that direct feedback and conference sessions have a significant impact on students’ writing accuracy. When students pay attention to their errors as identified by the study such as preposition, past tense and definite article, they learn how to use them correctly in their next writing draft. The study suggests that “classroom L2 writing teachers should provide their learners with both oral feedback as well as written feedback” (p. 202). This suggestion raises awareness on how important negotiation is in writing development when it is conditioned by attention.

A similar study was conducted by Wingate (2010), which focused on the effect of formative assessment that is provided for L2 writing class in a first year undergraduate program. Thirty-nine students were asked to submit their essays online or in class. After that, their peers gave them feedback on their writing, including grammar and ideas. Some feedback comments such as “a more critical/analytical approach is needed’ or ‘too descriptive’ are regarded as unhelpful”, (p. 522) because some students find them very difficult to understand. The findings of the study reported that “students who had utilized their feedback comments improved in the areas previously criticized” (p. 530). When students consider their peers’ feedback, they’re writing improved. However, other students who had paid little attention to their feedback comments have fixed problems in their writing. This study encourages the use of formative feedback in the writing class because students have an opportunity to write several times, receive oral/written feedback and concentrate on their writing errors.

The same findings are reported by Tithecott and Tang (1999). The concern of the study is whether ESL students change their writing as a result of peer review sessions. Like the previous studies, students submit their essays and receive feedback comments. The results indicate that students tend to be positive about their peer’s feedback and their writing improved. Students are engaged in conferences to understand their mistakes. These conferences help them to figure out their errors and learn not to repeat their mistakes again. When one of the students is asked about sharing each other’s essays, he/she says we appreciated the opportunity to “find out how others are using different words” and “good sentences” (p. 30). During negotiation students are engaged in various tasks like listening and note taking, and this can help them to pay attention to their errors. However, researchers such as Min (2004, 2006, 2008) recommend that students should be well trained in order to assist each other appropriately.

The last study conducted by Gielen, Tops, Dochy, Onghena and Smeets (2010) examined whether peer feedback can be a substitute for teacher feedback when discussion is provided. Gielen et al. divided the students into two groups: experimental and control group. Students wrote essays and were provided with either teacher or peer comments according to their groups. The findings of the study claim that there are no significant differences between both groups. This indicated that peer feedback could be substituted for teacher feedback. The findings also reported that students work more positively with their peers than with their teachers because they
can discuss their ideas informally and find out the appropriate words for specific meanings. Student can also ask their peers when they do not understand the comments. Although all of the previous findings encourage peer and teacher feedback, only Tithecott and Tang, 1999; Wingate, 2010; Geilen et al., 2010 report positive results regarding students’ writing improvement. Other studies by Tsui and NG, 2000; Bitchener et al. 2005; Miao et al. 2006; and Zhao, 2010 show that peer and teacher feedback might be effective in writing if it is conditioned by negotiation and discussion. These studies also reported that the students prefer teachers’ feedback comments to students’ feedback. The following figure summarizes the feedback process with regard to NFM and attention:

**Figure. 3 (Summary of feedback process)**

Problems Associated with Feedback and Negotiation for Meaning:

Although peer and teacher review can help students overcome their writing problems, there are some problems associated with feedback and negotiation for meaning in the feedback process. A few of the problems are as follows:

1. **Time**: teachers of ESL writing classes have some concerns about the amount of time they can spend with their students to offer oral and written feedback, and how much time is needed for students to work together during the class. Rollinson (2005) states, “whether feedback is oral or written, the peer response process itself is a lengthy one” (p. 25). Students need to write drafts, and then read each other’s drafts. They also need to negotiate the feedback before writing the final paper.

2. **Student/student response**: peer feedback can be seen as untrusted and inaccurate. Some of the previous studies such as Tsui and NG, 2000; Bitchener et al 2005; Yang et al 2006; Zhao, 2010 found out that students do not consider their peers comments. Yang et al (2006) argues that “most common reason for the rejection of peer feedback was that the writers did not accept the feedback for the reason that it seemed “incorrect” to them” (p. 189). Shashok (2008) claims that some peers do not understand the content of the essay. Therefore, they provide inaccurate feedback that misleads the writer and the reader. ESL students feel “instinctively” that only native speakers or better writers can provide a good judgment (Rollinson, 2005, p. 23). Tsui and NG (2000) stated that some students do not respond to their feedback because their peers are not authoritative, which will not harm the students if they do not respond. Tang and Tithecott (1999) maintained that some students argued that it was very difficult to give a negative feedback to their classmates, because they do not want to hurt their feelings (p. 31).
3. **Teacher/student response**: although many comparative studies about teachers and students feedback reveals that students prefer their teachers’ comments than their peers, teachers’ comments also can be viewed as problematic. Zhao (2010) states that some students view the teacher’s comment as a requirement that they have to follow. One student said: “I view teacher feedback as the revision requirement but peer feedback as suggestions. He is a native speaker and he is the teacher . . . Whether the essay is good or not is in the teacher’s capable hands” (P.12). This student is mainly influenced by his cultural background where the teacher’s comments are not questionable. However, this trust in the teacher leads students to apply the teacher’s comments without understanding like the previous example of ‘Jin’ in (Zhao, 2010). Therefore, teacher/student conferences are significant to assure that students understand the feedback comments.

4. **Oral discussion**: apart from the amount of time that oral discussion and negotiation require during class time, Tang and Tithecott (1999) claimed that few students had some complaints about difficulty to understand the pronunciation of their peers. Moreover, the students recommended written comments with the discussion to fully comprehend the feedback, because this might help to avoid communication failure.

7. **Peer Review Training: How Negotiation for Meaning Works**

In the quest of some solutions, the following section will discuss the effects of peer review training on students ESL writing. Some of the previous problems can be solved by training students on how to provide oral feedback and how to consider time in the oral discussion part. Firstly, when students are trained for giving feedback and negotiating for meaning, they should be aware of the three Cs (Long’s dissertation as cited in Foster and Ohta, 2005, p. 9). Long defines the three Cs as follows:

- **Comprehension checks**: reviewers should check whether the students understand the comments. Therefore, questions like: *Do you understand?* Is important while discussing feedback comments.
- **Confirmation checks**: reviewer should make sure that the student is able to apply the feedback comment by asking them to repeat what the reviewer has said.
- **Clarification check**: unlike confirmation check, at this stage the reviewer provides some clarifications while negotiating. Clarifications include giving examples so the student learns how to apply the comments.

Min (2004) conducted a study to find out whether training students to give feedback would facilitate learning and expand discussions. Similar to Long’s three Cs, Min applies four characteristics of comments during training: Clarifying writers’ intentions, identifying problems, explaining the nature of problems and making specific suggestions. During training the comments were classified into two categories: one related to global issues such as ideas and organization and the other is related to local problems such as words usage, grammar, spelling, and pronunciation. Trained students then marked each comment according to the four characteristics: clarifying intentions, identifying problem, explaining the problem and make suggestions. These characteristics are presented in the example below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>“Call for” means to need a particular action or behavior [explain].</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Did you mean that? [clarify] If not, try to think a more appropriate word to replace it [suggestion].

I think on this point, the description of the two cultures is not parallel [problem]. (Chinese=the definition of chingkeh (treat friends); America=the way they split bills [explain]) (p.298).

The findings of the study report when students are trained to give feedback, they benefit as reviewers and as writers. As reviewers, the study indicates that students raise awareness on different aspects of language skills. They learn how to organize ideas and construct proper grammar. Through negotiation and interaction, they learn how different cultures have an impact on the students writing. Therefore, some cultural and social practices are taken into consideration. As writers, students learn from their peers how to focus their discussion and their ideas. When negotiation takes place, they learn how to revise their grammatical mistakes. The findings of the study suggest that with proper training, students are capable of providing assistance that is considered critical for development to writers (p. 302). Other studies by Min, 2006 and 2008 report similar results of encouraging peer training before negotiation starts. In her 2006 study, Min argues that training students on how to provide feedback and how negotiate meaning has a positive outcome on students writing.

Conclusion
Students in general and second language learners in particular encounter many problems while writing in the target language. Based on the data set that are examined in this paper, many students believe that their writing has improved when they have a chance to negotiate for meaning and discuss the reviewer’s comments orally. This paper has argued the importance of negotiation for meaning when feedback is provided, it also argues the central role of attention while negotiating or interacting. However, research is still needed to consider other factors with negotiation for meaning like grammar. According to the evidences from the previous studies, negotiation is not the only aspect that helps students to improve, but if it is provided during the feedback process students’ writing improved.

References


The Role of Cohesive Devices and the Interplay of Theme and Rheme in Consolidating the Argument of Krauthammer’s *Free-lunch Egalitarianism*

Emad Ahmed Saleem Abu Ayyash
The British University in Dubai
United Arab Emirates

**Abstract:**
Ever since they were introduced by Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesive devices have been used as an instrument of analysis in a plethora of research papers that have investigated a variety of textual types. The reason behind using the 1976-model of cohesion in textual analysis is that it is probably the most comprehensive account of cohesive ties to-date. Of equal importance are the notions of Theme and Rheme since the interplay of these components has a major effect in analysing different genres. This paper espouses a micro-analytic approach, text-based analysis to explore the role of cohesive devices and the interplay of Theme and Rheme in reinforcing arguments found in newspaper editorials. Specifically, this paper analyses Krauthammer’s *Free-lunch Egalitarianism* in terms of the author’s employment of grammatical and lexical cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme variations to support his argument. Following the textual analysis, the paper concludes with a number of implications that the textual analysis can have on education, particularly the teaching of writing.

**Keywords:** grammatical cohesion, lexical cohesion, Theme and Rheme, editorials
The Role of Cohesive Devices and the Interplay of Theme and Rheme in Consolidating the Argument of Krauthammer’s Free-lunch Egalitarianism

In 2011, President Barack Obama issued a tax plan called the “Buffett Rule”, which brought too much controversy in the media between proponents (Seckan, 2012; Tilson, 2012; Weigel, 2011) and opponents (Calmes, 2012; Krauthammer, 2012; Milbank, 2012), who linked Obama’s plan to political agendas. To communicate their purpose and to highlight their argument, those writers, like all others, have had to use language as their tool. Linguistic-wise, writers usually utilize certain syntactic structures to get their messages across (Gee, 1999; Hatch, 1992). It is a rule of thumb that linguistic forms utilized by writers are affected by two factors: the genre these forms are employed in and the writers’ choice of the structures that, in their view, will consolidate the text’s message. On the readers’ part, considering syntactic structures in a certain text might lead to better understanding of the entire message and its exact meaning. The current paper examines whether analyzing syntactic forms, particularly cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme, can contribute to the consolidation of meaning in a certain genre. In order to do that, the text of Kauthammer’s Free-lunch egalitarianism will be analyzed, and links to the entire meaning of the article will be established accordingly. Structurally, this paper explores the conceptual framework that encompasses context, genre, cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme, analyzes Kauthammer’s Free-lunch egalitarianism in light of the conceptual framework, and finally links the analysis to the educational context, particularly teaching writing. In doing so, the research is intended to answer the following questions:

1. What role do cohesive devices play in consolidating the meaning in Kauthammer’s argumentative article?
2. What role does the interplay of Theme and Rheme have on fostering the article’s message?
3. Does this solely linguistic analysis help understand the nature of argumentative genre?
4. What implications does the current study have for education in the context of writing classes?

Conceptual Framework

Linguistic features can be rightly considered the core of textual analysis. According to Jorgensen and Phillips (2002), “Text analysis concentrates on the formal features (such as vocabulary, grammar, syntax and sentence coherence) from which discourses and genres are realized linguistically” (p. 69). Despite the significance of textual features in analyzing a certain text, the following conceptual analysis will also touch on context and genre as it is almost futile to consider a text without referring to its background and type. Basically, the following review will be divided into four major parts: context, genre, cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme.

Context of written discourse

Quite understandably, it is not easy to analyse a text in isolation from its context (Brown & Yule, 1983; Thornbury, 1999). Henceforth, whenever the word “text” is used throughout this paper, it refers to a cluster of sentences that are mutually dependent on each other (Crystal, 2006), or alternatively, a stretch of language that is structurally more than one sentence (Salkie, 1995). To Blommaert (2005), in addition to the text itself, context is a primary issue to be considered in critical language analysis. Nevertheless, acknowledging the significance of context in analysing written texts lends itself to a plethora of issues, one of which is what is exactly
meant by ‘context’ as far as written discourse is concerned. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) define context as “all the factors and elements that are nonlinguistic and nontextual but which affect spoken or written communicative interaction” (p. 11). Similar to this view of context as something outside the text is the description of contexts as socio-cultural conventions that exist outside the text, or code (Widdowson, 2004). In fact, depicting context as entirely “nonlinguistic” and “nontextual” makes the above definitions far from being accurate. Put differently, not all context types are nonlinguistic, or nontextual. Linguistic contexts are acknowledged in many works on discourse analysis (Cook, 2001; McCarthy, 1991; Mike and Tribble, 2006). Table 1 below outlines how these authors have approached textual context.

Table 1. Textual Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Textual context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy (1991)</td>
<td>A co-text consists of linguistic elements that exist within the text itself and that function as the immediate context of other parts of the same text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook (2001)</td>
<td>Immediate context is important in making sense of vocabulary items used in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike &amp; Tribble (2006)</td>
<td>Immediate context involves concordances, or the position of a word in a sentence, paragraph or a text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Linked to the concept of immediate context, or co-text, are lexico-grammatical relations that bind different parts of the written text. Reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion are all components of lexico-grammatical ties and will be discussed thoroughly in the third part of this review. The second element of the conceptual framework under discussion probes the issue of genre.

Genre

McCarthy and Carter (1994) state that genre is about prototypical features that occur time and again in certain groups of texts. The authors maintain that choice is an underlying concept within genre. The textual level of choice functions within the lexico-grammatical system. By way of exemplification, the authors explain that

To choose a simple past tense in preference to a simple present tense or to choose a particular range of temporal conjunctions rather than a set of non-temporal conjunctions is to make choices which result in different types of texts (pp. 29-30).

Apparently, the definition of McCarthy and Carter (1994) does not provide any indication about the nature of “features” that characterize genre. For example, whether these features are linguistic and/or nonlinguistic or not is an issue that should be harbored in the definition of genre. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) define genre as “a culturally and linguistically distinct form of discourse” (p. 6), thus confirming that features underlying genre are not merely textual. The main underlying concept of genre as introduced by Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) is purpose. They maintain that what determines genre’s internal structure is the communicative purpose. Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000) refer to functional purposes as an essential concept in genre studies. Bhatia (1993) acknowledges the centrality of communicative purpose to genres yet distinguishes between major changes and minor ones. To him, while major changes in the communicative purpose is likely to lead to a different genre, minor modifications only lead to sub-genres. Emphasizing narrative, descriptive, procedural and argumentative text genres, Richards (1990) and Hatch (1992) seem to be emphasizing purpose, too.
In accordance with the proposition that genre houses a twin focus, Thornbury (2005) and Luke (1995) indicate that genres involve both regular, predictable linguistic forms hand in hand with fixed forms of social action. Like Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), though, Luke (ibid) acknowledges the ever-growing flexibility within text types, yet at the same time, stresses that genres do have distinctive textual structures and as such operate within particular disciplinary fields. In other words, “genres tend to have identifiable and conventionalized lexical and syntactic characteristics” (Luke, 1995, p. 17). Luke (1995) asserts that genres are goal-oriented, a claim that is conspicuously compatible with the idea that purpose lies at the core of genre analysis.

An absolutely different attempt to define genre is perpetrated by Crystal (2006) who states that genres are “linguistically distinct activities” (p. 327), therefore, tacitly dismissing “cultural” features from the definition. Away from “choice”, but not from “purpose”, Crystal (2006) places activities and varieties at the heart of genres. He lists examples of activities that determine genres. Examples of these include everyday activities, such as writing out lists; information activities, such as works of reference and instructional material; and all kinds of academic publication. Crystal (2005) recognizes that within some of these activities, there are flexible sub-varieties. For example, newspapers house a range of varieties that range from news reports to crosswords. Table 2 summarises the myriad views of what matters most in genres.

Table 2. Core concepts within genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Core concepts within genre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy and Carter (1994)</td>
<td>Choice: The textual level of choice results in different genres, or types of texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As far as types of genre are concerned, Carter and McCarthy (1988) suggest that summary, report, argumentation, narrative, description, explanation and instruction are all types of what they call “discourse-genres”. Hatch (1992) draws distinction between two common types of genres: narrative and argumentative. While narratives tend to inform readers about the world of the story, “argumentation has often been defined as the process of supporting or weakening another statement…” (Hatch, 1992, p. 185). He distinguishes between six types of argumentation formats: zig-zag (pro, con, pro, con, ...), problem-refutation-solution, one-sided argument, eclectic (the author accepts some points and rejects others), opposition followed by author’s argument and the other side questioned pattern (questioning an a proposal rather than refuting it).

Despite the above genre distinctions, a number of writers (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; McCarthy & Carter, 1994) believe that there is no limited set of genres basically because genres are as dynamic as social systems. However, genres have distinctive textual structures (Luke, 1995) and can be quite similar linguistically (Smith, 2003). Therefore, textual analysis can be a pivotal tool in understanding certain types of texts within certain genres. The following parts of this review focus on two major linguistic, textual elements: cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme.
Cohesive devices

The content of this part relies heavily on the seminal work of Halliday and Hasan (1976) on the concept of cohesive devices. The reason for this is that their account of cohesive devices appears in a significant portion of literature that tackles the same issue. A list that is not at all exhaustive includes Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000); Crystal (2006); Hatch (1992); Luke (1995); McCarthy (1991); McCarthy and Carter (1994); Richards (1990); Scott and Tribble (2006) and Widdowson (2004). Whenever there exists an addition that enriches Halliday and Hasan’s model, it will be highlighted within the discussion. Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify five types of cohesive devices, which are reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical ties. Following is a rough discussion of these types.

Reference. Reference encompasses linguistic items that cannot be interpreted semantically in their own right. The list includes, but is not limited to pronouns, possessive forms, demonstratives and the definitive article. Figure 3 outlines the different types of reference.

While both types of endophoric reference refer to linguistic items within the text, exophoric reference involves shared worlds that exist outside the text (Widdowson 2004). Consider the following text:

“The principal was leaving the school, and everybody felt sad. He was a true role-model”.

The italicized words are examples of exophoric reference because they go beyond the text to establish referents. Hence, identifying the principal, the school and its population (everybody) depends on a shared world between the writer and reader. On the other hand, the underlined pronoun “He” is endophoric because the referent exists within the text itself. Two sub-types can be recognised within endophora, which are anaphora and cataphora. Following is an example of both types:

“When Mary’s father came home, he brought her a gift. The gift was something that she really wanted – a watch.”

Because the reader needs to look backward in the text to decode the three underlined pronouns, they are considered to be examples of anaphoric reference. On the other hand, “something” is cataphoric because it cannot be interpreted except if we look forward in the text.

McCarthy (1991) sheds light on the fact that some reference items, such as it, this, and that are more difficult to decode than others. The reason behind this difficulty is that such items can refer...
to longer stretches of text, or entire situations. The pronoun *This* in the following example seems to refer to “the situation of reading for three days”:  “Peter has been reading day and night for three days. *This* is very exhausting.

**Ellipsis.** Writers omit some linguistic items when they assume that they are obvious by virtue of the immediate context. By and large, there are three types of ellipsis: nominal, verbal and clausal. Table 4 depicts the three types of ellipsis, identifies their characteristics and provides examples on each.

| Table 3. Types of ellipsis (adapted from McCarthy 1991) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Ellipsis Type** | **Characteristic** | **Example** |
| Nominal         | A noun headword is omitted. | I achieved the highest mark. My brother had the lowest. |
| Verbal          | A verb is omitted from a verbal group. | A: Has anyone finished?  
B: John has. |
| Clausal         | Whole stretches of clausal elements are omitted. | If nobody talks to him, I will. |

Some ellipsis-related structures call for consideration, though. Thomas (1987, cited in McCarthy 1991) identifies two types of verbal ellipsis, namely *echoing* and *auxiliary contrasting*. The former involves repeating an element in the phrasal verb, whereas in the latter, the auxiliary verb changes into another. Following are examples on both:

1. A: Is he leaving?  
B: Yes, he is.  
2. A: Is he leaving?  
B: He already has.

The first example represents echoing since the auxiliary verb is repeated, or echoed. The second example is a case of auxiliary contrasting because *is* has been changed into *has*. Another verbal ellipsis issue arises from the possibility of confusing it with clausal ellipsis. It should be noted that ellipsis is verbal when only part of the verbal cluster is omitted. If the entire verbal phrase is crossed out, it is a case of clausal ellipsis. Consider the following examples:

1. A: Who is winning?  
B: John. (Clausal ellipsis)  
2. A: Who is winning?  
B: John is. (Verbal ellipsis)

A final issue linked to ellipsis is the controversy over whether or not ellipsis can be employed cataphorically. Crystal (2006) confirms that ellipsis “can be recovered only from the preceding discourse” (p. 261). However, McCarthy (1991) confirms that English *does* have cataphoric ellipsis and provides the following example (p. 43):  
If you could, I’d like you to be back here at five thirty.  
Accordingly, ellipsis can be used cataphorically in front-placed subordinate clauses (McCarthy, 1991).
Substitution. The only difference between substitution and ellipsis is that the former involves replacing the omitted linguistic item with another. Like ellipsis, substitution can be nominal, verbal, or clausal. Following are some examples:
1. I bought a blue jacket. My sister preferred to buy a pink one.
2. I encourage you to study. You will pass the test easily if you do.
3. Does James like parties? If so, please, invite him.
The first text houses an example of nominal substitution with one replacing jacket. In the second text, do substitutes for study, and is, therefore, an example of verbal substitution. Finally, so in the third text replaces an entire clause, James likes parties, which is why it is an instance of clausal substitution. Although one, do and so are the most common substitution items, other words can be used to substitute. For example, McCarthy (1991) provides the following example in which the same is used to substitute a noun:
She chose the roast duck; I chose the same (p. 45).
Salkie (1995) draws the attention to the fact that one, do and so are not always used as substitutions items. He provides the following examples (p. 36):
1. One and three make four.
2. If you do the right thing, you will be fine.
3. I’m so glad you could come.

Conjunction. Conjunctions are linguistic items that signal a relationship between segments of the discourse. Halliday and Hasan (1976) identify four categories, which are additive (e.g. moreover, in addition) adversative (e.g. however, nevertheless), causal (e.g. because, as a result) and temporal (e.g. then, next). Locke (2004) adds a fifth category, which is listing. This category employs some temporal conjunctions, such as first and second mainly to list elements of an argument. Despite these attempts, McCarthy (1991) states that it is not easy to produce an exhaustive list of the entire universe of English conjunctions. This is not hard to believe given that some conjunctions can fall outside any known category. For example, a conjunction like “and yet” is hard to classify since it consists of an additive “and” and an adversative “yet”. Some other conjunctions fall within more than one category, such as “first”, which can be a temporal or a listing conjunction.

Lexical cohesion. Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Hatch (1992) divide lexical ties into two broad categories: repetition and collocation. Under the heading “lexical chains”, Cook (1989) also approves of the same categorization. A more, convenient categorization, however, is that of McCarthy’s (1991), who states that collocation is not a semantic relation since it is merely about the probability of co-occurrence of lexical items. Therefore, lexical cohesion is basically the result of repetition of lexical items. This technique is sometimes referred to in terms of “keyness”, whereby words that mirror what the text is about are reiterated to reflect their importance (Scott & Tribble, 2006). Table 5 illustrates different types of repetition that can occur in written discourse.

Table 4: Types of lexical cohesion (Adapted from McCarthy, 1991)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of repetition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct repetition</td>
<td>Discourse…discourse…discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synonymy</td>
<td>Big/large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonyms</td>
<td>Beautiful/ugly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theme and Rheme

According to Wang (2007), Theme and Rheme are two concepts used to depict the distribution of words in a sentence. Basically, Theme serves as the message’s point of departure and contains familiar, or given, information, whereas the remaining part of the clause is called Rheme (McCarthy 1991; Wang, 2007). Highlighting the sense relationship between the two concepts, Fries (as cited in Coulthard, 1994) explains that the Theme of a text unit serves as a framework that in turn helps interpret the Rheme. Johnstone (2002) refers to Theme and Rheme as Topic and Comment, respectively, yet maintaining that a clause moves from the familiar (Theme, or Topic) to the less familiar (Rheme, or Comment) or from “what” to the “what about it”. Following are some examples on Themes (italicized) and Rhemes (underlined):
1. *Barbara* lives in a very nice villa.
2. *That boy in the playground* is my best friend.
3. *In front of my house, there is a huge tree.*

Analysis Method

This paper basically adopts a microanalytic approach (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000) in the analysis of Krauthammer’s *Free-lunch Egalitarianism* (Appendix A). This article was chosen to be the unit of analysis in this paper because it is rife with cohesive devices and a variety of Theme and Rheme varieties, which are the main focus of the analysis. The microanalytic approach is used here because it goes in line with bottom-up language analysis where forms are the starting point of the analysis, which then proceeds towards links between forms and discourse functions (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). The microanalytic approach is sometimes referred to as linguistic/register analysis (Bhatia, 1993). According to Bhatia (1993, p. 5), “register analysis focuses mainly on the identification of statistically significant lexico-grammatical features of linguistic variety”.

Although the microanalytic approach employed in this paper focuses on the text itself, some important links to context and genre have also been made by virtue of the text itself. To elaborate, the text is an argumentative article (genre-related issue) and contains some reference to an incident outside the text, which is the Buffet Rule (context-related issue). The microanalytic approach of this paper, therefore, describes the text as it stands, which is the lion’s share of the analysis, and comments on the role of linguistic elements in building up the argument of the article under discussion. Hence, it can be said that the microanalytic approach utilized here is a combination of both descriptive and predictive content analysis as described by Neuendorf (2002). Table 6 provides a brief account of the two notions as introduced by Neuendorf (2002):

Table 5. *Descriptive and predictive content analysis* (Neuendorf, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive content analysis</th>
<th>Researchers limit their conclusions to the content being analysed, yet have a desire to anticipate outcomes of the messages.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predictive content analysis</td>
<td>The main goal is to predict the outcome or effect of the message.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mixing the two types of analysis within a microanalytic approach is an essential technique dictated by the very nature of this paper. By way of illustration, as far as the article’s text is concerned, linguistic elements related to cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme will be analysed, which justifies the use of the descriptive content analysis. However, the paper also examines the implications of the analysis’s outcomes on education, which is why predictive content analysis is needed. In a nutshell, the microanalytic method of this paper embraces the emphasis that any textual analysis should include both form and content (Fairclough, 1992).

Analysis and Discussion

Since Krauthammer’s Free-lunch egalitarianism revolves around what has become to be called the “Buffet Rule”, it is crucial to consider some factors that exist outside the text (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Widdowson 2004) to clarify this rule. Of probably the same importance, too, is considering the textual elements (Crystal, 2006) in building the article’s argument. In a nutshell, discussion of the article’s context will encompass both factors outside and elements inside the text, called as immediate context, or co-text (Cook, 2001; McCarthy, 1991; Mike & Tribble, 2006). Since the analysis includes an account of the article’s argument, it is also indicative to look at text type, or genre. Following suit of the conceptual framework outlined earlier, this analysis will sequentially flow to discuss the following concepts respectively: context, genre, cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme. The article (Appendix A) has been divided into sixteen texts, T1 to T16, following the same distribution of the paragraphs as they appear in the original article published in the Washington Post (2012).

Context

Starting with the background context (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Widdowson, 2004), Free-lunch Egalitarianism revolves around the “Buffet Rule”. The rule derives its name from Warren Buffet, who according to Forbes ranks as the second billionaire in the United States and the twentieth powerful person worldwide (Forbes, 2012). The proposal of the rule comes from Buffet himself, who suggests that highest earners should pay more taxes, the matter which has urged the Obama administration to propose the Buffet Rule one month later (Goyette, 2012). This rule would impose more taxes on millionaires, taxes that may hit more than 30% and that are basically intended to close America’s financial deficit (Goyette, 2012). Kauthammer’s Free-lunch Egalitarianism argues against the Buffet Rule. In doing so, Kauthammer uses a plethora of textual features to build his argument. Immediate context, or co-text (Cook, 2001; McCarthy, 1991; Mike & Tribble, 2006), employed in the article will be discussed later in this analysis in terms of cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme.

Genre

Considering Hatch’s description of argumentation as aiming to ‘strengthen or weaken’ a statement (1992), it becomes obvious that Free-lunch Egalitarianism falls typically within argumentative genre since the article aims to weaken the proposal of the Buffet Rule. In fact, weakening the Buffet Rule is the purpose on which the entire argumentation is built. Purpose as a core element in genre analysis goes in line with the works of many authors, including Bhatia (1993), Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000), Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), Hatch (1992), Luke (1995) and Richards (1990). Accordingly, the textual analysis of the article will be directly linked to the purpose as the main generator of the article under discussion. Another important
dimension lies in the linguistic choices (McCarthy & Carter, 1994) Krauthammer makes in order to build his argument.

**Cohesive devices**

In order to establish a tight argument, Krauthammer utilizes a number of cohesive devices, including reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Starting with reference, the article includes a variety of reference items that fall within the two main categories of exophora and endophora. As indicated earlier, exophoric reference involves shared worlds that exist outside the text (Hatch, 1992; Widdowson, 2004). Krauthammer’s article is replete with examples of this kind of reference. For example, the definitive article in “*the* country” in T2 is exophoric since the writer does not mention the name of the country within the text, but assumes that the shared world between him and the readers will lead them to identify that America is the meant country. One more example on exophoric reference involves the use of the definitive article in T16. The text reads “Nice idea, but *the* iceberg cometh”. Once again, the writer assumes a shared knowledge between him and the readers, this time some knowledge about what caused the Titanic to sink, which is crashing into an iceberg. Using exophoric references is a clear indication that background context is highly significant to understand a text.

While exophoric reference relates the text to factors outside it, endophoric reference links parts of the text together (McCarthy, 1991). Krauthammer employs endophoric reference, both anaphoric and cataphoric, heavily in the article and utilizes them to foster his argument against the Buffet Rule. By way of illustration, the reference items “he” and “his” are only used to refer to Barack Obama, not anyone else. In T2, the pronoun *his* in “At the beginning of his presidency…” is used cataphorically since readers have to read on to figure out that “his” refers to Barack Obama. In all the other occurrences, “he” and “his” are used anaphorically since their referent can be identified by going backward in the text. Consider these two stretches from T13: “For Obama, fairness is the supreme social value. And fairness is what *he* is running on – although *he* is not prepared to come clean on its price.” Obviously, the italicised words are examples of anaphoric reference since their interpretation requires the reader to go backward. Utilizing linguistic items that refer to Obama intensively more than any other referring items is a tacit consolidation of Krauthammer’s argument against the Buffet Rule since it is the rule of a “he” rather than a “they”, for example.

Another dimension of the role of reference in building the article’s argument lies in the usage of referential items that link longer stretches that house main ideas in the argument. The items under discussion here are *it*, *this*, and *that* (McCarthy, 1991). For instance, *That* is used in T2 twice, in “*That* is true” to agree with Obama’s argument about health-care costs being the cause of the country’s debt and in “*That* was not true” to disagree with Obama about the health-care reform being the cure. In T3, “it could never be true” and “that costs” both strengthen the author’s argument presented in T2 via the use of “*it*” and “*that*” to refer to Obama’s suggested cure. Similarly, in T15, Krauthammer uses “This” to refer to *Obama’s claim that capital gains tax hike will spur economic growth*, and describes this claim as free-lunch egalitarianism. Therefore, the use of referential items, such as *this, that* and *it* empowers the argument of the article against the Buffet Rule.
Another cohesive tie employed to consolidate the argument of the article is *ellipsis*, or zero-substitution (Halliday and Hasan, 1976; McCarthy, 1991). Kauthammer uses clausal ellipsis for different purposes that serve his main argument against the Buffet Rule. T11 starts with “Clever politics” to describe the probable political gains behind the Buffet Rule. This instance of clausal ellipsis is meant to undermine the gains and mark the launch of a counter argument. Another example of ellipsis that serves to undermine Obama’s claims is found in T14 with “Growth?” starting the text. This is another clausal ellipsis in which the key word of Obama’s previous argument is reiterated only to mark the beginning of a hard response. A third example on clausal ellipsis is “Nice idea” (T16), which again sets the scene for a counter argument. Interestingly, and probably wittingly, two of the clausal ellipsis, “Clever politics” and “Nice idea”, are followed by “but”, which indicates disagreement with what has been argued.

Conjunctions used in the article reflect the argumentative nature of the text. Used more than other sets of conjunctions, *adversatives* (Halliday and Hasan, 1976) reflect the ‘hot’ argument nested in the text. Examples of adversatives that spread across the entire text include *but*, *yet*, *in fact*, *while*, *even if*, *or even*, *although*, *instead* and *on the contrary*. While *causals*, for example *Hence*, occur only once in the text (T9), and *additives*, for example *and* and *also*, occur only three times (T4 and T13), adversatives occur fourteen times in T8, T9, T11, T12, T13, T14 and T16. Dispersing adversatives through the article is a characteristic of the zig-zag argumentative model (Hatch, 1992) discussed earlier, where an argument is introduced and immediately followed by a counter argument. One can rightly argue that the higher frequency of adversatives aims to foster the idea that the article’s writer *does* disagree with Obama’s Buffet Rule.

Finally, the article is rich with examples of lexical cohesion that add more meaning to the content of the article. *Direct repetition* (McCarthy, 1991), or *keyness* (Scott & Tribble, 2006), which refers to reiterating key words, is one of the most noticeable lexical ties in *Free-lunch Egalitarianism*. The article also contains examples of synonymy and antonymy. Table 7 below outlines some occurrences of these lexical ties.

Table 6. *Examples of lexical ties*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Tie</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Direct repetition | debt (T2, T4, T6, T8, T9, T16)  
tax (T5, T6, T7, T9, T11, T14, T15)  
Buffet (T5, T7, T8, T9, T11, T16)  
free lunch (Title; T3, T13, T15) |
| Synonymy       | Spiraling, exploding (T2)  
Obvious (T3), clear (T4)  
Add (T4), raise (T6)  
Wit (T10), clever (T11)  
Fairness (T13), egalitarianism (T15) |
| Antonymy       | Reduces, raises (T11)  
Stupid (T8), clever (T11)  
Raising, lowering (T11) |
Apparently, a quick look at the cohesive ties used in the article reveals what the argument is all about. One can discern that it is about the relation between the Buffet Rule, taxes and debts. The author’s argument against the rule is represented in challenging it, not only at the idea level, but also at the word level. The rule, according to Krauthammer, is clever political-wise, but we are not stupid. It raises taxes but does not lower the debt. It is basically a free lunch that will not reduce the spiraling, exploding deficit. Obviously, lexical ties reflect the power of the argument.

Theme and Rheme

This part of the analysis will highlight how Free-lunch Egalitarianism employs Theme and Rheme as described by McCarthy (1991) and Wang (2007) to convey messages that enhance the argument against the Buffet Rule. To illustrate, in most instances, if “the Buffet Rule” is used as/in Theme, it is criticised in the Rheme, and vice versa. Consider the following examples from the article:

Table 7. The Buffet Rule: Interplay of Theme and Rheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Rheme</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As an approach to our mountain of debt,</td>
<td><strong>the Buffet Rule</strong> is a farce.</td>
<td>T8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Buffet Rule</strong></td>
<td>is nothing but a form of redistributionism that has vanishingly little to do with debt reduction and everything to do with reelection,</td>
<td>T9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Buffet Rule</strong></td>
<td>is, in fact, a disguised tax hike on capital gains.</td>
<td>T1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interplay between Theme and Rheme is also used to add emphasis on certain arguments in the article. In such cases, Theme is deleted to add more power to Rheme. For example, “Costs a lot” (T3) is a stand-alone Rheme of a deleted Theme that can be implied from the preceding co-text. Theme ellipsis adds emphasis to the argument that health insurance to 33 million uninsured will cost a lot. In other instances, Theme and part of the Rheme are deleted to express irony. Examples on this kind of Theme and part-of Rheme ellipsis include “Clever politics” (T11), “No matter” (T12) and “Nice idea” (T16). In all the three examples, Theme (probably It) and part of the Rheme (probably is) are deleted to reflect Krauthammer’s belittlement of certain arguments.

Implication

The microanalytic approach (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000) employed in this paper can be viewed as a model for a teaching strategy that can be used in writing classes. The reason behind this claim is that the microanalytic approach employed here has a twin focus on both content and form (Fairclough, 1992). Although the paper has discussed the effects of cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme on one type of genre, namely argument, utilization of these forms can be expanded to encompass different forms of academic writing that take place inside classrooms. Following are some suggestions for utilizing cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme in teaching academic writing.

One of the best ways for teachers to utilize cohesive devices in teaching writing is by using intensive, or controlled writing. The reason why this form of writing is appropriate for the use of
cohesive ties is that it is “sometimes used as a production mode for learning, reinforcing, or testing grammatical concepts” (Brown, 2007, p. 400). For example, the teacher can present a written text to students and then ask them to re-produce the same text by replacing some highlighted nouns with referring items, such as pronouns and demonstratives (Salkie, 1995). This guided-writing exercise might even be done with academically-distinguished students by asking them to produce certain texts using *it, this* and *that*, which refer to longer stretches of language (McCarthy, 1991). Brown (2007) suggests the writing form of a dicto-comp, where the teacher reads a text as many times as required and then asks learners to re-write from memory. This exercise can be adapted to focus on the use of certain cohesive devices, such as reference and substitution.

Another controlled-writing activity that may involve cohesive devices is “kill the text then bring it back to life” (Lindstromberg, 2004). In this activity, the teacher writes a text on the board and asks students to pick two conjunctions, for example, from the written text. Each student will then be asked to provide sentences using the conjunctions he/she has selected. Whenever a conjunction is used correctly, it is erased from the board, thus killing the text as the exercise goes on and on. After all conjunctions have been removed from the text, students will be asked to re-produce the text using either the conjunctions that have been deleted, or conjunctions that belong to the same group – additive, adversative, causal or temporal (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).

Guided writing may involve argumentative genre where different classroom techniques can be used to introduce cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme (Wang, 2007). One of the techniques that focus on lexical cohesion involves the teacher displaying the first paragraph in an argumentative essay and then asking students to come up with a list of key words that should be repeated in their essays. The words should be listed on the board, and alternatively, students may be asked to come up with synonyms, antonyms and hyponyms (McCarthy, 1991) for the listed words. After the essays have been written, students might be asked to change the focus of some sentences by reversing their Themes and Rhemes where possible. In addition to the use of additive, adversative, temporal and causal ties (Halliday and Hasan, 1976), students might also be encouraged to use *listing* (Locke, 1995) as it is a direct and simple way of stating different items of an argument.

In order to draw students’ attention to the relationship between form, represented here by cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme, and content, it will be a good idea for teachers to display some ‘good’ models and attract students’ attention on how form has added, or in some cases, established the content, or the message. Brown (2007) stresses the importance of connecting reading and writing, stating that “by reading and studying a variety of relevant types of text, students can gain important insights both about how they should write and about subject matter…” (p. 403). Therefore, ahead of any writing task that focuses on the use of cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme, teachers can start with written texts, which will serve as models for students to follow.

Finally, for advanced levels, the teacher may urge the students to write a fully-fledged counter-argument on an already written argument. In this case, students will have to be taught the different alternatives for presenting their arguments - zig-zag, problem-refutation-solution, one-sided argument, eclectic, opposition followed by author’s argument and the other side questioned pattern (Hatch, 1992). Adopting one of these patterns will help students decide on the type(s) of cohesive devices to be employed in the text and on the shape of the interplay between Theme and Rheme. For example, if a student chooses a zig-zag model, he/she can use a zig-zag
Theme and Rheme structure, where a main word in the Rheme of a clause is transferred into the Theme of the following clause.

Conclusion

The textual analysis conducted on Krauthammer’s *Free-lunch Egalitarianism* reveals that even though cohesive devices and the interplay of Theme and Rheme are form-related concepts, they can be utilized effectively to build and consolidate the content of a certain text on the writer’s part and to obtain better understanding of the text’s message on the part of the reader. The micro-analytic approach employed in this paper also houses a tacit acknowledgement that a decontextualised text is hard to interpret, and thus, emphasises the role of background context on forming more insight about the content. One more important element of the textual analysis is the examination of the type of text, or genre, and its role in both making linguistic choices and designing the purpose of the text.

The cohesive devices, including reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical ties, have been found to play a primary role in consolidating the argument in the article under discussion. The writer’s choice of reference items, elliptical forms and conjunctions has had a noticeable impact on conveying his message and in fostering his argument against the Buffet Rule. Having in mind the argumentative nature of the article, it becomes quite understandable why, for example, adversative conjunctions have had the lion’s share over other conjunctions used in the article. Lexical ties, represented in repetition of key words, synonymy and antonymy, have also added emphasis to the writer’s viewpoints.

In addition to the role of cohesive ties, the interplay of Theme and Rheme has also played a major role in conveying the article’s message. Basically, the writer employs two techniques as far as Theme and Rheme are concerned. Firstly, the interplay of Theme and Rheme has been used to criticise the Buffet Rule, the core around which the argument is built. Secondly, elliptical Theme is used whenever the argument’s emphasis is one of the Rheme’s elements. This is highlighted in the example of “Costs a lot” (T3) discussed earlier.

Finally, the paper has examined the implications of this paper’s analysis on education, particularly on teaching writing. The analysis makes it quite patent that teachers can use different techniques to highlight the significance of using cohesive devices and Theme and Rheme in writing tasks. Therefore, these concepts can be used effectively in writing, be it controlled or advanced.

About the Author:

Emad Abu Ayyash is a Doctorate student of education at the British University in Dubai. He completed his Masters Degree in Translation with the honor roll from Yarmouk University, Jordan in 2007. He is currently an Instructional Leadership Co-ordinator at the Ministry of Education, UAE.

References


Appendices

Appendix A: Free-lunch Egalitarianism

By: Charles Krauthammer
The Washington Post, April 13 2012

T1 Here we go again.

T2 At the beginning of his presidency, Barack Obama argued that the country’s spiraling debt was largely the result of exploding health-care costs. That was true. He then said the cure for these exploding costs would be his health-care reform. That was not true.

T3 It was obvious at the time that it could never be true. If government gives health insurance to 33 million uninsured, that costs. Costs a lot. There is no free lunch.

T4 Now we know. The Congressional Budget Office’s latest estimate is that Obamacare will add $1.76 trillion in federal expenditures through 2022. And, as one of the Medicare trustees has just made clear, if you don’t double count the $575 billion set aside for the Medicare trust fund, Obamacare adds to the already crushing national debt.

T5 Three years later, we are back to smoke and mirrors. This time it’s not health care but the Buffett Rule, which would impose a minimum 30 percent effective tax rate on millionaires. Here is how Obama introduced it last September:

T6 “Warren Buffett’s secretary shouldn’t pay a [higher] tax rate than Warren Buffett. . . . And that basic principle of fairness, if applied to our tax code, could raise enough money” to “stabilize our debt and deficits for the next decade. . . . This is not politics; this is math.”

T7 Okay. Let’s do the math. The Joint Committee on Taxation estimates this new tax would yield between $4 billion and $5 billion a year. If we collect the Buffett tax for the next
250 years — a span longer than the life of this republic — it would not cover the Obama deficit for 2011 alone.

| T8 | As an approach to our mountain of debt, the Buffett Rule is a farce. And yet Obama repeated the ridiculous claim again this week. “It will help us close our deficit.” Does he really think we’re that stupid? |
| T9 | Hence the fallback: The Buffett Rule is a first step in tax reform. On the contrary. It’s a substitute for tax reform, an evasion of tax reform. In three years, Obama hasn’t touched tax (or, for that matter, entitlement) reform, and clearly has no intention to. The Buffett Rule is nothing but a form of redistributionism that has vanishingly little to do with debt reduction and everything to do with reelection. |
| T10 | As such, it’s clever. It deftly channels the sentiment underlying Occupy Wall Street (original version, before its slovenly, whiny, aggressive weirdness made it politically toxic). It perfectly pits the 99 percent against the 1 percent. Indeed, it is OWS translated into legislation, something the actual occupiers never had the wit to come up with. |
| T11 | Clever politics, but in terms of economics, it’s worse than useless. It’s counterproductive. The reason Buffett and Mitt Romney pay roughly 15 percent in taxes is that their income is principally capital gains. The Buffett Rule is, in fact, a disguised tax hike on capital gains. But Obama prefers to present it as just an alternative minimum tax because 50 years of economic history show that raising the capital gains tax backfires: It reduces federal revenue, while lowering the tax raises revenue. |
| T12 | No matter. Obama had famously said in 2008 that even if that’s the case, he’d still raise the capital gains tax — for the sake of fairness. |
| T13 | For Obama, fairness is the supreme social value. And fairness is what he is running on — although he is not prepared to come clean on its price. Or even acknowledge that there is a price. Instead, Obama throws in a free economic lunch for all. “This is not just about fairness,” he insisted on Wednesday. “This is also about growth.” |
| T14 | Growth? The United States has the highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world. Now, in the middle of a historically weak recovery, Obama wants to raise our capital gains tax to the fourth highest. No better way to discourage investment — and the jobs and growth that come with it. (Except, perhaps, for hyperregulation. But Obama is working on that too.) |
| T15 | Three years ago, Obama promised universal health care that saves money. Today, he offers a capital gains tax hike that spurs economic growth. This is free-lunch egalitarianism. |
| T16 | The Buffett Rule redistributes deck chairs on the Titanic, ostensibly to make more available for those in steerage. Nice idea, but the iceberg cometh. The enterprise is an exercise in misdirection — a distraction not just from Obama’s dismal record on growth and unemployment but, more important, from his dereliction of duty in failing to this day to address the utterly predictable and devastating debt crisis ahead. |
Research Paradigms: Researchers’ Worldviews, Theoretical Frameworks and Study Designs

Sayyed Rashid Shah
Faculty of Engineering
King AbdulAziz University, Saudi Arabia

Abdullah Al-Bargi
English Language Institute
King AbdulAziz University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract
For novice researchers, in the fields of educational and social research, the choice of an appropriate research paradigm and relevant methodology is an uphill task. The vast amount of literature on this subject further exacerbates the confusion of early-career researchers. Hence, the current paper introduces them to the philosophical underpinnings of three major research paradigms in research. It delineates the positivistic, interpretive, and critical paradigms with an aim to seek a connexion among the ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods of each paradigm. In addition, it explores various underlying assumptions in educational research that have an impact on researchers’ world views, theoretical frameworks and study designs.

Keywords: methods; methodology; research paradigms; study designs; worldviews
Introduction
To explore the nature of educational research and to understand its underlying philosophy, novice researchers must be fairly familiar with major research paradigms and their underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions. For new researchers, it is essential to recognize how these assumptions narrate the chosen methodology and methods in connection to the findings of a research study. Therefore, to raise research awareness, this paper briefly discusses the terms Research and Paradigm; and reveals the philosophical underpinnings of three major research paradigms, known as Positivistic, Interpretive and Critical, which are mainly used in educational research. Their theoretical and philosophical issues are addressed in the light of ontological, epistemological and methodological positions.

Nature of Research
One of human kind's most persistent endeavours has been the search for the truth and the exploration of nature. This immutable obsession has been accomplished primarily through experience, reasoning and research (Moley, 1978 cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Research is considered a combination of both experience and reasoning, particularly in the natural sciences (Borg, 1963 cited in Cohen et al, 2007). If research is such a powerful tool for uncovering the ultimate truth, researchers must know more about its purpose and process.

Research is a systematic and methodical process that investigates a phenomenon, addresses an issue, answers a particular question and solves problems, all of which help increase existing knowledge (Sekaran, 1992: 4). Redman and Mory define research as a “systematized effort to gain new knowledge” (1993, p. 10). Similarly, Bassey (1990) considers research as "a systematic, critical and self-critical inquiry which aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge" (p. 35). These two definitions emphasise the systematic production and expansion of knowledge through research.

In the investigative process, a researcher attempts to link and build on existing knowledge, uses an organized process of enquiry, and engages in theory development (Cohen et al., 2007; Ernest, 1994). We believe that these elements assist a researcher to scrutinise the research phases while assuming a self-critical and principled position. This systematic and critical approach helps explore and develop knowledge in various domains of the social and natural sciences.

Paradigm
The term paradigm was first introduced by Kuhn in his seminal work The Structure of Scientific Revolution. Kuhn defines paradigm as “an integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tools” (cited in Flick, 2009). Guba and Lincoln (1994) call paradigm “a basic system or worldview that guides the investigator” (p. 105). Likewise, for Chalmers (1982), paradigm is “made up of the general theoretical assumptions and laws, and techniques for their application that the members of a particular scientific community adopt” (p. 90). It is generally acknowledged that a paradigm has five components:
1. Explicitly stated laws and theoretical assumptions.
2. Standard ways of applying the fundamental laws to a variety of situations.
3. Instrumentation and instrumental techniques that bring the laws of the paradigm to bear on the real world.
4. General metaphysical principles that guide work within the paradigm.
5. General methodological prescriptions about how to conduct work within the paradigm. (Chalmers, 1982, p. 91)

Hussain, Elyas and Nasseef (2013) believe that the term paradigm can be utilised in three ways in human sciences: it can be used for the institutionalisation of intellectual activity, for the broad groupings of certain approaches and perspectives to the study of any subject, and for the description of broad approaches to research, e.g. the positivist or interpretive paradigms (Grix, 2010). It is generally believed that the paradigms we build in our minds have a powerful effect as they create the lens through which we see the world (Covey, 1989).

**Positivist Paradigm**

Positivism is regarded as "scientific method" or "science research" and is “based on the rationalistic, empiricist philosophy that originated with Aristotle, Francis Bacon, John Locke, Auguste Comte, and Emmanuel Kant” (Mertens, 2005, p. 8). Positivism is related to various schools of thought such as empiricism, naturalism, behaviourism, scientism and determinism, and reductionism. Furthermore, it “reflects a deterministic philosophy in which causes determine effects or outcomes” (Creswell, 2003, p. 7).

Positivism was propounded by the French philosopher Auguste Comte who interprets it as a doctrine that defines observation and reason as a means of understanding behaviour. He maintains that true knowledge is based on sensory experience and only observation or experiment can accomplish it (Crotty, 2003, Cohen et al., 2007). On the same grounds, positivists in social sciences apply scientific methods, used in natural sciences, to study a social phenomenon, considering it value free and subject to scientific explanation. Thus, researchers pursue the social world objectively (Mertens, 2005), and adopt all those approaches that synchronize scientific methods with human affairs (Grix, 2010).

The twentieth century saw the emergence of post-positivism which shares somewhat similar ontological and epistemological grounds with positivism. In a scientific paradigm, the generated truth simply signifies a shared belief in its current tested hypotheses (Popper, 1959, p. 415-9). With regards to the principle of falsification, scientific theories can never be proven true (Ernest, 1994, p. 22) and can only be accepted tentatively true when all attempts to refute them fail. Hence, “every scientific statement must remain tentative forever” (Popper, 1959, p. 280). In addition, for a better understanding of scientific theories researchers need not restrict themselves to empirical data but are required to go beyond that in order to minimise the element of uncertainty. For instance, in light of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, it is highly unlikely to understand the precise position and velocity of a subatomic particle concurrently (Crotty, 1998, p. 29). Thus, Post-positivistic knowledge claimed to be more objective and certain in nature than knowledge originated from other paradigms.

**Ontology**

Positivist paradigm takes realism (naïve realism) as its ontological stance, assuming that reality exists and is driven by immutable natural laws and mechanism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). For a positivist, reality is "out there" in the world independent of the researcher (Pring, 2000a, p. 59) and essentially discovered through scientific and conventional methodologies (Guba & Lincoln, 1994: Bassey, 1995). Positivist researchers perceive the world as an external and objective reality where the observers are independent and detached (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 176) and their philosophical treatise is that the world is knowable which could be explored through...
quantitative methodologies. Further, positivists see the world as a meaningful object once the conscious beings engage with it and make sense of it. This is also evident from the researchers’ claim that human beings could be studied as a scientific entity in a world that exists independent of human consciousness (Cohen et al., 2007, Grix, 2004 and Crotty, 2003).

**Epistemology**

Epistemology pertains to the nature of knowledge (Crotty, 2003). The epistemology of the positivist paradigm is dualist and objectivist, in which the investigator and the investigated exist as independent entities and the former is able to study the object or the investigated without influencing each other (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, the role of a researcher is to maintain an aloof, distant and non-interactive position and not to impede the research procedure (Cohen et al., 2007) whereas, phenomena have an independent existence and can be discovered via research. Moreover, meaning exclusively rests in objects, not in the researcher’s consciousness, of those objects and the researcher aims to obtain that meaning as Crotty (1998) elaborates:

A tree in the forest is a tree, regardless of whether anyone is aware of its existence or not. As an object of that kind, it carries the intrinsic meaning of treeness. When human beings recognize it as a tree, they are simply discovering a meaning that has been lying in wait for them all along (p. 8).

**Methodology & Methods**

Positivist methodology is concerned with explaining relationships among various phenomena. Positivists adhere to the principles of demonstration, verification and causal links between the bits of information used (Dash, 2005) and identify causes which influence outcomes (Creswell, 2009, p. 7). Their research is related to quantitative methods, i.e. experimental (cause and effect) and non-experimental wherein questions and hypotheses are posited in advance in a propositional way and are subjected to an empirical test (falsification) for verification under conditions that are carefully controlled (manipulated) so that the results are not influenced (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This approach aims to study the fundamental relationship between variables that are consistent in time and context. An essential part of it is to deal with researchers' control and manipulation of conditions independently to determine the events according to their interests. In non-experimental approaches, especially, in correlational studies, the researcher would refrain from manipulating the independent variable. It is primarily concerned with researcher’s links between the variables (Cohen et al., 2007). The limitations of this linkage are that the researcher cannot generalize the results due to the probability of other justifications that could be gathered as in cause and effect research.

The scientific paradigm seeks predictions and generalisations, so different methods often generate quantitative data. Examples are: experiments, quasi- experiments, standardised tests, scales, questionnaires, closed ended questionnaires, structured interviews and descriptions of phenomena employing standardised observation tools (Pring, 2000, p. 34). However, it is on the researchers’ discretion to choose a method appropriate to their paradigmatic stance and design of the study to present and analyse the data statistically (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2009). Similarly, post-positivists seek to understand and establish causal relationships by designing experimentation and correlational studies. Post-positivists also aim to collect sense-data through seeking participants’ perspectives. Consequently, as knowledge is considered tentative, hypotheses are neither simply proved nor rejected (Creswell, 2009, p. 7).

The quality of the quantitative research is dependent upon its validity and reliability, however, Wellington (2000) believes that researchers often find the terms difficult to understand. For Cohen et al. (2007) reliability is a pre-condition of validity in research, but not the opposite.
Creswell (2009) relates reliability to consistency in test administration and scoring whereas validity pertains to the possibility of drawing meaningful and useful inferences using a particular instrument.

To measure the reliability of a result, Bryman (2008) considers three vital factors: stability, internal reliability and inter-observer consistency. Stability denotes that the outcomes are related to a sample’s measurement and are consistent. Internal reliability examines if the respondents’ scores on different indicators are similar. Inter-observer consistency involves more than one observer in the process of categorization of the data or recording of the observation. There are various kinds of validity. Two of them are significant i.e., external and internal: the external provides the precise description of an issue or an investigated event through the obtained data; internal validity is concerned with the contingency of generalizing the results beyond a specific research context (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007).

What is more, validity and reliability could be influenced by the participants’ unknown interests. For example, if a questionnaire is given to students to evaluate the teacher’s performance, they might not respond to the questions in an impartial way, bearing in mind the teacher’s rapport with them and his authoritative position. Also, the questions that are beyond the participants’ understanding may lead to unreliable results and interpretations.

**Sampling**

In a positivist study, sampling is of paramount importance. All quantitative sampling aims at approaches that draw a representative sample from the target population, hence, the results of studying the sample can then be generalized back to the population. The quality of quantitative research is not limited to the appropriate use of methodology and instruments, but hinges on the suitability of the sampling strategy adopted by the researchers (Creswell. 2009). Positivists commonly use random or probability samples. A random sample defines the nature of the population and offers all members an equal chance of selection. Area sampling and stratified random sampling are variants of random sampling and allow sub-groups to be studied in more detail.

**Critique of the Positivist Paradigm**

The positivist paradigm has been criticised from different perspectives. First, it fails to differentiate people and social sciences from natural sciences, and deals with human beings like any other natural objects (Bryman, 2008). Second, it seeks to dilute the complex to the simple by simplifying and controlling variables, which is why its application seems difficult in educational research. Third, it assumes that generalization is applicable in social sciences. However, it seems inapplicable based on differences in culture, belief and human experience. Last but not least, positivists shred contexts from the meanings while developing quantified measures of phenomena (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) and give no value to research. In fact, research is a value-laden activity with its meaning residing in the context. Accordingly, the context of the study gives value to the research by explaining and signifying the participants’ roles, different variables and interpretation of findings.

**Interpretive Paradigm**

This paradigm is considered as constructivist, naturalist, humanistic and anti-positivist which emerged in contradistinction to positivism for the understanding and interpretation of human and social reality. According to Crotty (2003), this approach “looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (p. 67). Interpretive research is concerned with subjective meanings as it seeks to recognize the individuals’ interpretation and
understanding of the social phenomena (Schwandt, 1994). Since social research is guided by the researcher’s desire to understand social reality, all is interpretive. Hussain et al. (2013) argue that researchers cannot distance themselves from the object being observed, the subject matter and the methods of the study. In contrast to positivists, interpretivists assume that there is no objective knowledge which is independent of thinking and reasoning by humans, so knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation (Schwandt, 1994). Moreover, interpretivists believe that adopting a cause-and-effect relationship in social sciences is not applicable. Thus interpretivist researchers aim to explore individuals’ perceptions, share their meanings and develop insights about the observed case (Bryman, 2008, Grix, 2004). This type of research investigates and highlights how the subjective interpretations of individuals and groups shape the objective features of a society. In interpretivist research, terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

**Ontology**

Ontology of interpretive paradigm is relativist. Realities exist in the form of multiple and intangible mental constructions that are based on experience, local and specific in nature and dependent for their form and content on the persons or groups holding the constructions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Interpretivists do not believe that reality is "out there", rather they view it as socially constructed. They maintain that people make their own sense of social realities that emerge when consciousness interacts with objects (Crotty, 1998). Interpretivists adopt the idea of multiple realities to conduct qualitative research on individuals. Intending to report these realities, language does not passively label objects, but actively shapes and moulds reality (Frowe, 2001, p. 185). Therefore, reality is constructed through interaction between language and various aspects of an independent world while actual words of individuals become the evidence of multiple realities (Creswell, 2007).

**Epistemology**

Interpretivism espouses subjective and transactional epistemology, therefore, the inquirer and the inquired are fused into a single (monistic) entity and their interaction leads to certain findings. Subjectivity serves as the only means of answering the constructions kept by the individuals which is thrust upon us by human conditions. Subjective interaction can access the realities that are in respondents’ minds (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Interpretivists believe that the world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it (Grix, 2004, p. 83) and the individuals’ interpretation and participation can influence the observed phenomena (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992 cited in Alwan, 2007). They present how the individuals or groups construe the social phenomena and how the researchers’ interpretation establishes different concepts, theories, strategies and procedures (Bryman 2008; Cohen et al., 2007; Ernest, 1994). Crotty (1998) elaborates the example of trees that “We need to remind ourselves here that it is human beings who have constructed it as a tree, given it the name, and attributed to it the associations we make with trees” (p.43).

The meaning of a tree is not discovered but, in fact, is constructed through interaction between consciousness and the world. To experience the world is to participate in it by encountering and shaping it simultaneously (Heron & Reason, 1997, p. 3).

**Methodology & Methods**

Interpretive methodology seeks an understanding of phenomena from individual’s perspective, investigating interaction among individuals as well as the historical and cultural contexts which people inhabit (Creswell, 2009, p. 8).
Research methods used by interpretivists are hermeneutical and dialectical (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The varying personal constructions are explained through hermeneutical techniques and equated through a dialectical interaction to reach a consensus construction that is more informed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Interpretivists think that quantitative research methods are not adequate to comprehend social phenomena so they believe in qualitative techniques that are diverse. The qualitative aspect of these techniques presents human beings as the primary research instrument. These techniques include phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, case study, historical and documentary research and ethno-methodology. Following are brief definitions of these methods:

**Phenomenology** considers the experiences of different individuals and focuses on what all participants have in common while they experience any social phenomenon. “Phenomenologists talk about the ‘primordial phenomena’, the ‘immediate, original data of the consciousness” (Crotty, 2003: 79). Husserl and Schutz are the main advocates of this school of thought.

**Grounded Theory** evolves from the research study and is developed from the data while the research is carried out.

**Ethnography** is considered to be the essence of qualitative research. It intends to investigate the beliefs, ideas and practices of a particular cultural setting and its influence on people.

**Case study** is an approach that employs in-depth investigation of any social phenomenon, using various sources of data. A "case" may refer to an individual, an event, a social activity, group, organisation or institution (Jupp, 2006). It could be a descriptive, explanatory or exploratory form of research inquiry.

**Historical and documentary research** deals with qualitative historical studies as it depends on verbal and other symbolic materials largely derived from past cultures.

**Ethno-methodology** is a research perspective that foregrounds the intentional activity of human beings and describes inter-subjective negotiations between individuals (Scott & Morrison, 2005, p. 93). It delineates everyday life and defines how common sense reality is constructed in everyday interaction. The ethno methodologists’ core interest is to interpret how people perceive their social settings (Creswell, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Dornyei, 2007; Grix, 2004).

**Symbolic Interactionism** explores the understandings prevalent in culture as the meaningful matrix that guides our lives (Crotty, 2003, p. 71). The hallmark of this approach is that it shows how human beings interpret and define each other’s actions rather than reacting to them.

**Narrative research** is a form of research in which the researcher analyzes the lives of individuals by asking one or more individuals to narrate their life stories (Creswell, 2003; Dornyei, 2007; Grix, 2010).

The data collection techniques include observation (participant / non participant), open-ended questionnaires, interviews (semi- structured / unstructured / interactive), focus-groups, think aloud protocol and role-playing, document reviews, and visual data analysis. Interpretivists do not rely on statistical analysis rather they employ an investigative, holistic and inductive approach for data analysis (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2003; Dornyei, 2007).

Klein & Myers (1999) contend that ...

...the word interpretive is not a synonym for qualitative – qualitative research may or may not be interpretive, depending upon the underlying philosophical assumptions of the researcher (Myers 1997). This implies that case study research can be positivist (Yin
1994), interpretive (Walsham 1993), or critical, just as action research can be positivist (Clark 1972), interpretive (Elden and Chisholm 1993) or critical (Carr and Kemmis 1986) (p. 69).

**Sampling**

The quality of a piece of research not only depends on suitable methodology and instrumentation but also on the suitability of the sample (Cohen et al., 2007). There are three extensive approaches to select a sample in interpretive research known as convenience, purposive or theoretical but the most important sampling technique is purposive sampling, which helps in obtaining thorough information (Cohen et al., 2007; Marshall, 1996).

**Critique of the Interpretive Paradigm**

Whilst Interpretivism is sensitive to individual meanings, it can be buried within broader generalizations (Samdahl, 1999). The subjective and contextual nature of interpretive research findings prevents researchers from generalizing the results to different organizational settings. Moreover, carrying out interpretative research could also become costly because of the prolonged research time that is needed to observe and describe idiosyncratic interactions. Replicating original research and reaching an inter-subjective agreement about the results is also problematic. Furthermore, as researchers’ views are reflected in the interpretive research process, their personal subjectivity may influence the research outcomes and compromise the participants’ privacy and autonomy due to the open-ended nature of the adopted methods; that may lead to the unintended discovery of secrets, lies and oppressive relationships (Howe & Moses, 1999, p. 40). Owing to the lack of participants' control over the subjective interpretations of the researcher, interpretivists often produce theorized accounts that represent participant’s sociological understandings (Danby & Farrell, 2004, p. 41).

**Critical Paradigm**

Critical theory challenges both positivist and Interpretivist paradigms and attempts to uncloak beliefs and practices that shackle human freedom (Scott & Usher, 2011). The main proponent of this paradigm, Jurgen Hebermas worked at the Frankfort school in Germany to develop an approach of investigation and action in social sciences.

The critical paradigm research tries to emancipate people by changing their social, political, and cultural settings. It is concerned "with questions of power, control, and epistemology as social constructions with benefits to some and not to others" (Muffoletto, 1993, p. 4). Research in this paradigm advocates changes in societal and educational structures and aims at practicality (Alwan, 2007; Crotty, 2003; Pring, 2000). Moreover, it vouches for collective freedom and social transformation (Cohen et al., 2007). It considers the researcher to be a transformative intellectual who liberates people from their historical, mental, emotional and social conditions (Crotty, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Critical theory doubts all the culturally constructed meanings and emphasizes that meanings are created in peculiar social conditions which might attend to certain hegemonic concerns, “Each set of meaning supports particular power of structures, resists, moves towards greater equity, harbours oppression, manipulation and other modes of injustice and denial of freedom” (Crotty, 2003, p. 59-60). The issues encountered by the marginalised groups, such as oppression, domination, suppression, alienation, and hegemony are given paramount importance. The researchers study and expose these issues and give participants a voice, raise their consciousness and improve their lives (Creswell, 2003, p. 21). The goals that critical inquirers set may not obtain the absolute results, yet they regard their struggle for social justice, freedom
and equity to be worthwhile. They explore the relationship between power and culture through the lens of the marginalised and hope for "universality and universal validity of culture" (Crotty, 2003).

The critical paradigm is considered anti-foundational attacking the reality and asserting that people are not only in the world but also with it (Crotty, 1998, p. 149). It also considers reality a commutable human action. The emancipatory aim is achieved through addressing issues of social justice and marginalisation. Various theoretical perspectives of critical research embraces: Marxism, queer theory and feminism.

**Ontology**

*Historical realism* is the ontological stance of the critical theorists who view reality as tangible and historically placed in social and institutional structures (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Reality is shaped by social, political, cultural, ethnic and gender values; that was deemed plastic once and has become crystallized over time (ibid). Interaction between language and aspects of the independent world helps shape the reality (Frowe, 2001, p.185).

**Epistemology**

The epistemology of the critical paradigm is transactional and subjectivist which is based on real world phenomena and associated with societal knowledge. It assumes the investigator and investigated objects are interactively linked and closely related to the practical conduct of the research that is likely to influence the enquiry (Crotty; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The researchers characterize knowledge as socially constructed and human perception as value laden and prejudiced (Ernest, 1994: Creswell, 2003). They also believe that our actions depend on the meanings we comprehend (Ernest, 1994).

**Methodology & Methods**

Critical methodology aims to interrogate values and assumptions, to expose hegemony and injustice, to challenge conventional social structures and to engage in social action (Crotty, 1998, p. 157). Critical theorists adopt dialogic, dialectical and transformative methodologies. The transactional nature of the inquiry involves the researchers and the subjects in the dialectical nature of dialogues to transform ignorance and misapprehension (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). For researchers, a research methodology is not value-free and their utilised methods aspire to initiate dialogues with participants as sources of information (Pring, 2000b, p. 250).

Cohen et al. (2007) associate two research methodologies with critical paradigm, ideology critique and action research. Ideology critique aims to uncover the vested interests and illegitimate actions of those in authority, to raise the awareness of marginalised people about an unjust social system. Therefore, a crucial relationship exists between theory, data, research questions and interpretation (Talmy, 2010). Action research is mainly concerned with practice which gives researchers’ a "voice" (Cohen et al., 2007). It is a strategy that sets out to change the situation being researched and improve the standard of practice in various contexts (Scott & Morrison, 2005). In educational practices, it is assured to have an in-depth view of the context to enhance learning outcomes through developing reflective practice and acquainting the school environment with effective changes (Mills, 2003). Dornyei (2007) considers it a vital tool for a research project that establishes a close link between research, teaching and teachers. However, novice researchers may find it challenging to establish these links, thus they collaborate with old hands to conduct sound research.

Critical researchers may adopt qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods to design their research studies in order to critically examine the realities from a cultural, historical and political stance. Triangulation can be used to obtain more valid and reliable results (Mertens, 2005).
Purposive sampling is a key to understand the target groups, their problems and expected changes to happen. Moreover, open-ended interviews, focus groups, open-ended observations, open-ended questionnaires, and journals are commonly used methods which usually generate qualitative data. Like interpretivism, analysis often includes thematic interpretation of data placing explicit values on them.

**Critique of the Critical Paradigm**

Critical theory has been criticised on a number of grounds. It has a deliberate political agenda where researchers place themselves as ideologues when they should remain objective, dispassionate and disinterested (Morrison, 1995, cited in Cohen at el., 2007, p. 30). This may lead the researchers to introduce political changes with ulterior motives. As a result, that may encourage people to make radical changes irrespective of their desires and needs. On the other hand, the hidden institutional forces of resistance to change, like teachers, students and institutional structures, etc. may foreclose the attainment of desired results, thus rendering the whole process a futile exercise. Furthermore, to conduct critical inquiries in various marginalised contexts in order to liberate and empower people, critical theorists often lack clarity in terms of guidelines and roadmaps to achieve the desired outcomes. These shortcomings notwithstanding, the immense strength of critical paradigm cannot be denied due to its plainly stated goal of transforming the phenomena under study (Ernest, 1994).

**Mixed-Method Approach**

This discussion would not be complete without touching upon the acceptance and utility of the mixed-method approach in research. The use of mixed methods finds its roots in *triangulation* which aims to enhance and strengthen research validity and credibility (Grix, 2004; Creswell, 2009; Bryman, 2008) through complementarity, convergence and dissonance among the findings (Erzerberger & Prein, 1997). Its benefits include ‘increasing confidence in research data, creating innovative ways of understanding a phenomenon, revealing unique findings, challenging or integrating theories, and providing a clearer understanding of the problem’ (Thurmond, 2001, p. 254). For example, using interviews as well as questionnaires add depth to the results that would not be possible using a single-strategy study, thereby increasing the validity and utility of the findings.

The nature of mixed-method research reflects the practical orientation of an approach that equips a researcher with a variety of tools to be used in different contexts in line with the research design. However, philosophically oriented writers question the possibility of mixed-method research as it mixes paradigms or worldviews. It is believed that paradigms or worldviews have rigid boundaries and mixed-methods research is untenable due to the incompatibility of the paradigms underlying them (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Also, methods are linked to paradigms, and mixing of methods results in mixing paradigms (Holmes, 2006), whereas the process of combining two different paradigms in the same study is challenged by researchers (Foss & Ellefsen, 2002), who have a purist stance and believe in the "incompatibility thesis" (Howe, 2004; Pring, 2000). For them, mixed-methods research is unfeasible and fundamentally flawed (Johnson et al., 2007).

On the other hand, some scholars acknowledge the fact that there is no direct correspondence between paradigms, methodology and methods. In fact, “…research methodologies are merely tools, instruments to be used to facilitate understanding” (Morse, 1991). Since, strategies related to types of data and methods of data collection and analysis do not have paradigmatic characteristics, there is no issue with using numbers, text, visual and
sensory data synthetically in combination (Gorard, 2012). Moreover, both qualitative and qualitative methods may be simultaneously used with any research paradigm with the increasing support for mixed-methodologies (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 200).

Conspectus
This paper has critically viewed three major research paradigms and offered some foundational literature on researchers’ worldviews, theoretical frameworks and study designs. In the domain of educational research, the positivist paradigm seeks to generalize, the interpretive paradigm aims to understand, and the critical paradigm attempts to emancipate. Since, each paradigm has its own ways of realizing its goals, the literature has revealed the fact that a comprehensive understanding of these paradigms is essential to a research endeavour. Troudi (2010) asserts that it is imperative for researchers to establish a clear link between the paradigmatic nature and the theoretical framework of their studies, which will help them choose a suitable research design, methodology and method(s). In choosing a method, we should be more flexible in order to maximise our research potential and produce valid and reliable research results. However, the ontological and epistemological beliefs of a qualitative researcher should not prevent them from utilizing data collection methods typically used in quantitative research approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). If a researcher utilises any data collection method, qualitative or quantitative, that should not be interpreted as an indicator of an ontological or epistemological position (Troudi, 2010).

About the Authors:
Mr. Sayyed Rashid Shah is a lecturer in English at King Abdul-Aziz University, Saudi Arabia. He earned a master degree in TESOL from Sheffield Hallam University, UK. He is currently enrolled on EdD TESOL programme at University of Exeter, UK. Mr. Shah’s research interests include language teacher development, educational leadership and management, TESOL pedagogies, and EFL classroom teaching and learning.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Bargi is Vice-Dean for Development at the English Language Institute (ELI), King Abdulaziz University (KAU), Saudi Arabia. Prior to joining the ELI, he served as an advisor to the editorial board of the Saudi Gazette Newspaper, the first English daily in the country. He was recently featured in the ASU Alumni Magazine "Learn Locally, Work Globally." He also teaches linguistics courses at the European Language and Literature Department at KAU. Dr. Al-Bargi earned his Master's in TESL and PhD in Linguistics/Rhetoric & Composition from Arizona State University, USA

References
Berliner, D. C. (2002). Educational research: The hardest science of all. Educational...
Researcher, 31(8), 18-20.


Publication Ltd. London.

Interpretive Field Studies in Information Systems. MIS Quaterly, 23, 1, 67-93.

Kuhn, T.S. (1962). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago, IL: University of
Chicago Press.

University of Leeds, UK. *System* 32 (3–19).

525.


Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/ Prentice Hall.


Muffoletto, R. (1993). Schools and Technology in a Democratic Society: Equity and
social justice. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association for the Educational
Communications and Technology, New Orleans, LA.


Redman, L. V., & Mory, A. V. H. (1933). *The romance of research*. The Williams &
Wilkins Company in cooperation with the Century of Progress Exposition.

Samdahl, D. M. (1999). Differences between quantitative and qualitative research. In
Jackson, E. J., & Burton (Eds), *T.L. Leisure studies: Prospects for the 21st century* (pp. 119-133). State
College, PA: Venture Publ.


International Publishing Group, New York.

Publishing Group. NY.


33(3),254–256.Retrieved from:

research. In Al-Hamly, M. Coombe, C. Davidson, P. Shehada, A. (Eds.) English in learning: Learning in
English (pp. 315-323). Dubai: TESOL Arabia Publications.

Hit Two Birds with One Stone: Idioms and Culture in FL Translation Class

Ahlam Mohammad Alharbi
Taif University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract:
A foreign language (FL) translation class should be invested in teaching translation as well as pragmatic competence including culture. The current study has suggested a multilayered method of teaching idioms and culture in FL translation class to provide learners with the required background to communicate successfully. Idioms are one of the important aspects to achieve a successful communication in L2, because it is cultural-oriented, need different methods of translation, and enrich the pragmatic competence of L2 learners. This study has suggested a comparative method in FL translation class to achieve the previous aims. The comparison between the idiomatic expression of L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English) has revealed interesting subclasses of comparison based on cultures, which also indicate the different translation tactics in translating English idioms into Arabic. The subclasses are cultural-identical idioms, cultural-semi-identical idioms, cultural-equivalent idioms, and cultural-specific idioms.

Keywords: Idioms and culture in FL translation class, Cultural-identical idioms, Cultural-semi-identical idioms, Cultural equivalent idioms, Cultural-specific idioms.
1. Introduction

The purpose of learning a new language is diverse; yet, good communication skills are essential. Successful communication, as Kramsch (1994: 2) explains, involves “learning how to use words, rules and knowledge about language and its use in order to communicate with speakers of the language”. This way of looking at language views a language not only as a body of knowledge but also as a social practice (p. 2). Similarly put, as Nyyssonen (1999: 160) claims, “communicative [or pragmatic] competence is a highly complex ability. It includes grammatical accuracy, intelligibility and acceptability, contextual appropriateness and fluency.” Moreover, communication, according to Çakir (2006: 137), “is functional, purposive and designed to bring about some effect on the environment of hearers and speakers.” Hence, second language (L2) learners are required “to understand the purpose of communication, developing an awareness of what the purpose of a communicative act is and how to achieve that purpose through linguistic forms” (Çakir, 2006, p. 137).

Needless to say, most L2 learners are encouraged at schools and, especially, universities to use the foreign language for successful and effective communication. Yet, it has been noted that most of the L2 learners fail in achieving such a goal (see e.g., Lo Bianco 2009, Calviño 2011, McDougald 2009, Li 2013), especially university level learners. Cook (1995: 52) argues, “[m]any L2 learners achieve only minimal L2 competence after long years of struggle and effort.” The researcher has noticed that L2 learners sometimes cannot express themselves in the second language effectively, perhaps, because they do not possess certain degree of pragmatic and communicative competence of the target language. This problem, as Tran (2012: 76) explains, “may come from the lack of idiomatic phrases in teaching and learning English whereas idiomatic expressions are of great popularity in English in use.” Similarly, Barcroft (2012: 1) adds, “[a]dvanced L2 learners also suffer from limited vocabulary knowledge, such as when it comes to their command of idiomatic expressions.” On the other hand, this problem also may be due to the fact that the focus in the learning process is on feeding EFL learners with rules, forms, and decontextualized sentences. However, it is well known that the focus on form should be supplemented by the study of function in context to enrich the students’ vocabulary and promote successful communication. Hence, it has been argued that teaching fixed expressions and lexical chunks such as idioms to EFL learners especially at the university level may help enhance their pragmatic competence (e.g., Yorio, 1989, Duquette, 1995; Schmitt, 2004). Such research indicates that the proficiency level of L2 learners can be shown through his mastery of idioms and there is a positive correlation between the number of idioms memorized and the success of L2 learners in communicative tasks. In the same vein, as Lewis (1997:15) points out, “fluency is based on the acquisition of a large store of fixed and semi-fixed prefabricated items.” Such fixed expressions can also be “retrieved and processed as whole units, which may not only enhance the accuracy and fluency of the language, but also speed up language processing significantly” (Zhao, 2009, p. 1). Zhao (2009: 10) further explains that a number of studies indicate that such fixed phrases are helpful to L2 learners not only because they increase their motivation but also because they “contribute to the aspect of language fluency, accuracy, creativeness and cohesion to a large extent.”

In essence, the significance of idioms in everyday language cannot be over looked. Copper (1998) argues that the native English speaker uses about twenty million idioms in his lifetime of sixty years, which means each speaker uses 356,720 idioms a year (i.e., 980 idioms a day and almost five idioms a minute). These statistics indicate the importance of idiomatic expressions in the daily language use of L2 learners (Tran, 2012, p. 76). In addition, Tran (2012:
76-77) explains that the idiomatic competence is one of the pivotal criteria for IELTS speaking score, as they are considered “as indicators for the use of lexical resource in bands 7, 8 and 9.” With reference to other significant aspects of idioms, idioms are culture-bound expressions; they “contain rich, unique features of the language and culture” (Zhang, 2009, p. 2). Thus, they can enrich their knowledge of the culture of the target language as well. Furthermore, teaching L2 learners idioms can emphasize and highlight some historical, social, and linguistic issues. By learning idioms, L2 learners will be able to identify issues that English-speaking people are sensitive to such as ethnicity, religion, gender, death, just to mention a few, and also learn the strategies to avoid offending people and enable them to express themselves. Needless to say, cultural knowledge is one of the necessary aspects of forming communicative competence and an educational objective in itself. In other words, it is one of the necessary aspects “of communicative competence but an educational objective in its own right” (Agbedo, 2008, p. 9). It is difficult to detach language from its cultural identity. That is, one language cannot give the same meanings of another because sometimes there is a distinction between the meanings built in a sentence and the meanings that must be expressed. In this sense, each language predisposes and forces its speakers to think differently, i.e., direct their attention to different aspects of the environment.

In short, the significance of teaching idioms is not a hypothesis any more. In fact, according to Fernando (1996), “[n]o translator or language teacher can afford to ignore idioms or idiomaticity if a natural use of the target language is an aim” (p. 234). Idioms, according to Chen and Lai (2013: 13), “have long been regarded as problematic for L2 learners due to the arbitrariness of their meanings and forms. Traditional methods of teaching idioms focus on rote learning and memorization.” In the same vein, Zhang (2009: 1-2) explains, “L2 idiom learning constitutes a difficult part in second language acquisition because idioms are word collocations with figurative meanings that cannot be easily predicted from the literal meanings of their constituent parts.” In practice, the researcher has noticed that teaching fixed phrases such as idioms at the university level has been problematic and could be boring as well. As Cook (1995: 52) argues, “[a] main goal for second language acquisition research is seen as explaining this dismal failure.” Thus, the current study suggests a method of integrating teaching idioms in foreign language (FL) translation class through which learners may learn form, meaning, and new uses; it is worth to note that these dimensions refer to syntax, semantics, and pragmatic respectively. In so doing, the researcher hits two birds with one stone, i.e., teaching different methods of translation (to solve the problem of translating idioms) and at the same time teaching idioms and culture of the foreign language. According to the researcher, the translation class is one of the suitable classes to teach such material. It is worth to note that Rostamzadeh (2008: 10) argues that translation class can be invested to improve foreign language competence. Similarly, “translation class can be evolved by exploring the culture-bound Englishness” (Kao, 2009: 1). Through teaching idioms in FL translation class, the researcher attempts to make the translation class as a class in which “students and teachers are active at the same time” (Jakobsen, 1994: 147). FL translation class is also the ideal class, because bilingual competence is needed to invest L1 knowledge as well as control L1 interference.

2. Translation and Culture

More often than not, translation in FL classes gives the learners the wrong impression about the concept of translation. Most of L2 learners perceive it as a matter of finding similar words that carry the same meaning disregarding the cultural differences between the two
languages and the appropriate way to say the same thing in another language. This linear perspective may result in inaccurate translations. Below is a diagram (Fig. 1) that clarifies the task of a translator viewing translation as transferring the meaning in the appropriate way in the receptor language.

Fig. 1 Overview of Translation Task

Catford (1965: 20) defines translation as “the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language.” Similarly put, Newmark (1981: 7) defines translation as “a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language.” Hence, “the linguistic competence is a necessary condition, but not yet sufficient for the professional practice of translation” (Badawi, 2008, p. 5). More accurately, as Karamanian (2002) puts it, “translation, involving the transposition of thoughts expressed in one language by one social group into the appropriate expression of another group, entails a process of cultural de-coding, re-coding and en-coding”. She suggested the term “transcoding” to refer to the process that focuses “not merely on language transfer but also—and most importantly—on cultural transposition”. Newmark (2001: 328) indicates, “whilst some see culture as the essence of translation, I see culture as the greatest obstacle to translation, at least to the achievement of an accurate and decent translation.” Similarly put, in practice, according to Badawi (2008: 3), “translating the cultural aspects of any source language is not an easy job.”

It seems that “differences between cultures may cause more serious problems for the translator than do differences in language structure” (Nida 1964:130). Accordingly, Loescher (1991:8) views the translation strategy as “a potentially conscious procedure for solving a problem faced in translating a text, or any segment of it.” Accordingly, this research is an attempt to participate in solving one of the many problems EFL learners and teachers may face in FL translation class and at the same time propose a way of integrating teach culture and language (i.e., idioms) at the same time in FL class. As Badawi (2008: 3) indicates, “[c]entral to culture and communication is translating culture-bound expressions.” Yet, as Badawi (2008: 7) argues, “the role of culture in translation is marginalized in the research [carried out] in the Arab world. This means that more studies are needed in the area of culture and translation.” Furthermore, Badawi (2008: 7-8) notes that the role of culture in translation is also marginalized in most of the available translation programs as well as courses at some Saudi universities. Needless to mention, this problem is widespread problem that faces EFL teachers and learners as well as

1 This diagram is from Larson (1998, p.4)
translators. Badawi (2008: 7-8) notes, “translating culture-bound expressions is expected to be one of the most nagging translation problems facing EFL prospective teachers at the University of Tabuk, KSA” (Badawi, 2008, pp.7-8). I have to admit that this problem is not only confined to the teachers of the University Tabuk; it is a widespread problematic issue. Al-Dosari and Mekheimer (2013) suggest exposing translators as well as learners to “different socio-linguistic and cultural features of target texts that deal with both the source language and the translation language cultures.”

In this study, FL translation class is designed so learners can learn idioms through investing their prior knowledge of their first language and analytical power to develop their pragmatic competence and polish their translation skills at the same time. This method can make teaching idioms fun, too. As noted earlier, comparing English and Arabic idioms in translation class can provide a good source for teaching vocabulary, grammar, and culture besides enriching the learners’ pragmatic competence and teaching them how to translate problematic fixed phrases. In addition, this study suggests a new way of looking at idioms in EF translation class through presenting a new typology of English<>Arabic idioms. The translation of non-literal meaning such as idioms has been viewed as being non-literal translation solely. Yet, a comparison between the idioms of the source language and those of the target language can result in some interesting possible methods of translation depending on the culture of the two languages under investigation. These different methods can be invested in EF translation class to teach different methods of translation as well as enrich the learners’ vocabulary.

3. Idiomatic Expressions

Cacciari (1993: iii) defines idioms as “strings of words whose semantic interpretation cannot be derived compositionally from the interpretation of their parts.” One of the universal prosperities all languages share is the arbitrary relations between form and meaning. According to Abel (2003: 329), “idioms are described as fixed expressions, i.e., as phrases or sentences whose figurative meaning is not clear from the literal meaning of their individual constituents.” Abkarian et al (1990) explain that Alexander (1984) has highlighted the importance of teaching idioms to L2 learners. They agree with Alexander (1984) regarding “the close relationship between knowledge of idioms and knowledge of a culture” (p. 247).

Some L2 learners believe that idioms are rare; hence, they have been overlooked. Yet, idioms are very common in spoken language (see, Carter and McCarthy, 1997; Cockcroft, 1999). Many idiomatic expressions are used on daily basis. Pollio et al (1977) claimed that almost “four figures of speech (many of them idioms) are uttered every minute by adult speakers” (qtd. in Abkarian, 1990, p. 247). Hence, learners are supposed to memorise such idiomatic expressions, as they do in their native language. Teaching culture through idioms by exploring the historical origin of an idiom, i.e., ‘the fable’ behind it may offer a logical explanation for L2 learners and keep them motivated as well. Some of the metaphors and the colours used in idioms can provide learners with some information of the culture of the L2, because the metaphors underlying idioms are usually deeply embedded in the culture of the language. In addition, some of the idioms are based on the L2 traditions, festivals, folklore, religion, etc., which can indirectly give L2 learners some insights of the L2 culture providing them with certain degree of competence to enable them to communicate successfully and effectively.

As Chen (2010: 227) puts it, “[i]dioms are the gems of a language.” Hence, translating idioms is not an easy task, especially from English to Arabic because not all English idioms have equivalents in Arabic idioms due to linguistic and cultural differences. To solve the problems of
translation facing learners, Ghazala (1995) simply divides idioms into three divisions: direct idioms, indirect idioms, and phrasal verbs. However, in the proposed study, the comparison between English and Arabic idioms has resulted in some new divisions based on culture, which in turn result in different methods of translation. As noted above, these divisions may be used in translation classes in order to teach idioms, culture, and different methods of translation. The subclasses the present study offers are cultural identical idioms, cultural semi-identical idioms, cultural equivalent idioms, and cultural specific idioms. Connecting the cultures of two languages can make the task of the learners easier to memorize these idioms and enjoy doing so. In essence, native speakers do memorize these expressions and it is the same task L2 learners should do. Yet, comparing the two cultures and showing the similarities and the differences can simplify things for them.

Richard-Amato (1996) argues that adult learners “construct language from prior conceptual knowledge and develop language in predictable stage” (qtd. in ZhonggangGoa, 2001, p. 1). In more detail, L2 learners are usually inclined to use their prior knowledge and their analytical power to compare between L1 and L2 consciously and unconsciously. Hence, Richard-Amato (1996) urges teachers for L2 learner to invest these analytical abilities and prior knowledge to enable them to learn a new language easily. This power can be invested and directed to facilitate the process of learning instead of hindering it. Therefore, the current study encourages L2 teachers to invest the prior knowledge of the learners to facilitate the process of teaching and at the same time to control L1 interference. The next section shows some examples of the comparison that can be carried in FL translation class.

4. Data and Methodology

The data of the present study comprises 62 English idioms that were selected randomly from the internet to be taught to L2 learners. The researcher translated these idioms from English into Arabic utilizing different methods of translation. In addition, a transliteration of each idiom is provided. As noted above, these idioms are divided into subclasses based on the cultural aspects which in turn determine the method of translation. This resulted in four subclasses of idioms; they are cultural identical idioms, cultural semi-identical idioms, cultural equivalent idioms, and cultural specific idioms. It is worth to note that the purposes of the typology of the present study are threefold: (a) to offer suitable divisions of idioms for translation reasons, (b) to describe the development of idiom comprehension among learners from a cultural perspective, and (c) to suggest some activities to enhance idioms learning as well as cultural comprehension development among L2 learners. The following are the discussion of the subclasses of idioms based on cultures.

5. Typology of Idioms

As mentioned above, in this study there are four subclasses of idioms based on culture and methods of translation. Each subclass is discussed below with examples providing their transliteration and translation when needed.

5.1 Cultural-identical Idioms

Cultural-identical idioms are those idioms that are identical in both languages (i.e., English and Arabic). That is, there are identical idioms in both languages English and Arabic that can be translated following the method of literal translation (word-for-word), because the idioms in this category are completely similar in form (syntax), meaning (semantics), and usage (pragmatics). The following are some examples with their transliteration:
1. When one wants to tell someone that a person says unpleasant things about him to other people in his absence, one may say:
   - behind your back
   - /min wara Dahrak/

2. When one would like to let others know that he found out about a piece of information without naming the person who told him, one may say:
   - a little bird told me
   - /?l? Sfuurah qaalt lii/

3. When one is ready and eager to listen to what a person is saying, one may say:
   - be all ears
   - /Kuuluna ?danin Sagyyah/

4. When one intends to say that something is considered as a very important part of a person and seems natural to him, one may say:
   - in your blood
   - /fii damak/

5. When one wants to say that something makes him angry, one may say:
   - make my blood boil
   - /xallat damii yigli/

6. When one wants to indicate that he does not like an action or a plan and will do anything to prevent it, one may say:
   - over my dead body
   - /?ala juθati/

7. When one wants to say emphatically that something happens throughout a person’s life, one may say:
   - from the cradle to the grave
   - /minn ?lmahd iila ?laHd/

8. When one wants to say that a person pays no attention to things one is saying, or forgets about what has been said immediately, one may say:
   - go in one ear and out the other
   - /yudxul minn ?u?n wa yuxruj minn ?aθanyyah/

9. When one is too embarrassed to do something because of something happened, one may say:
   - not have the face
   - /maali wajh/

10. When one says that something is taken care of by a trustworthy person and therefore it will not be damaged, one may say:
    - in safe had
    - /fii ?ydii ?miinah/

11. When one asks a person to keep him aware of changes or developments in any situation, one may say:
    - keep me in the picture
    - /xaliini fii ?Suurah/

12. When one gets or obtains the largest part of anything leaving very little for others, one may refer to the largest part as being:
    - the lion’s share
    - /naSiib ?l?asad/
13. When one sees something without using any equipment such as a telescope, one may say:
   - the naked eye
   - /bil‘ayn ?lmuujaradh/

14. When one sees something and wants to win it, one may say:
   - have one’s eye on something
   - /?yinii ?alihaa/

15. When one is looking for something and he wants to say that it is difficult or even impossible to find it, one may say:
   - like looking for a needle in a haystack
   - /yiidawir ibrah fii kumat qash/

16. When one asks a person to slow down and not to do something hasty, one may say:
   - hold your horses
   - /ikba jiimaaHk/

17. When one wants to say that a person does something by means of hard physical work, one may say:
   - by the sweat of one’s brow
   - /bi‘arq jabiinii/

18. When something bad happens, one sometimes may try to console himself or another person by suggesting that the consequences of the events are not as bad as might seem by saying:
   - It is not the end of the world
   - /mihii nihayat ?l‘aalam/

19. When one wants to describe a person who does whatever others need to get what he wants, even if it may involve stepping on his principles or doing something wrong, one may say:
   - sell ones’ soul
   - /tiibii‘ ruuHahaa/

Surprisingly, in both languages, there are such cultural identical idioms. Interestingly, these few examples illustrate the intercourse between Arabic and English and the exchanges of some ideas and concepts. Through translating these idioms, learners can be taught not only a method of translation, i.e., literal (word-for-word) translation, but also such an aspect of language will be a good material to be translated literally to show how cultures of different languages interrelated and intertwined with each other. Idioms in this category can be understood in isolation, because learners will relay on their prior knowledge of L1. This wealth of L1 knowledge of L2 learners can be invested to teach them how to use such already learnt idioms to express themselves in English just as they do in Arabic. Most of the idioms in this category are to a great extent universal and L2 learners need to express themselves in the L2 as fluently and efficiently as they do in their L1. Broadly speaking, L2 learners are already equipped with the cultural-linguistic knowledge their L1 and such idioms are not problematic with reference to first language interference. On the contrary, in this category L2 learners can benefit from first language interference to develop their L2 and help them to know when to avoid such interference.

5.2 Cultural-semi-identical Idioms
The second subclass is the semi-identical idioms. The idioms in this category are semi-identical, because the translation of these idioms needs to be modified to fit the structure of the idioms in the source/target language. Such idioms can be translated literally; however, one has to take into consideration the L2 culture, which will have its impact on some lexical choices. The following idioms are identical in their meanings; yet, there are some slight differences in the lexical choices:

1. When one wants to refer to a person whom he is fond of, one may say:
   - the apple of my eye
   - /qurat ʔayinii/

2. When one criticizes a person, who is making an unimportant problem seem big and important, one may say:
   - make a mountain out of a molehill
   - /yʕnal minn ʔIhabah kubah/ (i.e., make a dome from a seed)

3. When one wants to excuse the way a boy is behaving as being normal for boys to be boyish, one may say:
   - boys will be boys
   - /Hamiid walad/ (i.e., Hamiid is a boy)

4. When one wants to describe two persons who usually have violent arguments with each other, one may say:
   - fight like cat and dog
   - /zayy ʔIbis wa ʔIfaar/ (i.e., like cat and rat)

5. When one wants to describe the policy of a person who is in power and wants stay in power by making sure that the people under his control quarrel among them, one may say:
   - divide and rule
   - /fariq tasud/ (i.e., divide and dominate)

6. When one wants to say that it is very obvious to people that a person is relieved or miserable, one may say:
   - written all over your face
   - /bayin ʔala wajhak/ (i.e., it is clear on your face)

7. When one is criticizing people for talking about unpleasant or personal matters in front of others, one may say:
   - wash their dirty laundry in public
   - /nasharat gasiilahaa/ (i.e., to hang one’s laundry)

8. When one wants to indicate that a person is in a very bad mood without an obvious reason, one may say:
   - get up on the wrong side of the bed
   - /nayim ʔala janbuh ʔIyasar/ (i.e., he/she slept on his/her left side)

9. When one wants to make a fresh new start after a period of difficulties and problems, one may say:
   - turn the page
   - /nibda? SaffIah jadidah/ (i.e., start a new page)

10. When one wants to clarify that it is impossible to be loyal to two opposing principles, ideologies, or organizations, one may say:
    - cannot serve two masters
    - /SaaHIib balayn kaðaab/ (i.e., who has two minds is a liar)
11. In a race or contest, if two competitions are exactly level with each other, one may say:
   - neck and neck
   - /raas bi raas/ (i.e., head and head)

12. If there is something one doesn’t understand at all, one says:
   - be all Greek to me
   - /Talaasm/ (i.e., mystery)

13. If one wants to say to someone not to remind him of an unpleasant experience in the past that one would rather forget, one may say:
   - don’t open old wounds
   - /laa tiqaliibii ?lmawaaji/ (i.e., do not recall wounds)

14. To say something has both a good and a bad side, one says:
   - a double-edge sword
   - /silaah ðuu Hadyin/ (i.e., a weapon with two edges)

15. If one intends to say that it is easy to forget about someone or something, or to stop caring about them, when one has not seen them for a long time, one may say:
   - out of sight, out of mind
   - /?lba/iid ‘n ?fiiin, ba/iid ‘n ?lqalb/ (i.e., away from the sight, away from the heart)

In this category, learners can give the correct translation of the English version depending on their prior knowledge of L1 with some changes regarding some lexical choices. Hence, FL teachers should highlight these differences in regards to the lexical choices. Undeniably, these lexical differences will help them to understand the culture of the target language. To a great extent, learners can use literal translation but they have to modify their translation afterwards. As identical idioms, these idioms can be utilized in EF translation class to invest their first language.

5.3 Cultural-equivalent Idioms

It is common that any two languages can express the same thing in two different ways. Each language has its own differences whether they are arbitrary or non-arbitrary (cultural); however, all languages can express its needs fully. Cultural-equivalent idioms are the ones that their meanings can be found in both languages with different fixed expressions. Thus, the idioms in this category can be found in both languages sharing only the meaning, yet the expression itself is completely different:

1. When one wants to express his sympathy for an unhappy person, poor etc. one may say:
   - I feel for you
   - /qalbii ma’aakii/ (i.e., my heart is with you)

2. When one wants to show that he is attracted to a person, one may say:
   - make eyes at someone
   - /sabal ‘inih/ (i.e., soften his/her eyes)

3. When one wants to say that something makes a person conceited, one may say:
   - turn his head
   - /kibir ra?su?/ (i.e., he/she makes his/her head big)

4. When one is wants to say that two things are completely different in every aspects, one may say:
   - Apples and oranges
   - /zyi ?asamaa? wa ?al?rD/ (i.e., like sky and earth)

5. When one gets a piece of information directly from main sources, and so he is sure it is true, one may say:
6. When one wants to say that an idea or a promise are very unlikely to happen, one may say:
   - pie in the sky
   - /fii ?lmishmish/ (i.e., in apricots)

7. When one wants to say that he can do something very soon and very quickly, one may say:
   - in two shakes
   - /fii lamH ?albaSar/ (i.e., in the twinkling of the eye)

8. When one wants to say that there is no more cause for criticism, hate, anger etc., one may say:
   - a clean slate
   - /saafii ya laban/ (i.e., clear Oh yoghurt)

9. When one promises to give people things that he cannot give them, one may say:
   - promise the moon
   - /laban ?aSfuur/ (i.e., the milk of the bird)

10. When one is in a difficult situation where he has to choose between two equally unpleasant choices, one may say:
    - between a rock and a hard place or between the devil and the deep blue sea.
    - /bayin naaRayin/ (i.e., between two fires)

   Interestingly, these cultural differences can be explained by the fable behind some of the idioms or some of their concepts and beliefs that are rooted in the culture of L2. Most of the languages have this type of idioms which can be used as a good material for teaching translation, culture, and idioms. In essence, explaining these differences through examining these fables can motivate learners and make teaching and learning idioms fun, too.

5.4 Cultural-specific Idioms

The following list may mark a language from another, because of cultural and religious differences; however, they are limited in number. The following English religious/cultural idiomatic expressions are a few examples that illustrate such differences:

1. In English, one may say that a person is as poor as a church mouse, when one intends to say this person has very little money.

2. One may describe a person who chooses to do a particular thing using “like turkeys voting for Christmas” to emphasize that he is unlikely to do it because it would very obviously be bad for him.

3. A person may say “if Mohammed will not go to the mountain, the mountain must go to Mohammed”, if someone you want to see does not come to you (then, you are supposed to go to him). Of course, this idiom is based on a story about Prophet Mohammed (PBUH)² “who was asked to show how powerful he was by making a mountain come to him” (‘If Mohammad’, 2010).

4. In English, when one describes something as being a “forbidden fruit”, one means that one wants it very much and he is not allowed or supposed to have it. Such an idiomatic expression is based on the story of Adam and Eve when they violated God’s commands

² Peace be upon him.
when He asked them not to touch a particular tree and its fruits. Their violation led to their expulsion from Heavens (see Quran, Surah Al Baqarah (The Cow), verses, 30-39).

There are other cultural-specific idioms in English that flow from the English history, literature, and beliefs, such as:

1. When one talks about the “halcyon days of something”, he is referring to a time in the past when he or someone was successful. Based on the English myths, Halcyon is a bird that calms the sea in “for the seven days before and seven days after the winter solstice” (‘Halcyon’, n.d.).

2. When a situation is describes as being “a Gordian knot”, he means that this situation is very complicated and difficult to resolve. If a person succeeds in resolving it, one may say that this person “cuts the Gordian knot”. “Gordian knot” is a knot fastened tightly by Gurdus who was the king of Verigia. It is claimed that it will be united by the coming Lord of Asia. When Alexander the senior comes, he cuts it by his sword (Gardner, 1959).

3. In English, one may say that a person is “crying wolf”, when he means that this person is continually and falsely asking for help, or warning about false danger. Thus, people have stopped believing him and they will not help him when he needs them. This idiom is based on a story from the English folklore. It is based on the story of a little boy whose name is Aesop. Aesop was a shepherd and he used to call falsely and continually for help. Accordingly, when a wolf really attacked his sheep, the villagers did not believe him and the sheep were killed (‘The Boy’, 2010).

4. Also, if something goes wrong and the person in a position of authority “walks the plank” or “walks the gangplank”, this means that he has accepted the responsibility for what has happened and accordingly he left his position. This idiomatic expression is based on a belief that pirates used to kill their prisoners by forcing them to walk along a plank or gangplank sticking out from the edge of a ship until they fell into the sea (‘Walking the’, 2010).

5. When one says that someone “pulls a rabbit out of the hat”, he means that this person unexpectedly does something to solve a problem or help other achieve something. Of course, this idiom refers to a traditional magician’s trick, in which a rabbit is produced mysteriously out of an apparently empty hat (‘Pulling a Rabbit’, 2006).

On the other hand, the Arabic language is rich in cultural-specific idioms. The Arabic culture is, like any other culture, rich in its resources and its own expressions. The following list clarifies some religious and cultural idiomatic expressions that differ from the idioms in the English language:

1. The Arabs sometimes describe two similar things by saying /?alHasan wa ?alHuusayin/ (i.e., like Al-Hassan and Al-Hussayn). Actually, these two names are the names of the sons of Ali bin Abitalib who is the cousin of the prophet Mohammed (PBUH).

2. When something is easily known by common sense, Arabs usually say /?alah ma shifnah bi ?alFaql ?irifnaah/ (i.e., we have not seen Allah, but with our minds we did), because Muslims believes in the existence of Allah without even seeing Him.

3. In Arabic, when two fight severely, one says as /daaHs wa ?alghabraa/ (i.e., like Dahes and Al-Ghabraa). These two names are camels’ names. During the pre-Islamic era, there were two tribes, namely Abas and Dhubian, who used to race camels for money. Each tribe used to select its fastest camel, and the winner would win the prize that was put up by both parties. In one event, Dahes, the camel of Abas ran against Al-Ghabraa, the she camel of Dhubian. “The two tribes had bet 100 camels each on each animal, but
the outcome was contested. Hundreds perished in the 40-year war of Dahes Wa Al-Ghabraa, named after the racing camels” (‘Divide and’, 2009).

1. If someone is asked to do something and he failed, one may say /raj bii zufayy Hunayyn/ (i.e., come back with Hunayn’s shoes). This expression is based on the Arabic folklore.

2. In addition, something is describes as /mismaar juHa/ (i.e., Juha’s nail) as being a feeble excuse. This expression is based on the Arabic folklore. Juha is a famous comic character who is claimed to be imaginative; yet some says it is a real man who was born in 673H. Once he sold his house to someone on the condition that Juha maintain the ownership of a nail on one of the walls of the house. The buyer agrees especially because the price of the house is low. Juha used this nail as an excuse to come to his house every now and then bringing his family with him to visit his nail. The new owner of the house get sick of Juha and in order to get rid of him he decides to buy this nail from Juha for a price that is higher than that of the house (Kenner, 2008).

3. Finally, when two persons are similar everything especially their way of thinking, one can say /waafaq shanon Tabaqah/ (i.e., Let Shan follow Tabaqah or Shan and Tabaqah match well) (Farghal & Al-Hamly, 2005, p. 12). This expression is based on the Arabic folklore too. Shan is a man who is married a woman, called Tabaqa, who is similar to him in everything even their stupid way of thinking.

Although each language has its own cultural and religious beliefs, there are some basic ideas and some beliefs both languages agree on. Yet, such similarities are expressed in different idioms carrying the same meaning:

1. In English, one may say “Rome was not built in a day” to point out that it takes a long time to do a job or task properly, and one should not rush it or expect to do it quickly. On the other hand, when Arabs want to express the same idea, they say /rabanaa xalaq ?al aalam fii sitat ?ayyam/ (i.e. Allah created the heavens and the earth in six days). Muslims believe that Allah created the world in six days. Allah says in the holy Quran: “Indeed your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in Six Days” (see Quran, Surah Al-a’araf, 54).

2. Also, in English, one may say someone “has nine lives”, when one means that this person keeps managing to get out of difficult or dangerous situations without being harmed. This expression comes from a saying that a cat has nine lives. It is known that the ancient Egyptian worshipped the cat and considered it sacred. They had a goddess called Pasht, who had the head of a cat. The Egyptians believed their goddess Pasht had nine lives, and this explains why many people still think a can has nine lives (‘Why do’, n.d.). On the other hand, Arabs think that a cat has seven lives. Therefore, they say that someone is /biisab ?arwaaH/ (i.e., seven souls).

3. In English, one may call any devoted lovers as being “Romeo and Juliet” and the Arabs say /qayyis wa laylah/ (i.e., Qayis and Layla) or /?antarah wa ?ablah/ (i.e., Antarah and Ablah). Of course, “Romeo and Juliet” is a play written by Shakespeare it was about two devoted lovers. On the other hand, /qayyis wa laylah/ or /?antarah wa ?ablah/ are real Arab lovers who died for the sake of their love.

Such cultural-specific idioms are among the most interesting subdivision of idioms, because they are purely cultural; yet, they might be hard to translate. Translating such idioms require more than translation. That is, it requires cultural knowledge of the both languages in order either to find the equivalent idiom in the target language or to translate the meaning of the idiom into
non-idiomatic expression. Hence, to translate such idioms L2 learners are encouraged to invest their L1 cultural knowledge as well as learn the culture of L2. It should be noted that this subdivision of idioms should be introduced to intermediate-advanced L2 learners, who might appreciate the cultural aspects of L2 and thus may enjoy working on the most accurate translation for these idioms.

**6. Pedagogical Implications and Suggested Activities**

The significance of both cross-cultural pedagogy and the contrastive methods of teaching a foreign language has proved fruitful, because according to Garces (1999: 33), “the influence of the mother tongue is inevitable”; thus, it could be invested to correct some mistakes and “makes it possible to work with authentic materials in both languages” (p. 33). He also believes that L1 linguistic competence of learners can be invested to increase and strengthen L2 linguistic competence through comparing and contrasting both languages. Introducing learners to similarities and differences between L1 and L2 through contrastive methodologies increases “their communicative competence and producing, as a result, effective communication” (Graces, 1999, p. 34).

FL translation class was among the most suitable classes, because, as Graces (1999: 33) claims, “translation is a natural and necessary activity. Our own culture is a translated culture, and, everyday it is used in banks, airports, travel agencies, and most businesses in general. Why can it not be used in the classroom?” In addition, translation, as Duff (1989: 7) explains, helps to develop three skills learners need: it “trains the learner to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to convey what is meant (clarity).” Moreover, contrastive studies highlight the pivotal elements in each culture and thus explain the implied (deeper) meaning of a sentence. In other words, when the learners examine cultural elements, they examine the pragmatic meaning rather than the syntactic superficial structure.

Providing learners with L1 or L2 idioms and asking them to put forward their own translations promotes both their linguistic and translation skills in both their native language and the target language. It should be noted that this study does not suggest teaching idioms in context only; rather, it suggests investing L1 linguistic knowledge. The beauty of idioms is that they can be taught in contexts, i.e., in text, or it could be taught individually, i.e., out of context and then cultural context will be utilized. Some of the activities that the implications of this study can suggest are as follows:

1. The FL teachers may introduce selected idioms individually and encourage students to think about their meaning utilizing L1 knowledge. Then, the teacher can give the students the same idioms in context in order to be translated.
2. Based on the type of translation, the FL teacher may introduce a method of translation and give the students a number of sentences including the suitable type of idioms to be translated following the given translation method. This way the teacher will be teaching translation but at the same time the teacher will be teaching idioms indirectly.
3. Also, the FL teacher can give the students an exercise where there are both English and Arabic translation in order to match and specify the methods of translation that were employed in each idiom.
4. The same divisions and examples in this paper can be used as they are to teach students idioms in FL translation class. That is, the teacher may introduce translation and its methods employing them on the given idioms.
5. FL teachers can give the students the divisions and the examples in the present paper and require them to look for more idioms that list them under their category.

It is worth to mention that in all the suggested exercises above, the teacher should highlight the element of culture and meaning in these idioms in order to enhance and strengthen their knowledge, competence, and understand of L2. From the researcher’s teaching experience, learners usually face some difficulties when they translate idioms. When the learners are given “straight from the horse’s mouth” or “play it by ear” to translate, things become complicated. They may not appreciate such an aspect of language at the beginning. However, teaching them first the identical idioms in both languages may help them to develop their way of thinking to reach a higher level in which they can work out any new idioms in the target language without restoring to the source language, because sometimes one cannot find the same meaning in the source language due to cultural differences.

The activities above are only examples of the types of activities teachers can integrate in FL translation class and they are a guideline and subject to change according depending on the lesson plans and goals. It should be noted that these divisions can be conducted using languages other than English and Arabic.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

Looking at the contrastive analysis above, it is safe to say that the results of this study have pedagogical implications for L2 researchers, teachers, and learners. Considering the findings of this study, it can be argued that this multilayered method of teaching idioms and culture in FL translation class demonstrates the challenges of translating idioms, whether identical or not, in FL class. At the same time, however, the figurative Arabic/English idioms allow learners to see how images may cross cultures, regardless of the differences of some terms or expressions. It also shows the importance of idioms to communicative competence and how to enhance learners’ communication skills through investing their previous knowledge of L1 by carrying out a comparison. In addition, this study has built a system for differentiating idioms within languages and suggested an activity for teaching idioms to L2 learners. It stands to reason that such a methodology in teaching cultural material such as idioms might lead to facilitate learning. Griffin (2004) claims:

[T]ranslation encourages [learners] to have fun with language and to think about language as a creative tool, while realizing the potential for misunderstanding when communicators lack a common culture. By making learners active decoders and translators, this [method] allows learners to experience that potential and to realize, in a memorable way, the rationale for prescriptive warnings about figurative idioms in intercultural communication . . . [He argues] that it deepens an appreciation for the kinds of translation learners do daily, as they navigate between worlds that only partially and imperfectly share a common language and shared meaning. (p.463)

Another pedagogical implication of this study that is based on the comparison between idioms in Arabic and English is the new divisions of idioms have emerged: cultural-identical idioms, cultural-semi-identical idioms, cultural equivalent idioms, and cultural-specific idioms. In addition, this study has shown how to set a comparison between the idiomatic expressions of L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English) and vice versa and how FL Translation class can be invested to teach more than translation. It should be noted that a comparison between different languages may result in interesting new divisions. Yet, most of the comparisons may perform at least five functions: (a) illustrate the intercourse between languages and the exchanges of ideas and some
concepts, (b) show how cultures of different languages interrelated and intertwined with each other surprisingly, (c) encourage learners to invest their prior knowledge of L1 to learn L2 easily and effectively, (d) help learners to appreciate and understand arbitrary and non-arbitrary differences, (e) introduce different methods of translation to solve the problem of translating idioms. These functions may explain how FL translation class is one of the classes that should be invested in teaching not only how to translate from L1 to L2 and vice versa but also communicative (pragmatic) competence.

It is worth to remind the reader that this paper does not suggest how to teach idioms in FL class. Rather it only shows how to integrate teaching idioms in FL translation class (to teach idioms, method of translation, and culture). It is plausible to assume that utilizing translation as a method of teaching idioms helps learners to appreciate idioms and to play an active role in understanding their meanings through comparing them with their prior knowledge of L1. That is, learners will attempt to understand the deeper meaning of the idiom through experimenting different methods of translation.

However, certain limitations of the study exist. The first limitation is the sample size due to the purposes of this study, i.e., to (a) illustrate how to build language competence development into FL translation class and (b) introduce a method to invest FL translation classes in teaching other aspect of language to help L2 learners to build their pragmatic competence to be able to communicate effectively. Furthermore, the scope of the paper is limited to the discussion of the types of idioms from a cultural perspective providing some examples from both languages as illustrative examples of how a comparison between the languages in EFL classes is fruitful and might be invested to teach more than abstract rules.

About the Author
Ahlam Alharbi holds a Ph.D. in Linguistics from Monash University, Australia. Currently, she is an assistant professor at the Department of Foreign Languages at Taif University, Saudi Arabia. Her primary research interests are semantics, pragmatics, forensic linguistics, and the applications of critical discourse analysis within linguistic studies. Her other research interests relate to the area of TEFL.

References


‘If Mohammed will not go to the mountain, the mountain must come to Mohammed’ (2010). Retrieved June 1, 2010 from http://dictionaries.cambridge.org/define.asp?dict=l&key=mohammed*1+0


Li, P. (1996). Why don’t L2 learners end up with uniform and perfect linguistic competence? Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 19, 733-734.


Appendix

Transcription Conventions

In transcribing examples and extracts from the sample Arabic data, the study uses the following symbols – in addition to the common English phonetic alphabet:

?  ء Voiceless glottal stop
δ  ئ Voiced dental fricative
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Letter</th>
<th>English Fricative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>θ</td>
<td>Voiceless dental fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>Voiced palatal fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Voiceless pharyngeal fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Voiceless uvular fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sh</td>
<td>Voiceless palatal fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Voiceless pharyngealized fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Voiced pharyngealized plosive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Voiceless pharyngealized plosive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ء</td>
<td>Voiced pharyngeal fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gh</td>
<td>Voice fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>Voiceless uvular plosive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>Voiced bilabial semi-vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>Voiced palatal semi-vowel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loss and Maintenance of Somali Language in the UK

Shamsudin Abikar

Bristol Primary School Teaching Assistant

Abstract

This study attempts to investigate first language attrition in Somali (L1) speakers of English as L2. Specifically answers were sought for the questions on Somali language features that are first susceptible to attrition when they come in contact with the English language; and the perception of Somali parents on maintaining the Somali language by their children. The data collected was based on 11 tape recordings (to elicit oral narrative) of six Somali pupils’ voices, structured/unstructured interviews with pupils and parents while case study approach is used. The six pupils were divided into two groups: group1, which included three Somali siblings who are newly arrived in the UK whilst Group 2 consisted of three Somali siblings who are already established in the UK. Initially it was assumed that Group1 would constitute as a control group. This was later disregarded for two reasons: 1) the utterances provided by them, at this early stage, illustrated demise of their L1 verbal ability and 2) due to time and space. Therefore, Group2’s utterances were analysed and the outcome indicate strong indicators for attrition in their L1 lexical retrieving and L1 sentence structure skills.

Keywords: First Language, Second Language, Language Attrition.
Introduction
Over the past twenty five years, since the disintegration of the Somali central government in 1991, the number of Somali immigrants into the UK increased dramatically. Many children and young learners form part of that population. For example in Bristol, The demographic changes of Bristol saw the number of Somali population in Bristol rapidly increased for the last decade and this increase is predicted to raise as the birth rate of Somali children rapidly increases. This means that in Bristol schools, one in 25 pupils is Somali whereas eight years ago it was one in 500 pupils. For secondary education, the Somali population of four secondary schools in Bristol have more than 10% Somali pupils (The Post, July 22, 2009). This learning age population learns English as an additional language and have experienced disadvantage in terms of their inclusion to mainstream education and the way the local authorities meet their needs because of language barrier.

The British government embraced an inclusion policy, namely Section 11 grant of the Local Government Act 1966, which availed the payment of grant to local authorities to empower the education institutions. The purpose of the grant was to enable addressing the disadvantage brought about by differences of language or culture in accessing education (Multiverse, 2000-2001). There has been improvement in this trend as strategies for the acquisition of English as the second language (L2) was realised by successfully gathering date for informed planning. However, the importance of the L1 seemed to be overlooked. Barwell (2005) quoting Cummins (2000) emphasised that a) proficiency in L1 (first language) and L2 (the second language) by bilinguals leads to cognitive advantage, b) less proficiency in L1 and L2 by bilinguals leads to cognitive disadvantage, and c) fluency in one language by bilinguals offers neither cognitive advantage nor disadvantage. This suggests that negative consequence is associated with losing L1.

Therefore, till now, there had been no literature on the issue of Somali (L1) loss by Somali natives who learn English as L2. This can be attributed to two reasons: unfamiliarity of Somali language by the teachers/ education managers around the world and the inception of Somali language is fairly juvenile and its further development was staunchly arrested by the civil war.

Particular problem areas which can be associated to L1 loss by Somali pupils in the UK include ineffective interaction with parents and extended families, loss of identity and possible negative consequence for academic achievements by the learners (Barwell (ibid).

Based on these trends this study examines a) what Somali language features are susceptible to attrition when they come in contact with the English language and b) how to prevent the language attrition. For the first part (a) voice recording of six Somali pupils in Bristol, UK, are analysed to identify discrepancies about what and how they used the Somali language; and for the latter part (b) pupils’ parents were interviewed to explore their views on the importance of L1 & the L2 and how can the loss of L1 best be prevented.

Literature review
Schmid & Kopke (2009) noted that language attrition means the changing of bilingual’s language system while acquiring and using an L2; Van Els (1986) citing De Bot & Weltens (1985) defined the attrition research types in terms of ‘what is lost’ and in which environment it is lost and proposed four types of attrition research: 1) Loss of L1 in an L2 environment such as in the case of ‘dialect community; 2) Loss of L1 in an L2 environment such as migrants in an L2
country; 3) Loss of L2 in an L1 environment such as foreign language loss and 4) Loss of L2 in an L2 environment such as loss by aging migrants.

Language loss was not researched in great depth until fairly recently (Guardado; ibid). Now we know that the cause of language loss can be attributed to many factors such as ‘lack of use or exposure to the language’ as ‘an immigrant may move to an environment where they disuse their L1 (Loewen & Reinders; 2011; Caruso; ibid). Moreover, Sherwood and Van Buren (1991:22) explained that two conditions must be fulfilled in order language attrition to occur: ‘L1 deprivation and cross linguistic influence from another language being acquired’. Thus cause of attrition may be experienced due to ‘disuse of a language system (that) affects accessibility of lexical items most immediately...' (Schmid, 2007:135; Schmid & Kopke, 2009:211).

However, caution needs to be exercised where identification of attrition is required as ‘one of the common fallacies of research on L1 attrition is that any indication of CLI (Cross Linguistic Interference) is interpreted as evidence for attrition, particularly in the area of the lexicon’ Schmid & Kopke, ibid:211).

Therefore, Caruso (ibid) explained an advantageous typology by citing De Bot and Weltens (1995:20) for classifying language attrition which he termed as 1. ’the nature of the language being lost whether it is a native language, L1, or a second language L2’ and 2) ‘The environment, in which it is lost whether the language functions as a native language or as a second language in the environment’.

On the other hand, many factors need to be considered when dealing with methodical consideration of language attrition. For example, Schmid (2002) explained that how the data was gathered, what language features are considered and what is regarded as evidence for language attrition need be taken into account when considering methodical consideration of language attrition and ‘the analysis of variables on any linguistic level...has to make the basic distinction between what is lost and what is retained’ (Schmid, ibid: 31).

Nonetheless, Wong Fillmore (1991) presents a depressing picture of minority children studying in the United States as she found that the younger the children are when coming into contact with English the greater devastating impact the L2 has on the L1 (Guardado, ibid). Furthermore, Guardado (ibid) clearly stated that where failure to maintain L1 during childhood is experienced it is entailed by devastating consequences. Furthermore, Guardado (ibid) noted the causes for L1 loss by citing various studies. The most notable factors were devaluing L1 in the community and language shift in home. Consequently, citing a study by Schecter and Bayley (1997: 538), Guardado (ibid: 4) described ‘the social conditions under which children were expected to retain their home language’. This seems to mean losing L1 is a Quagmire and enfeebles one’s identity.

The phenomena of losing identity needs for remedial and, therefore, Kahin (1997), as a result of a longitudinal study, found that in order Somali parents in the UK to counter a) the inadequacy of mainstream education and b) children’s prolonged involvement in the mainstream education system in the UK which they view as undermining the Somali culture (identity), they send their children to supplementary school as a remedial measure. Besides, prolonged sojourn in L2 environment also affects the L1’s retrieval ability. For instance, Schmid (2010:1) recounted her interview with two German siblings who migrated to the USA and the UK and observed her participant’s laborious efforts in retrieving words ‘... she frequently asks the interviewer to help her with particular German words which has difficulty remembering’. Yet, as far as literature on word retrieval, especially picture naming tasks, is concerned there is
concession that age is a crucial factor for name retrieval. For example Goral (2004:33) claimed that ‘the cross-sectional studies, comparing groups of younger and older participants, demonstrated that older adults performed significantly less well than younger participants’. Furthermore, due to the nature of the research questions and participants’ first languages, presenting how the Somali grammar functions seems to be of important factor for the study as it is believed that it will shed light on the similarity and dissimilarity of the English and the Somali grammars and will enable contrasting analysis to be made.

The verb of Somali language has many functions and each verb can be divided into many types and each type has information to deliver. However, there are two main parts the ‘root’ and ‘prefix and suffix’ (Mansur, & Puglielli (1999). For example, the Somali root words have the character of an imperative like the English:

\[
\begin{align*}
go, \quad eat, \quad walk, \quad jump \\
tag, \quad cun, \quad sco, \quad bood
\end{align*}
\]

Unlike Arabic root words which are in past tense form: iwm

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Walked} & \quad \text{ate} & \quad \text{went}
\end{align*}
\]

As a way of summarising the literature review, although not yet researched in great depth, the literature review looked at the phenomena of the first language attrition, what it is meant, in which environment it happens, under which conditions it occurs and the methodological consideration for the research of language attrition. The literature review also touched on the importance of maintaining the first language for cultural (identity) purpose in the context of supplementary schools. Finally, the literature review glanced briefly the structure of the Somali grammar. All literature review contents are believed to have direct bearing to the study and helped me for research questions and will be used in analysing the data.

**Ethical issues**

As my research sample involves six pupils with English as additional language learners of Somali origin (Group 1 and Group 2), it is important to comment on how I accessed the participants. A participant of Group 2 attends my workplace (primary school in Bristol) where through her I became acquainted with her family. On the other hand, Group 1 dad is a long time friend of mine, and I provided him support for the children to settle down as newly arrived pupils in the UK.

Furthermore, the term ethics refers to questions of right and wrong (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006:54). Likewise, Opie (2004), Pat Sikes citing Siber (1993:25) explained ‘Ethics has to do with the application of moral principles to prevent harming or wronging others, to promote the good, to be respectful and to be fair’. Researchers firmly emphasise the importance of a) informed consent and b) that nobody suffers as the results of the findings to ensure quality outcome.

Therefore, I have chosen to adhere to the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Ethical Review Guidelines (2004) as Clough and Nutbrown (2002) noted that every institution has different procedures for the ethical protocol.

**Participants**

The participants in this study are pupils and parents. Pupils included three Somali newly arrived siblings (arrival UK date January 2012): three girls Hodon Yr4, Hanna Yr8 and Hibo Yr9
(not their real name) - Group 1; and other three Somali participants who are already established in the UK (arrival UK date October 2011): a boy and two girls Bilan Yr4, Abdi Yr8 & Jihan Yr9 (not their real name) - Group 2 they are also siblings. Prior to arriving into the UK both groups have had no formal education in home country and mastery of L1 is confined only to verbal communication.

Group 1 was selected merely due to the assumption that they master L1 whereas group 2 was selected for the criteria of being longer in the UK than group 1 and that both groups’ academic year groups as well as their ages match. Both group 1 and group 2 attend different schools. Group 1’s use of L2 can be characterised as an input (receptive language mostly) whilst Group 1’s use of L2 can be termed as input/output as shown their language profile below.

Table 1 Participants’ language profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Language used</th>
<th>Somali</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hibo</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends (at school)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends (at school)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hodon</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends (at school)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdi</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends (at school)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jihan</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends (at school)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Also two fathers and two mothers constitute parents of Group1 and Group2 and were they selected by purposive sampling. Guardado (ibid: 6) noted that ‘all sampling is purposive to some degree, since identifying a target population invariably expresses the researcher’s interests and objectives’

**Methodology**

Due to nature of research questions consent forms in English and in Somali (App. A); and participant information sheet (App. B) also in English and in Somali were sent to pupils and their parents as well. As for an approach, I have chosen a case study approach as it is the umbrella term for various research techniques with the aim of reconstructing and analysing a case or cases from social point of view (Verma & Mallick, 1999; Hamel & et al, 1993).

Tape recording (for pupils) for recording their narrative stories (App.C & D) and structured interview to understand their language profile (App. E) and unstructured interview (for parents) were employed as a method to collect data as they are assumed to answer research questions. During the tape recording, participants were asked to retell two picture stories: one of Handa’s Surprise by Browne (2006) and the lion and the mouse story (pictures downloaded from online- Google). The pictures were photocopied and texts were excluded to enable independent narrative speeches by participants when recording on a tape machine. This was designed to produce data to answer research question (1). The rationale of the first story lay mainly on the fact that the background and characters in the story were almost identical to Somalia geographically therefore, the assumption was that cultural references would not be unfamiliar to the participants. The rationale for the second was a) to get diversity in narrating when recounting two different stories b) it was familiar among the Somali folk tales. Group 1’s voices were tape recorded (App. G) twice (once a week with one week skipped: Week 1 & Week 3) the reason for skipping was unavailability of participants whilst Group2 voices were tape recorded (App. H) once a week+ Week1, Week 1 II. The latter 1 & 1 II to clarify which story they were narrating).

The recordings were conducted at participants’ houses. They recorded separately and lasted for almost two minutes each session. There were 11 recordings in total with 1 fault due to recorder problem.

The unstructured interview was chosen as it is ‘… a way of getting a writing project off the ground … and helps a writer get past that initial block of not knowing where to start’ (Strauss & Corbin, 1998: 90) . It enables interviewees to avail an opportunity to speak out using their own words which may develop deeper, more complex meaning. It is a way of discovering rather than a way of just checking. Besides, it will generate rich and valuable data in contrast to structured interview where ‘researchers are trying to collect large volume of data from wide range of respondents’ (Denscombe 1998:112). Parents have been asked about the importance of L1 and the L2, the possibility of L1 eroding and how this can be challenged (Appendix I)

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Binti</th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>✓</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends (at school)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mean**
Data analysis and discussion

It was an assumption that Group 1’s language mastery is intact and will act as a base line for Group 2 in order to shed light on any deviation from normal Somali language use. However, this became futile as they after such a short period of sojourn in the UK their L1 seem to shift by using L2 words such as banana (muus in Somali), apple (tufaax) and pear. This latter is comprehendible as the pear fruit is unfamiliar in Somalia. Also using and L2 connective and in the first week is notable. Furthermore, omission of the subject or the object of the verb by both Group 1 and Group 2 is observed. However, due to time and space the study will confine to the deficiencies of lexical retrieval and incorrect sentence structure by Group 2.

Challenge of lexical retrieval:

Abdi Week 1

6 Een...(unclear: UC) kanna waxay ka soo buuxsatay tufaax iyo ...(long pause) moos iyo liin iyo canbo
Een... (UC) and this she filled with apple and ....(long pause) bananas and lime and grapes

The above seems to demonstrate an ability to retrieve the bag in L1

Transfer (CLI) sentence structure

Abdi Week 1

7. iyo... (UC) kanna waxay wadataa...(long pause) and... (UC) and this she is carrying ...(long pause).

This is deviation of how L1 is used; at least, even though explicitly mentioning the object, it should have been

She is carrying this
Waxay wadataa kan

The above structure is like putting the object of the verb in front of the sentence as if using a passive voice sentence.

Jihan Week 1

Challenge of word retrieval:

1. Waxay gabartaan dambiisha waxay ku wadatay cananaas, canbo, liin iyo ...(UC),avokaato.
This girl is carrying pineapple, mango, lime and (UC) avocado

Above an L2 name (avocado) is used and the cause for this is that unfamiliarity of this fruit in Somalia.
Deviation from L1 sentence structure

2. ...(UC) waxay dhigtay baaldi.
   ... (UC) She put a bucket.
The above L1 this structure contradicts the L1 correct pattern as the object of the sentence is omitted (where the bucket was put)

   She put the basket.
Again the object of the sentence is omitted

4. Dambiishana waxay kor saartay cananaas iyo oranjiga iyo canbaha iyo isbaandheyska iyo muuska.
   And the basket she put on pineapple and the orange and the mango and the isbandeis (Somali fruit)
Above demonstrates an L1 deviation in terms of the use of a preposition. The pineapple was put in the basket not the basket on the pineapple. Also there is L1 deviation in terms of how the article the orange= oranjiga is used. It was rather to use an article in front of the pineapple which could have made the sentence correct in terms of L1.

Jihan  Week 1 II

Challenge of word retrieval:

1. Shabeel ayaa meel fadhiyey.
   A tiger was sitting somewhere.
The above sentence demonstrates that there is confusion over the animal’s name tiger when in fact it was a lion. Jihan completed her supposed L1 acquisition period (8 years) prior to arriving in the UK and should have known the animal.

Deviation from L1 sentence structure

3. Doolligaa qabtag oo isku cambajujiyey
   The mouse caught and squeezed.
Here the mouse did not catch the lion but contrary the lion did. So there is confusion over who did what. Further, the sentence is grammatically unacceptable in L1 as well as the L2.

6. Libaaxaa waxaa ku jira shabaqa
   in the lion there is a net.
The above instead of the sentence being the lion is in the net she expressed that the net is in the lion. The sentence is grammatically unacceptable in L1 as well as the L2.

Binti  Week 1

Challenge of word retrieval:

1. Tufaax, mango.
   Apple, mango
2. **Tufaax, mango... I don’t know (me don’t worry)**  
   **Apple, mango... I do not know (me don’t worry)**

In (1 & 2) Binti lost the fruit name *Canbo =Mango* in L1, a fruit she used to enjoy in Somalia. Repetition of the fruit names possibly in English may indicate she is experiencing difficulty in retrieving a suitable word, a suitable sentence or found difficulty in naming another fruit as participant said ‘I don’t know’.

**Deviation from L1 sentence structure**

Out of 18 Utterances 12 of them, 1 – 12, do not make sense as they contain lots of pauses and incomplete sentences.

**Binti Week 1 II**

**Challenge of word retrieval:**

1. **Doolliga...iyo...( long pause =LP)...iyo libaax.**  
   The mouse... and ...(LP)...and a lion.

2. **Doolliga...een...sankiisu koray.**  
   The mouse...een...claimed his nose.

3. **Libaaxa...een...doolliguu qabtay.**  
   The lion...een... caught the mouse.

4. **Doolliga...doolliga... please ammaan is ii...uu dhahay.**  
   The mouse...the mouse...please let me go...he said

From 1 – 4 above the long pauses may indicate difficulty in the retrieval process

**Deviation from L1 sentence structure**

1. **Doolliga...iyo...( LP)...iyo libaax.**  
   The mouse... and (long pause)... and a lion.

The long pause may indicate difficulty in either completing the sentence or maintaining the fluency of story narrating.

4. **Doolliga...doolliga... please ammaan is ii...uu dhahay.**  
   The mouse...the mouse...please let me go...he said

Here an L2 word *please* is used.

5. **Libaaxa shabaqaa lagu riday**  
   The lion was put in the net.

The above sentences it is unclear who did what: This could be because of English familiarity by the participant. In English this sentence is correct as English permits leaving the subject in passive voice. For instance, I was told to come to the office.

7. **Libaaxa wuu ka soo baxyey.**  
   The lion came out from

Sentence (7) the object of the sentence is missing. It is not clear where the lion came from. In the story the lion came out of the net. Why the word *net* is not mentioned is unclear since in (5)
above the word *net* was used. It seems that a word is retrievable at one point whilst it is not at the other time.

The data collated on pupil participants seem to strongly show that group 2’s L1 mastery is negatively affected in terms of lexical retrieval and sentence structure of L1. Their L1 word retrieval and sentence structures, considering such limited period of stay in the UK, their ability of L1 is strongly influenced by their L2. Of particular interest is Binti who seems to be strongly affected her L1 by L2 as out of 18 Utterances 12 (Week 1) of them, 1 – 12, do not make sense as they contain lots of pauses and incomplete sentences. The reason for this can be assumed as Wong Fillmore (ibid) claimed that the younger the children are when coming into contact with English the greater devastating impact the L2 has on the L1. Moreover, the other reason for the challenge of L1 word retrieval can be due to infrequent L1 disuse can be because of the ‘disuse of a language system affects accessibility of lexical items most immediately...’ (Schmid; ibid:135; Schmid & Kopke; ibid:211). In general both: lexical retrieval and sentence structures deficiencies can be attributed to the fact that pupils have had only mastered the verbal domain of the L1 as they are inexperience in L1 literature.

**Analysing Parents’ view**

Parents’ views were analysed and the two main emerging factors were that 1. the L1 is important for maintaining the identity of children and 2. That L1 can be maintained by providing L1 lessons in formal and informal settings and visiting to L1 country by the children.

**The importance of First Language (L1)**

The importance of the Somali language for the Somali pupils regardless how established they are in the UK is clearly explained by the Somali parents. For example, Saalim explained

> *Waa u tahay muhiim, maxaa jira hadda waxay kula hadlaayaan familkooda iyo qaraabadooda...*

> *It (L1) is important because they now communicate with their family and relatives...*

Likewise Nafisa noted that

> *wuxuu muhiim u yahay hadhoow haddii ay waddankaoda ku noqdaan in ay ku hadlaan khasab waaye.*

> *It (L1) is important if they (children) later go to their country of origin they must communicate with it.*

Binti’s father

> *Waa muhiim sababta waxaa waaye gosfka luqadda uu u dhashay waa inuu haaystaa taasoo asalka ahayd*

> *It (L1) is important the reason for that is the person must maintain his first language which is the origin.*

Binti’s mother

> *Haan waa u yahay maxaa yeelay waa luqaddoodii hooyo waa in ay ku hadli karaan. Yes it (L1) is important because it is their mother tongue they must be able to communicate with it.*

The date indicated that parents view the L1 as an asset for their children in that they will use it for communicating with their immediate family when they later visit their home country as Nafisa claimed that

> *It (L1) is important if they (children) later go to their country of origin they must communicate with it.*
Also, parents believe that L1 serves as an identity symbol for the children of which they must maintain. Henceforth, Binti’s father explained that

_It (L1) is important the reason for that is the person must maintain his first language which is the origin._

Likewise, Binti’s mother emphasised

_Yes it (L1) is important because it is their mother tongue they must be able to communicate with it._

**Maintaining the L1**

**Saatim**

...waxaa muhiim ah in guriga iyo, maxaa la dhahaa, community-yaasha ay tagaayaan Soomaali kula hadlaan si Soomaaliga uu meesha uga bixin oo ay u fahmaan wax walba.

...It is important that in the house and the communities they (children) go communicate with the Somali language in order it to be maintained

**Nafisa**

mar walba waa inaad geysaa waddanka si uusan uga dhumin ama fasax oo kale haddii aad geysid Soomaliya xoogaa inuu ka dhumin macqull waxa noogon kartaa.

Always you have to take them (children) to their home country in order to maintain the L1 for example during the holidays if you take them to Somalia it is possible that they may not lose it.

**Binti’s father**

Marka waxuu ku haaysan karaa luqadda waa in guriga loogu hadlaa oo famiilka habarta iyo aabahay luqadda ay ku hadlaan iyo in ay baxaan oo waddankii la geeyaa oo markastaba luqadda Soomaaliga ku soo hadlaan. Haddii loo heli karana waxbarasho loo furaa oo luqadda Soomaaliga macallimiintana Soomaali ah u dhigaan, casharrda qaarkood lagu soo daro iskoolka waa fiicana tahay.

So the child can maintain his L1 it must be used at home with family: the mother and the father should speak it; and that they visit their home origin and must always speak Somali. If it possible provision of L1 by L1 teachers and some Somali lessons would have been better.

**Binti’s mother**

Waxaa looga hortagi karaa in la geeyo meelo community ah oo looga hadlaayo luqadda Soomaaliga oo in loo furo in ay bartaan casharro Soomaali ah

_It can be prevented that they visit community venues where L1 is spoken and provision of L1 lessons_

Parents’ view of maintaining L1 and countering against the peril of losing L1 by their children accords Kahin’s (ibid), claim that they used remedial strategies to maintain L1. Moreover, parents advanced different views on how to maintain the L1. ¾ or 75% of parents believe that the use of L1 in home enables the maintenance of L1. For example, Saalim and Binti’s father believe that social interaction by the chidren with their community while using L1 is crucial. For instance, Saalim noted that

...It is important that in the house and the communities they (children) go communicate with the Somali language in order it to be maintained

Furthermore, Binti’s father also urged that L1 is important and further added that, to maintain it, children should use it at home with their immediate family
… So the child can maintain his L1 it must be used at home with family: the mother and the father should speak it...

On the other hand, Binti’s mother commented on how the L1 erosion can be prevented by further providing L1 provision in the form of lessons

*It can be prevented that they visit community venues where L1 is spoken and provision of L1 lessons*

Consequently, Binti’s family is of opinion that provision of L1 beyond the community cycle is plausible. i.e. L1 provision by L1 teachers during the school hours where possible. For example, Binti’s father illustrated

*If it possible provision of L1 by L1 teachers and some Somali lessons would have been better.*

Binti’s mother further elaborated the issue

*It can be prevented that they visit community venues where L1 is spoken and provision of L1 lessons.*

Nonetheless, ¼ or 25% of parents believes that L1 can be maintained by facilitating contacts by the children with their relatives back in home country as Nafisa claims

*Always you have to take them (children) to their home country in order to maintain the L1 for example during the holidays if you take them to Somalia it is possible that they may not lose it.*

Therefore, parents’ perception on the importance and the maintenance of L1 by their children affirms Ahmed (ibid:29) claim that ‘…the provision of Mother Tongue classes for Somali pupils is viewed by both schools & community as a fundamental element in maintaining the cultural integrity of Somali pupils’.

**Conclusion**

The study aimed to answer two research questions: Which Somali language features by Somali pupils in the UK are first susceptible to attrition when they come in contact with the English language? And what is the perception of Somali parents on maintaining the Somali language by their children?

Tape recording, structured and unstructured were used as a method of data collection from pupils and parent. The recorded voices were subjected to transcription and analysed. The outcome of the analysis illustrates deficiencies in L1 lexical retrieving and L1 sentence structure. Analysing parents’ view on countering L1 erosion include provision of L1 lessons by L1 teachers, visiting community venues where L1 is spoken by pupils and a visit to home country.

Referring back to the research questions above, L1 lexical retrieval and L1 sentence structure, among other issues, by Somali pupils were found to be blamed for the L1 attrition at this early stage of L2 acquisition. For the second part of the research question, visiting home country by the children, interaction with L1 community using L1 and provision of L1 by L1 teachers are believed to serve as counteract measures to arrest the L1 attrition.
Reference


Appendix

**App. A**

Participant consent form: 'Loss and Maintenance of Somali Language in the UK

I hereby give my consent to participating in the study on Somali language attrition by Somali pupils.
I have been informed about the purposes of the study. My data will be treated confidentially and I can opt out of the study at any time.

__________________________
Signature

__________________________
Print name

__________________________
Date

**App. A1 (Somali)**

Participant consent form: Loss and Maintenance of Somali Language in the UK

Foomka Oggolaanshaha ka-qeybqaadashada: Lumidda iyo ku dheegenaanta luqadda Soomaaliga marka ay ku milanto luqadda Ingiriiska.
Waxaan halkaan ku bixinaayaa oggolaanshaheyga ka qeyb-qaadashada baaritaanka habka loo ilaaliyo in ay luqadda dhumin
Waxaa la igu wargeliyey qasdiga baaritaanka. Macluumaadkeyga waxaa loo tixgelin doonaa si xafidan waxaanna dooran karaa inaan ka baxo baaritaanka waqti walba.

__________________________
Saxiixa

__________________________
Daabac Magaca

__________________________
Taariikh
App. B

**Participant information sheet**
The study: Loss and Maintenance of Somali Language in the UK
Dear participant,

Thank you for your interest in this study that aims to identify the challenges faced by the Somali children using the English language in their day to day lives.

These challenges are not unique to the Somali community, indeed they appear whenever two language come into contact. Some of the outcomes are similar, others depend on the languages and individual speakers involved. I am interested in finding out what happens when the Somali language comes into contact with English.

The study will be conducted for a short period: one to two weeks. Tape recording and interviews will be used and will take (ca. 5 minutes): A short story pictures will be shown to the children that they will have time to study. Then they will be asked to tell the story in Somali and English.

Finally, I will ask children a few general questions in English, or Somali if they prefer, about their age and background and their use of English & Somali. They can choose to opt out of the interview at any time - without having to give a reason to the researchers.

The results will be used to fully understand Loss and Maintenance of Somali Language in the UK which I hope will be beneficial for the Somali children in terms of academic achievements and also for the wider community.

The child’s name will only be known to the researcher. I will make his/her data anonymous, which means removing his/her name and other identifying information. That means that others won’t be able to see the answers his/her gave. If his/her wants, his/her can listen again to what I recorded and let me know if anything in particular should be treated confidentially.

Thank you for your help!

App. B

**Warqadda akhbaarta ka-qeybgalaha** Daah-furidda habka ay bartayaasha ku cusub UK ee Soomaalida ay u bartaan luqadda Ingiriiska
Gacaliye ka-qeybqaaate,
Aad ayaad ugu mahadsan tahay daneyntaada baaritaankaan kaasoo u qasdeysa in ay cayimto Raadraaca habka ay bartayaasha ku cusub UK ee Soomaali ay u bartaan luqadda Ingiriiska
Dhab ahaan bartayaasha imaanaaya UK waxay maraan hab ay ku bartaan luqadda. Habkaan ma aha mid isku si u ah barte walba waxaanna si gaar ah u daneynaayaa inaan ogaado khaladaadka ay bartayaasha ku cusub UK ay sameeyaan marka ay luqadda Ingiriiska baranaa aan iyo waxa loo sababeyn karo arrintaa iyo waxa horumariya habkaas.
Baaritaankaan waa qeyb ka mid ah waxbarashadayda heerka MA wuxuuna socon doonaa laga billaabo bisha Sibtember ilaa Disember 2010 (duubista codka waxay dhaceysaa Jimce walba, qoraalka xusuus qorkana wuxuu dhici doonaa labadii usbuucba mar; marka laga reebo mashruucu tijaabada oo la sameyn doono mar, bisha June 2010 gudaheeda, natiijooyinkana
waxaa loo isticmaali doonaa in si buuxda loogu fahmo habka kor ku xusan kaasoo aan rajeynaayo inuu waxtar u noqon doono Soomaalida ku cusub UK ee baraneysa luqadda Ingiriiska iyo dhammaan bulshada Soomaaliyeed.

Waad ku mahadsan tahay caawintaada!

**App. C** (handa’s story)

---

**App. D**

*The lion and the mouse story*
App. E

Structural interview on language profile

1. Do you often listen to an English speaking TV?

2. Do you often listen to an English speaking TV?

3. Which language do you speak to:
   Your peer group? ..................
App. F

Parents’ unstructured interview

1. Do you think mastery of Somali language by your children is important? Why?
2. Do you think mastery of English language by your children is important? Why?
3. Do you feel that mastery of Somali language by your children is diminishing? If so what do you think can be done to encounter it?

App. G

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>HBQ</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.5.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time taken</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01:32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handa’s surprise story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Gabartaan ayaa waxay u socotay saaxiibteed.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• (1 &amp; 2) Use of English words: fruit names (lack of Somali word: pear, orange (to differentiate orange (bambelmo ?))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ka dib wey soo qaadday waxay u tirineysaa min hal : tufaax, beella, banana and orange.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Generally good Excellent recounting though unfamiliarity of tape recording might have been a bit influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Waxay ku ridatay meeshoodii : banana, cananaas, beella, orange and tufaax.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wey soo qaadday wey soo baxday.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Waa waxaa geed sarnaay oo ay aragtay daanyeey.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Waxay soo martay geed hoostiisa oo saaran shirimbir.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Waxay aragtay geedka oo eber ah waxa ugu soo daayti liima orange.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Waa waxaa geedka uga buuxay orange.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Waxay saaxiibteed u soo ororday iyadoo naxsan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>HBQ</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.6.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lion and the mouse story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Maalin maalmaha ka mid ah ayaa libaax wuxuu ku ararka jidka dooll.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• (1 -8) unclear who did what: confusion over the subject and the object of the sentence; but it might be that participant is assuming that the researcher knows what she is talking: the subject and the object of the sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Asagoo meel hurdaaya ayuu soo qabtay... kor istaagay... waa ku kor fadhiya.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Asagoon fileynin ayaa gaanta lagu qabtay.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ka dibna gacanta ayuu ku majiijinaayey.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wuxuu sameeyey inuu iska sirsiro oo yiraahdo.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Wuxuu ku dhax-dhacay shabaq qey nada oo ..., doolliga.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ka dibina doolliga ayuu u imaaday oo ka soo furay ka dibna laga furfury</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>HNI</td>
<td>Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12.5.13 |     | 1. Gabartaan waxay wadaa cananaas, **beella apple**.  
|         |     | 2. Weel ayey ku ridesaas.  
|         |     | 3. Moos iyo **beella** iyo cananaas iyo tufaax.  
|         |     | 4. Haddana weel ayey fiirinaysa wixii ku jiray.  
|         |     | 5. Wey sii socotaa saaxiibteed ayey u socotaa.  
|         |     | 6. Daanyeer ayaa ka dafaaya wixii madaxa u saarnaa.  
|         |     | 7. ... Daanyeerkii waa ka dhammeeyey, waxaa ku dadanaaya cananaa.  
|         |     | 8. ... waa u imaad jiray saaxiibteed wey salaantay.  
|         |     | 9. Wey isku soo ordeen iyada iyo saaxiibteed.  
|         |     | ● (1, 2) Use of English words: fruit names (lack of Somali word: *pear*).  
|         |     | ● (3) Use of English words: fruit names *apple*. Used later in Somali *tufaax- use of Somali & English interchanging*.  
|         |     | ● (4,8,10) (1 - 8) unclear who did what. Specially (10) they ate *the thing*. The thing- is not explained previously though she termed it canana (pineapple. In Somali it should have been cananaas left the s. Prticipant should have used .  
|         |     | ● Generally: good command of Somali language |

| Week 2 |     | 1. Sheekadii libaaxii iyo doolliga.  
|        |     | 2. Libaaxii ayaa waxaa korka ka koray doollii.  
|        |     | 4. Libaaxii wuu xanaaqay (repetition), doolliga ayuu soo qabtay.  
|        |     | 5. Wuxuu dhahay ma i dhaafee mise waa ku dilaa.  
|        |     | 6. Isaga, doolligana waa iska baryey.  
|        |     | 7. Iga tag ayuuna dhahay.  
|        |     | 8. Libaaxii shabaq ayuu ku dhasay.  
|        |     | 9. Wuu qeyliiye, doolligii ayaa u imaaday.  
|        |     | 10. Xarrigii half ayaa laga furguray.  
|        |     | 11. Xerigii... (pause) shabaqii uu ku jiray bannaanka ayaa looga soo saaray.  
|        |     | ● (2) clear who did what. Used passive voice: The lion’s back was claimed by a mouse. Active: A mouse climbed on the back of a lion.  
|        |     | ● (3,4) repetition: the lion got angry.  
|        |     | ● (6) He, the mouse begged. Even the Somali language this sentence is incorrect grammatically further who begged who is unclear.  
|        |     | ● (10) half instead of the Somali word *nus*.  
|        |     | ● (11) Participant might have meant to complete (10) about the rope (xarigga) then decided to conclude the story. This could be to escape the pressure of the recording, could be to maintain the fluency of storytelling.  

Language Attrition Transcript Group 1
### Week 1 12.5.13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MHD</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time taken 01:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Handa saaxiibted ayey u wadday lii iyo iyo liintaan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. b...way xisaabinesaaxa hal hal ayey u xisaabinoyaa tan Liintaan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Haddana dhulka ayey u yaallaan ...Madaxa intey saaratay ayaa daanyeer hal hal xabo ayuu uga qaadanayaa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Hal hal xabo ayuu u qaadaanoyaa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Liintaan oo geedaha ka soo dhax baxoysado.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Hello</strong> ayey dhahday liinta... liinta... kaalay ayey dhahday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Liintaan wax fiican ayaan ku wadaahato.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Week 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HDA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time taken 01:37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Gabartaan waxay wadatagaa Cananaas, beella iyo tufaax iyo orange.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Waa tanaa haddana hal hal xabo ayey u tirineysaa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cananaaski ayey saartay orange-gii ayey ku xejisay, mooska ayey ku xejiime, beelalaha yeye ku xejiime, tufaaxey ku xijimee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Haddana waa kanaa wey ku riddayba. Wey socotaa, hadda walaasheed ayey ku socotaa... ee... rabtaa...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Wixi waa kanaa hal hal xaba looga qaataay daanyeeki ayaa hal hal ugu qaataay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Wixii eber waaye ma wadato. Ee... geed lii iyo buuxdo ayey hoos mareysaa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Geedkii ayaa liin... oo... ku buuxsamay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Wey salaameysaaxa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Haddana waa kaasaa ciyaalkii ayaa meesha joogaan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Liima oranigii ayaa meesha ugu buuxo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- (1) The use of beella (pear & orange) is because of lack of these words in Somali: pear is unknown in Somalia & Orange is used as liima oranj: orange lime.
- (4)... ee... (paused possibly wanted to finish the sentence but changed her mind): Wey socotaa, hadda walaasheed ayey ku socotaa... ee... rabtaa... she is walking, now she is walking to her sister... ee... she wants...
- Generally: good recounting in Somali language due to her age & the pressure of recording.
App. I Parents’ unstructured interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week2</th>
<th>13. Haddana waa kanaa gabartii ayey afka u gelinoysaa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 3 (8.6.13) 1:00 | 1. Libaaxaan wuxuu fiirinoobaa doollii.  
2. Haddana li...li... doolligii sankoo wuxuu ka koray libaaxii.  
3. Libaaxaana wuu xanaaqay indhahood gadoood ka dhiigay.  
4. Haddana waa kanaa libaaxa gacanta ku qabtay doolliga.  
5. Doolliga waa kanaa haddana waa ku tuugaa iga qaalle ayuu dheebiiba.  
6. Hadana baxaa la dhaay, bax soco (repetition).  
7. Libaaxii waa kanaa shabaqa asagoo ku jira.  
8. Doolligii ayaa u imadooy.  
10. Waa kanaa waa laga fufuray xeriggi.  |
| | (2) wanted to say Lion-libaax (li...li...) then instead doolligii-the mouse) self correction  
(3) and the lion became angry and made his eyes red. This seems to demonstrate participant’s ability of associating the red colour with the anger.  
(5) iga qaalle(street talk- ability to use street talk seems to demonstrate her command of the Somali language). Generally: Good command in Somali with creativity skills |
Balqisiis’s mother answers to the questions | L1 important for:
---|---
A1. Haa waa u yahay maxaa yeelay waa luqaddoodii hooyo waa in ay ku hadli karaan. | • For identity  
• For survival in the UK
A2. Haa maxaa yeelay waxay joogeena waddankaan wax walba oo ay rabaan in ay sameeyanba waa in ay yaaqanuuna English. | • L1 is losing (no reason give)  
• Prevention: 1) providing community meeting venues where L1 is spoken. 2) provision of L1 lesson
A3. Haa waa ka sii dhumaayaa. Waxaas looga horita qaraa in la qeyb oo la iska heli karaa ayaa loo furaan in ay bartaan casharro Soomaali ah | • For identity  
• Loss of L1 leads to L2 loss as well

Balqisi’ dad  

A2 Ee... luqaddaas waa luqadd muhiim ah oo international ah oo caalamka oo dhan laga yaaqan. Marka muhiim waxay uu tahay waxayna kula dhaqmayaand dadka jaanibta ah iyo dadka kaloo ah. Waxbarashadenna waa iska fiicnayd Ingiriiska, Carabiga iyo Soomaaliga iyo Talyaaniga intaba waa lagu dhiogayey, laakin waagii dambe luqadda Soomaaliga waxay gaartay ilaa dushi dare jaamacadd oo keli ah ay ayaan dhiinayey. Ilaa dushi dare ayaa lagu dhiogayey. | • L2 is prestigious as an international language.

A3. Haa waa is-dhimeysaa sababta waxaas waaye qof beyad kale yimaada beyadda kale ayaa ka xoog badinesya. Luqaddiisa hore waa ka tagaayaa ama ha yaraado ama ha weynado. Marka wuxuu ku haaysan karraa luqadda waa in guriga loogu hadladdaa oo famiikha habarta iyoqabahay luqadda ay ku hadlaan iyo in ay buuxaan oo waddankii la geeyaa oo markastaba luqadda Soomaaliga ku soo hadlaan. Haddii loo heli karana waxbarasho loo furaa oo luqadda Soomaaliga macalliiminta Soomaali ah u dhiigaa, casharrda qaarkood lagu soo daro iskoolka waa fiicana tahay | • L1 is influenced by enrivirnment.
• L1 loss can be prevented by visiting home (L1) country + provision of L1 lessons by L1 teachers + provision of L1 lessons by the school.

Nasteexo

A1 Waxaan qabaan inuu ku dhumi karo mar walba oo kula hadashaa...  
Q2 So is Somali not important?  
A1 waa muhiim waaye  
Q Muxuu muhiim u yahay?  
A1 wuxuu muhiim u yahay hadhoow haddii ay waddankooda ku noqdaan in ay ku hadlaan khasab waaye | • L1 is important for maintaining their identity.  
• L2 is important for future economical wellbeing.  
• L1 loss can be prevented by visiting home (L1) country
## Loss and Maintenance of Somali Language

**Abikar**

**Q** when they return to Somalia? *Confirmation*

A. Haa

Q3. Waa macquul in xoogaa uu u ka dhumo maadaama caadi u noqdaan?

Q. Haddii uu ka dhumo maxaa la sameyn karraa?

A mar walba waa inaad geysaa waddanka si uusan uga dhumin ama fasax oo kale haddii aad geysid Somaliyada xoogaa inuu ka dhumin macquul waa noqon kartaa.

**WAAD MAHADSAN TAHY**

### APP. H

**GROUP2**

**Abdullahi**

Handa’s Surprise 15.10.2013 1.35

1. Gabartaan waxay wadatay tufaax
2. iyo waxay wadatay canbo...  
3. iyo waxay wadatay...iyo liin iyo canab  
4. iyo waxay wadatay...een (long pause)...  
5. Inta liin iyo tufaax ay wadatay  
6. Een...(not clear) kanna waxay ka soo buuxsatay tufaax iyo ... (long pause) moos iyo liin iyo canbo  
7. Iyo...(not clear) kanna waxay wadatay... (long pause)  
8. Waxay wadatay in ay  
   cunto...ee...liin...ee...canbo...iyo oranj ayey wadatay.  
9. Waxay wadatay...(not clear) cunkey u wadatay.  
10. Daanyeeral waxuu ka qaayt mooska.  
11. Hadda waxay...haddana waxay...(not clear).  
12. Waxay u soo ordaa saxiibteed u soo ordeysa...(not clear) mise wey u maanveysa.

**Jawaahir**

Handa’s Surprise 15.10.2013 0:48

5. Waxay gabartaan dambiisha waxay ku wadatay cananaas, canbo, liin iyo ...  
   (NC),avokaato.  
6. ...(NC) waxay dhigtay baalidi  
7. Waxay kor saartay dambiisha  
8. Dambiishana waxay kor saartay cananaas iyo oranjiga_iyo canbaha iyo isbaandheyska iyo muuska.  
9. Wey socotay waxaa ... (NC) mooska waxaa ka qaatay daanyeerkaa  
10. ...daanyeerva...saaxiibteed ayaay soo orodday  
11. Dambiisha waxay ku wadatay liin badan.  
12. Saaxiibteed iyo iyadana liinta ayey isla cuneen

**The use of avocado (no word for it in Somali language)**

- (2) unclear/incorrect: she put backet
- (3) unclear subject & the object
- (4) Incorrect use of an articles: oranjiga_canbaha
  - iyo isbaandheyska +incorrect preposition and she put the basket on pineapple, the orange and the mango and the isbaandheyska (a blum like Somali fruit).
- (5 & 6) Repetition of daanyeeka (the monkey).
| Jawahir Lion & the mouse 0:32                                      | • (1) incorrect identifying of an animal: Shabeel (tiger) instead of lion.       |
|                                                                 | • (3) confusion over subject & the object                                     |
|                                                                 | • (4) Somali expression: walaaloow I daa (let me go brother).                  |
|                                                                 | • (6) grammatically incorrect.                                               |
| 2. Shabeel ayaa meel fadihiyey.                                  |                                                                              |
| 3. Doolli ayaa korka ka fuulay...sanka.                          |                                                                              |
| 4. Doolligaa qabtay oo isku cambajuujiyey.                       |                                                                              |
| 5. Wuxuu dhahay walaaloow i daa.                                 |                                                                              |
| 6. Doolligaa wuu fasaxay, wuxuu dhahay iska bax.                 |                                                                              |
| 7. Libaaxaa waxaa ku jira shabaqa.                               |                                                                              |
| 8. Maya wuxuu dhahay...shabaqaan ka furay.                       |                                                                              |
|                                                                 | • (1 &2) Repetition of fruit names possibly experience difficulty in retrieving a suitable sentence or found difficulty in naming another fruit as participant said ‘I don’t know’.
|                                                                 | • (11) difficulty in retrieving an animal name: daanyeer (monkey)             |
|                                                                 | Generally: unable to produce a single sentence (1 -12) with lots of pausing.  |
|                                                                 | • Generally: lots of pausing (possible difficult to speak normal in Somali (retrieval). |
|                                                                 | • (5) unclear who did what: Libaaxa shabaqaa lagu riday: the lion was put in net. |
| Balqiisa                                                        |                                                                              |
| Balqiisa                                                        |                                                                              |
| Handa’s Surprise 2:32                                           |                                                                              |
| 3. Tufaax, mango.                                                |                                                                              |
| 4. Tufaax, mango... I don’t know (me don’t worry)                |                                                                              |
| 5. (me what is this?)  iyo gabar.                               |                                                                              |
| 6. Gabarta...(LP) tufaax iyo...(LP) (me gabarta maxay sameynysaa?-prompt) |                                                                              |
| 7. Waxay sameynysaa...een...een... tufaax iyo...iyo...pineapple...ee...ee... caag ku ridoyssa. |                                                                              |
| 8. Baaldi...baaldi...ee...ee... ee... saartay.                     |                                                                              |
| 9. Ba...banana...mango...tufaax...pineapple.                      |                                                                              |
| 10. Gabarta wey socotaa.                                        |                                                                              |
| 11. Mar...markaasna qof...een...markaas...weelkana...caagane...caagga|                                                                              |
| 12. pa... markaasne een (LP) (me kan muxuu yahay?-prompt)        |                                                                              |
| 14. Wuxuu sameeyey...een...banaanada uu ka soo qaay.             |                                                                              |
| 15. Markaas gabartii...gabartii...gabartii waa socotay.           |                                                                              |
| 16. Shimbirta waxa dhan avey qadaaty.                           |                                                                              |
| 17. Gabartana wey socotay.                                      |                                                                              |
| 18. Saaaxiibtedaa dhiiday waa ku soo oroday.                     |                                                                              |
| 20. Iyada iyo saaxiibted oranjada avey fiqdeen eey cuneen       |                                                                              |
| Balqiisa                                                        |                                                                              |
| The lion & the mouse 1:36                                       |                                                                              |
| 6. Doolliga...iyo...(LP)...iyo libaax.                           |                                                                              |
| 7. Doolliga...een...sankiusi koray.                             |                                                                              |
| 8. Libaaxa...een...doolliguu qabtay.                            |                                                                              |
| 9. Doolliga...doolliga... please ammaan is ii...uu dhahay.       |                                                                              |
| 10. Libaaxa shabaqaa lagu riday.                                |                                                                              |
| 11. Libaaxa...wuu...(LP) libaaxa inuu cuno... inuu ka baxayo...inuu |                                                                              |
| |
### 12. Libaaxa wuu ka soo baxyey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saalah</th>
<th>• L1 is important for maintaining identity.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1 Waa u tahay muhiim, maxaa jira hadda waxay kula hadlaa xanuun familtikooda iyo qaraabadooda oo guriga ay aad ugu fiican tahay in ay wax ku fahmaan maxaa yeelay waalidiinta qaarkood ayaana fahmeynin luqaddaan... ee. Ingiriiska siidaas darteed in ay fahmaan luqadda Soomaaliga aad ahey muhiim u tahay. Luqadda Soomaaliga dhaqanka ahey muhiim ugu tahay iyo maxaa la dhaahaayey wada xiriirka qaraabada iyo wax walba ahey muhiim ugu tahay in ay bartaan luqadda Soomaaliga oo aysan ka tegin luqaddooda.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| A2 Wey u tahay in ay bartaaan luqadda ay baranaa yada ay bartaan waxay ku baxaan English bal sidaas darteed haddii aysan English fahmeynin waa ku adkaaneysaa in ay fahmaan waxyaaba loo dhiigaayo iyo xataa macallinka wax u dhiigaayey in ay fahmaan waa ku adkaaneysaa sidaas darteed si uusan canugga taclinta ugu soo harin waxay aad ugu anfayey inuul luqaddii xoogga saaro oo barto. |

| Q ingiriiku ma wuxuu keli anfacaa iskoolka mise waxyaabo kale ayuu nafacaa? |
| A2(e) Waddanka ay ku nool yiihiin waxaa looga hadlaa English sidaas darteed xataa saaxiibadood iyo xataa meel kasto haddii shopping haddii ay sameysanaaan waxay u baahan yiihiin in ay ku hadlaa English, haddii ay bas raacaayaan sidoo kale marka waxaa wax walba community-gii dhexdiisa aad ahey muhiim ugu tahay in au fahmaan Ingiriiska oo ay bartaaan. |

| A3 Waa laga yaabaa in ay is-dhinto maxaa jira because wixii ay yagaaneen waxaa beddelooya ereyo kale oo cusub ahey barabaabakoon sidaas darteed si ay tan, maxaa la dhaahaayey, ay focus-ka u saaraan ahey mar kasta ugu xeran tahay oo ay maadaama maskaxdoooda ka sii baxeyso waddankaan lagu nool yahay dadka ay la macaamilaayaan kulli waxay ku hadlaa English marka ereyada qaarkood oo Soomaaliga ah waa laga yaabaa in ay ka dhumaan oo xita marmarka qaarkood ay hafmi waayaan oo markaas ay ku adkaato waxyaabaha qaarkood haddaad weydiso ay ku dhahaan Soomaaliga maxaa lagu dhaahaan sidacs darteed waxaa muhiim ah in guriga iyo, maxaa la dhaaha, community-yaasha ay tagayeen Soomaali kula hadlaan si Soomaaliga uu meesha uga bixin oo ay u fahmaan wax walba. |

• L2  is important for academic achievements + interaction with teachers+ prevention of academic regression +social interaction.
A Comprehensive Method for Teaching English for Specific Purpose

Muhammed Ali Chalikandy  
Department of English  
Al Buraimi University College  
Buraimi, Sultanate of Oman

Abstract

English for Specific Purpose (ESP) is a market driven, need oriented and purpose driven course but a snap shot of an ESP classroom in gulf countries will reveal that it is often taught on the line of teaching General English focusing on language teaching methods. ESP teachers often forget that ESP has some distinguishing features unlike General English. ESP is a separate activity within English Language Teaching (ELT) with its own approach, material and methodology by adapting and integrating with other disciplines and it encourages learner investment and participation. Since ESP uses distinctive approaches, materials and methods based on learners’ specific needs, ESP practitioners must assess learners’ needs, design course, develop materials, choose appropriate instruction and implement it to satisfy the identified needs of the learners. Therefore, just knowledge of language system and ability to deliver this is not enough for an ESP teacher. This article is going to delineate how to teach an ESP course successfully.

Keywords: ESP, need, design course, develop materials, evaluation
1. Introduction

English for Specific or Special purpose (ESP) has become a prominent part of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) or ESL (English as a Second Language) teaching since 1960. Nowadays both material writers and teachers realize the importance of need analysis due to the influence of ESP on English language teaching in general. ESP is a broad area consisting of English for business, English for science and technology, English for engineers, English for waiters etc. It is a branch of English Language Teaching (ELT) with its own approaches, materials, and methods which have been developed by adapting from other disciplines and integrating with other disciplines. ESP has been very actively influencing ELT since it is material driven, learner centered and learning centered approach. There is a growing diversity in ESP now.

2. The Origin of ESP

ESP did not begin just because of some new theories or ideas in any field. It was mainly because of the necessity of the time which shaped ESP in the present form. The proverb ‘Necessity is the mother of invention’ is very relevant to the origin of ESP. ESP has been changed since it originated because of the developments in education, business, computer, information technology, global economy, applied linguistics and ELT. There were many events which paved the way for ESP. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) the demands of a brave world, a revolution in linguistics and focus on the learner were the three common reasons for the birth of ESP. They further argued that Second World War and the Oil Crisis of 1970 were the two historical events that were responsible for the origin of the ESP. Firstly; the Second World War changed the world politics drastically, the immediate result of which was the emergence of the US as the world super power, the expansion of science and technology, growth of global economy and becoming English as the international language for communication. Secondly, because of the Oil Crisis of 1970, western money and new knowledge flowed into the oil rich countries. Naturally, English was the language of this knowledge. As a result, there was a pressure on ELT to modify its approaches, methods and materials according to the needs of the learners and clients. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) aptly said, “English now became subject to the wishes, needs and demands of people other than language teachers” (p, 7).

Around this time, changes took place in linguistic in general and in ELT in particular. For instance, traditional linguistics viewed language as an object to be described and segmented into discrete elements like phonemes, morphemes and words while the revolutions in linguistics forced linguistics to view language as means of communication used in the context. Consequently, language has been viewed that it varies depending on the context, participants and purposes. In addition, there was a shift from teaching method and the teacher to the learning and the learner due to the popularity of Communicative Language Teaching. Learners use different learning strategies as they are different and their needs are divergent. In fact, all this lead to the importance of considering learners’ varied needs in learning context. Focusing on learner and learning resulted in adapting the language instruction according to their needs and designing a course that suitable to the specific needs of the learners.

3. ESP Vs General English

Generally, ESP is a branch of EFL or ESL, which are the main branches of English Language Teaching (ELT) in general. According to Hutchinson and waters (1987) ESP is an approach to language learning based on learners’ needs and centered around the question: “Why does this
learner need to learn a foreign language?” (P. 17). Scrivener (2005) differentiated both terms clearly:

ESP contrast with the rather mischievous acronym LENOR (Learning English for No Obvious Reason); it implies that we are going to take the client’s needs and goals more seriously when planning the course, and rather than teach ‘general English’, we are going to tailor everything to his or her character and particular requirements. (p. 324)

According to Strevens (1988) ESP is designed to meet learners’ specific needs by choosing content from particular disciplines and using activities, syntax, lexis and discourse suitable to these activities, and he added that ESP may not use any pre-planned instructional methodology. Dudley- Evans and St. John (1998) revised Strevens definition and accepted most of his claims. However, they elaborated and broadened the concept by adding more variables such as:

- ESP may be related to the specific subjects;
- It may use teaching methods and situations different from General English (GE);
- It may be designed for adult intermediate or advanced learners. (pp. 4-5)

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) defined ESP more broadly as “an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and methods are based on the learners’ need for learning” (p. 19). These definitions, thus, makes it clear that learners’ specific need is the foundation on which the entire edifice of ESP is established. Although every learner has their own reason to learn a language such as improving communicative skills, passing exam, these are too vague in General English. Basic interpersonal communication skills refers to the language skills used in everyday informal contexts with friends, family and co-workers, while academic skills refers to a language skills required in academic setting. Successful communication in an occupational set up requires the ability to use the particular jargon specific to that context, and use everyday communicative language effectively in non- occupational context, for instance, chatting over a lunch with a colleague. Unlike General English, ESP has to blend both interpersonal communication skills and academic communication skills effectively and naturally. It is the challenge of the ESP practitioner to integrate all these skills effectively in the ESP course naturally by balancing and blending structures, lexical and discourse into the course.

4. Types of ESP

Traditionally ESP is divided into English for Academic Purpose (EAP) and English for Occupational Purpose (EOP), both of which are sub-divided into further like English for science and technology, English for law, English for vocational purpose etc. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) divided ESP into three: English for Science and Technology, English for Business and Economics and English for Social Science, each of which is subdivided into EAP and EOP. They didn’t see much difference between EAP and EOP, and pointed out that “people can work and study simultaneously; it is also likely that in many cases the language learnt for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the students takes up, or returns to, a job” (p. 16). It is implied here that the end purpose of both EAP and EOP are one and the same but the means to achieve this is very different. However, there is a difference between these two terms. EAP refers to English requires in an educational institution like school, college and university and it is concerned with those communication skills in English which are required for study purpose in formal educational system. Whereas, EOP refers to English required for professional communication in professional context like medical, engineering, aviation and business. According to Hamp- Lynos (2001) EAP is:
a branch of applied linguistics consisting of a significant body of research into effective teaching and assessment approaches, methods of analysis of the academic language needs of students, analysis of the linguistic and discoursal structures of academic texts, and analysis of the textual practice of academics. (p. 126)

In the view of Strevens (1977) EAP is a shift from teaching literature and culture of speakers of English to teaching English language for communicative purpose. He added that English language should be matched to the needs and purpose of learners.

EAP takes place in a variety of setting and circumstances. The students need EAP for higher education. The teachers may be native or non-native speakers. The course may be pre-sessional (full time), in-sessional and usually part time. It may be a short term or long term. The course may include formal teaching program, self-access situations, distance learning materials or CALL (Computer Aided Language Learning). GE (General English) course teaches learners conversational and social genres of the language, whereas EAP course teaches formal academic genres and EOP course teaches genres related to occupation. To be precise, EAP and EOP are specific because they teach language skills required for learners’ immediate purpose by selecting vocabulary, grammar pattern. In addition, they use the topic and themes that are relevant to learners’ immediate needs and address learners’ immediate communicative needs.

4.1. Current Practice of EAP

Unlike General English, EAP begins with learner and situation and teaches academic genres. According to Swales (2001), it started with a goal, genre and focus which are different from literary language in the 1960s, to which many additions and adaptations have been done since then. Carkin (2005) has stated that EAP has broadened its scope by including more disciplines and texts to it, for instance, EAP course in Agronomy and ESP course in computer repairs.

Currently, EAP is offered in variety of international setting. Dudley- Evan and St. John (1998) reports that there are four types of EAP offered in higher education contexts. The first type of EAP is taught either intensively or extensively in English speaking countries like the USA, the UK and Canada where it is done for international students of graduates and undergraduates. The second type is offered in countries like Singapore and Zimbabwe where many native languages exist and English is recognized officially in education. The third type of EAP can be seen in Middle East countries where subjects like medicine, technology, business, science and IT are taught in English in higher education. The fourth type of EAP is taught in South American countries where higher education is in L1 (mother tongue), but English is recognized as an auxiliary language. According to Snow (1997), in English speaking countries EAP is largely a pre-university bridge program, in which it links English language with content courses and both ESL instructors and content instructors work as a team. The aim of such program is to enable the learners to enter university directly by making them proficient in English language required for a specific academic program. Furthermore, such courses assist second language (L2) students in acquiring language skills needed for successful work in higher education. Whereas, in non-speaking English countries such as Middle East countries EAP is a part of academic program, in which students are required to take a compulsory subject like study skill as an intensive program, which is a part of pre-planned syllabus.

Generally, an EAP course “usually consists primarily of study skills practice (e.g. listening to lectures, seminar skills, academic writing, reading and note taking, etc.) with an academic register and style in the practice texts and materials” (Hamp-Lynos, 2001, p. 127).
5. ESP Around the World

ESP is a major ELT enterprise in English speaking countries where English for occupational purposes for new migrant and refugee population and English for academic purpose in academic context for non native speaking students are offered. However, the present trend is spreading ESP into non-native English speaking countries where English is taught as either a second language or as a foreign language. According to Johns (2001), “… ESP continues to be even more common in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, where an increasing number of adult students are eager to learn business English or academic English in order to pursue their career or study in English medium educational institutions” (p. 43).

ESP started late in China; however, it has developed quickly because “the boom of ESP teaching both in college education and continuing education is rightly the result of social demand of the English language, rapid development of linguistics, and educational psychology” (Wang, 2007, p.122). According to him, business English has been a part of ESP for long, but now the trend is spreading into aviation industry. Though grammar translation method has been dominating in ESP, bilingual method and a contrastive approach along with linguistic analysis is used in aviation ESP, where a contrastive analysis of aviation language between English and Chinese is done in order to provide suitable ESP approach to the Chinese context. In Iran ESP is a part of academic subjects and locally produced ESP textbooks are used. However, Iranian ESP text book are not based on learners’ need analysis (Eslami, 2010; Iranmehr, Erfani and Davari, 2010).

Liton, Muhammed and Alom (2012) investigated the effectiveness of ESP courses for business administration students at Community College of Jazan University in Saudi Arabia and found that the existing ESP course is not based on students’ work place needs. Further more, they reported that ESP in Malaysia needs to be redesigned to meet the demand of the job market. ESP courses are getting popularized in Middle East, East Asian countries, Iran, Lebanon and South Asia due to global trade and career growth. As a result, universities in these countries started offering ESP recently.

6. Future of ESP

According to Nunan (2001), the demand for English language education around the world is increasing because it is the language of international business, technology and science. Therefore, ESP will flourish and grow more in non-native English speaking countries. ESP will use computer based curricula and authentic texts. In other words, ESP will use more sophisticated learner centered curricula. Since ESP is sensitive to the learners’ background and the context in which the learners use English, it will be sensitive to cross cultural issues (Connor, 1996). As a result, ESP will research the cross cultural issues related to ESP learning. ESP will still use need analysis, however, the focus of need analysis will be shifted because ESP will be done more in non native English speaking countries.

ESP will be the part of ESL or EFL teaching, which will be the part of English Language Teaching in general. Developments in applied linguistics will certainly influence ESP teaching in particular. Furthermore, Content Based Instruction and Task Based Instruction will become more popular in ESP.

7. Characteristics of ESP

What makes a course really an ESP course? There are many features that stand out in an ESP course. Firstly, ESP is a multidisciplinary activity; therefore, it is necessary to understand how
written and spoken text works in a particular discipline or profession and essential to be sensitive to cultural differences both academic and professional world. Secondly, it uses authentic materials which are used as vehicle of information rather than linguistic object. Thirdly, ESP exploits learners’ previous and current academic skills and knowledge and professional experience. In the ESP classroom the teacher may not have the knowledge of the content, but learners have. For instance, an ESP teacher may not know how exactly a business run, but they know what language and how it is used in it. Therefore, the ESP practitioner must use the learners’ greater knowledge of the content. Furthermore, the practitioner needs to include specific subject content and balance content level and language level to have real content as language learning approaches and subject learning approaches are integrated in an ESP course. Fourthly, distinctive teaching methodology which is different from General English is used in ESP except pre-study or pre-work ESP where learners have not started their academic study and professional activity. For instance role play, case-study, project work and task based teaching are commonly used in ESP classes. Fifthly, ESP is designed for specific discipline or profession for limited duration or longer duration and for learners who are often advanced or intermediate adults with at least some basic knowledge and skill of English. According to Dudley- Evans (2001) need analysis is the central feature of ESP. Chambers (1980) calls the initial need analysis as target situation analysis since it provides information about the target situation and the purpose of the course. Present situation analysis provides information about learners current level in English, weakness in English and skills needed. Register analysis is another feature because certain grammatical and lexical items are more frequently used in particular subject and occupation. To illustrate, simple present and passives are used in scientific and technical English, and vocabulary items like consists of, contains; enables appear more in academic writing. Therefore, register analysis is done to identify the grammar, syntax, lexical items which are particular to the specific ESP. Last not the least feature is, discourse analysis. It is done to find out specifies discourse used in a particular discipline and explains why certain text is preferred how they are used in the text. Dudley- Evans (2001) “… the ESP teacher considers the (written or spoken) texts that the learner has to produce and/or understand, tries to identify the texts’ key features and devises teaching material that will enable learners to use the texts effectively” (p. 134).

Authentic discourse, vocabulary and situation are very important in ESP since ESP consists of special English and contexts. How to provide authenticity? There are two traditions according to Johns (2001), the first of which is to deliver the course onsite target situation like oil rigs, dockyard, military and police training centers, banks, factories and other work places and delivering the lesson concerned university departments as a part of academic subjects. Raof and Yousof (2006) have found ESP course embedded with learners’ work place or discipline is very effective because learners acquire knowledge about their specific subject and future work place as it provides authentic input. Moreover, learners interact with the professionals and gain knowledge about their subject. The second tradition is to provide specific oral or written discourse (creating artificial target situations through role play, real play and simulation play).

8. Structure of ESP Course

It is impossible to run an ESP course haphazardly since the basic structure of the course is definite. There are certain building blocks which form an ESP course. Analyzing needs, preparing syllabus, designing the course, developing materials, selecting methods and evaluating the course are the necessary steps involved in an ESP course.
8.1. Need Analysis

Need analysis is an integral part of ESP and it is an ongoing process because students are culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse, their objectives and the levels of academic literacy are different. The method of doing need analysis have become more sophisticated due to the development of new technology. The most common ways of doing need analysis are questionnaires, surveys, interviews and observations (Johns, 2001).

The learners' needs or goals are the foundation of the course. A need analysis is the essential starting point for ESP teaching. Need is defined as the reason for which the learner is learning English, which varies from learner to learner, context to context and discipline to discipline. To demonstrate a learner may want English to study in an English speaking country, or work in a multinational company as an IT expert. Need analysis is asking questions about students’ needs and wants. Broadly learners’ needs can be divided into two: immediate and delayed needs. Immediate needs refer to those needs that students have at the time of the course, whereas, delayed needs refer to those needs that students will have later or after the course. ESP teachers should be aware of the options and limitation arising from learner expectations and requirements. When developing an ESP course, the designer needs to answer these questions: What English do learners need? Why do they need it? Which specific skills do they require? And what genre do they need to achieve their goal. According to Burmfit (1984) need analysis is not exclusive to ESP, but it is rather common in all language teaching program. However, ESP starts with need analysis and it is done by ESP practitioner or teacher, not an outsider. Specific learners’ need analysis has to be done by explaining the context in which learners are going to use the language, and the text used in that situation because Dudley- Evan (2001) asserted that “for ESP courses to be successful and to have a lasting effect on learners, ability to study or work using English, the environment in which English is taught versus that in which it is used must be assessed” (p. 133). Furthermore, the course designer has to see the four dimensions of needs: target situation, the sponsor, students and course designer (Jordan, 1997). Need Analysis should be the starting point for devising syllabus, course material and the kind of teaching and learning that are going to take place in the ESP course. In nutshell, need analysis includes: necessities, demands, wants, likes, lacks, deficiency, goals, aims, purposes and objectives. Thus, a typical need analysis includes these: job contexts; academic contexts; learners’ multiple intelligence; learning styles and ways of working in a particular job.

8.2. Syllabus

Need Analysis will give the necessary background to draw up the syllabus. Basically, a syllabus is a specification of what is to be included in an ESP course. Designing a syllabus involves examining need analysis and establishing objectives of the course. It then entails the selection, grading, sequencing the language and content and the divisions of the content into units. (Jordan, 1997)

8.3. Course Design

After obtaining the syllabus, the next step is to design the course around the syllabus. According to Hutchinson and waters (1998) “course design is the process by which the raw data about learning need is interpreted in order to produce an integrated series of teaching – learning experience, whose ultimate aim is to lead the learners to a particular state of knowledge” (p, 65). There are two types of course design available for a designer: fixed and flexible. According to
Nunan (1988) a fixed course design is prepared in advance and rarely deviated from it, where as a flexible one allows changes and modification based on negotiation with the learners and feedback from learners. For instance, if an EAP is a part of an academic program and is assessed, it follows a fixed course design.

Designing an ESP course is not easy, but a really challenging task. In ESP, it is the teacher who develops the course after analyzing learners’ needs to suit their requirement. The ESP teacher has to investigate a number of issues before taking decision. They are: whether the course is intensive or extensive; it is assessed or not; it meets immediate needs or delayed needs; it is done as a pre-study or work, while study or work; the learners are homogenous or heterogeneous.

In short, course design is to adapt or write materials in accordance with the syllabus, to develop a methodology for teaching those materials and to establish evaluation procedure by which progress towards the specified goals will be measured.

8.4. Material Development

It is important for ESP teachers to have a great deal of experience both in teaching and material development – providing and writing. According to Jones (1990) “ESP teachers find themselves in a situation where they are expected to produce a course that exactly matches the needs a group of learners, but are expected to do so with no, or very limited, preparation time” (p. 91). Even though plenty of commercially published ESP textbooks available now, none of them are suitable to meet students’ specific needs. Consequently Jones (1990) argues that there is no book to be called as an ESP textbook and suggests having a resource bank with variety of materials for the teachers to choose. It does not mean that every ESP practitioner needs not be a good material designer, but needs to be a provider of suitable material, be creative with the available material, modify according to learners needs and supplement with extra materials.

There are certain key issues that ESP practitioners must consider when they develop materials. ESP materials need to be more visually illustrative to help learners showing the processes of relationship, and the language used in the illustration has to be functional. Therefore, ESP material should be visual based in order to improve learners’ visual literacy like increasing the power of observation and reporting what they observe. As a result, video clips, sound files are compulsory in ESP material. As ESP follows learner centered approach, it should explore technology to provide learners varied choices. Furthermore, ESP should use topics, themes, activities and methodology that are specific to subject and the profession. To demonstrate, an English course for medical students use medical situations like diagnosing and performing a surgery to present appropriate language and discourse. Dudley Evans (2001) argued that “ESP is a materials- led field. Most materials, however, are prepared by individual teachers for particular situations, and there is not a huge amount of published ESP material” (p. 135). In addition to this, in an ESP class the group generally has mixed abilities. Therefore; it is required to have an eclectic approach to material catering every learner.

Adaptation and revision of ESP materials are part of any ESP program whether published or tailor made material is used. In EAP, ESP teachers consult with the content teachers or work with them as a team to provide and update ESP materials suitable to learners’ academic program and EOP teachers include specific language skills and linguistic items required in a particular job.
8.5. Methodology

ESP makes use of the methodology of other content subjects. This is the strength of ESP methodology that integrates language learning approaches and subject learning approaches. Widdowson (1983) wrote “ESP (or ought logically to be) integrally linked with areas of activity (academic, vocational, professional) which… represent the learners’ aspirations” (pp. 108-9). For instance ESP uses case studies, project work and tasks. Furthermore, a typical ESP class uses video discs, CD-ROM, the internet, e-mail and Computer Aided Language Learning (CALL). Role play, real play and simulation play have a key role in an ESP classroom. Content Based Instruction and Task Based Instruction are very useful in ESP classrooms.

ESP teachers make use of learners’ specific subject knowledge, which makes classroom interaction and methods different from General English. A good ESP teacher will try to minimize the negative effects of the learners’ emotional reactions to learning and will instead try to boost the positive emotions by using the following strategies:

- Use pair work and group work to minimize the stress of speaking in front of the class, for example, pyramid discussion;
- Structure the task, i.e. introduce the task, remove hurdles, give clear instruction, concept checking, demonstrating the task, run the activity, close the activity and give feedback;
- Give time to think and do, listen to the learners, ask questions, give enough time to think and answer, allow them to complete;
- Emphasis on the process rather than the product as the correct answer is not the most important issue but getting the answer is important;
- Include fun, variations, varieties;
- Avoid monotonous and mechanical teaching.

9. Evaluation

In narrow sense, evaluation is the process of gathering, analyzing and interpreting information about what is done to make a judgment about it. Nunan (1998) views evaluation more broadly:

The data resulting from evaluation assist us in deciding whether a course needs to be modified or altered in any way so that objectives may be achieved more effectively. If certain learners are not achieving the goals and objectives set for a course, it is necessary to determine why this is so. We would wish, as a result of evaluating a course, to have some idea about what measures might be taken to remedy any short comings. Evaluation, then, is not simply a process of obtaining information, it is also a decision-making process (p. 118).

It is imperative to evaluate an ESP course since the ESP course normally has specified objectives and the learners, sponsors, course designers and practitioners of the course want to see the end result of their effort. They want to see how far their divergent objectives are achieved, what went wrong what went according to the plan. This would give the plat form for the future. There are two kinds of evaluation that are used in ESP teaching. They are: learner assessment and course evaluation.

9.1. Learner assessment

Brindley (2001) defined the term assessment as “a variety of ways of collecting information on a learner’s language ability or achievement” (137). “Assessment refers to the processes and
procedures whereby we determine what learners are able to do in the target language” (Nunan, 1992, p. 185). Both formative and summative (Brindley, 2001) form of assessment should be used to get the desired results. According to Douglas (2000), a specific purpose language test is: One which test content and methods are derived from an analysis of the characteristics of a specific target language use situation, so that test tasks and content are authentically representative of the target situation, allowing for an interaction between the test taker’s language activity and specific purpose content knowledge, on the other hand, and the test tasks on the other. Such a test allows us to make inferences about a test takers capacity to use language in the specific purpose domain. (p.19)

According to Day and Krzaanowski (2011), assessment depends on the objectives of the course and should be based on need analysis. The test we administer should be the one that captures the kind of behavior, skill or performance we are interested in studying and attempting to evaluate. Furthermore, ESP assessment should be appropriate to the context of learning. To illustrate, if the ESP is learner led, assessment should evaluate learners’ performance in the work place. In ESP there are three basic types of learner assessment. They are: placement test, achievement test and proficiency test.

9.1.1. Placement tests
A placement test is used at the beginning of the course to place the learners in the course most suited to their needs. It is done to see the learners' proficiency in the beginning and it is also a tool for need analysis. According to Harmer (1998), generally it tests learners’ linguistic competence and assess their four language skills to determine their level, after which suitable syllabus and materials are decided. Placement test are done in relation to previously decided levels.

9.1.2. Achievement tests
An achievement test is done to assess the learners' progress. It can be done at any time during the course. Harmer (1998) has observed that “these tests are designed to measure learners’ language and skill progress in relation to syllabus they have been following” (321). He further argues that like a progress test, an achievement test should indicate learners’ progress not the weakness as it is based on the syllabus and course objectives. Achievement tests decide whether or not the learners have successfully achieved what they are supposed to learn if they have done at the end of the course. In short it is done to see how much progress has been made in terms of goals.

9.1.3. Proficiency tests
A proficiency test is to assess whether the learners can cope with the demands of particular situation or not. According to Brindley (2001), it “refers to the assessment of general language abilities acquired by the learner independent of a course of study” (p. 137). Standardized commercial language proficiency test like IELTS and TOEFL are used to assess students’ proficiency before they enter a university in native English speaking countries. According to Harmer (1998), proficiency tests assess learner’s general language ability, not their progress since they are not based on any syllabus or curriculum. On the other hand, they measure the degrees of proficiency of learner in the skills or sub skills of a language.

9.2. Course evaluation
This is very important because the future of the course depends on the feedback it receives. The ESP course is to satisfy a particular educational need; therefore, evaluation helps to understand how far it has achieved its objectives. Furthermore, evaluation tells us that whether the course is capable of meeting its stated and required needs of the clients. Course evaluation includes assessing the syllabus, the materials, teaching and learning methods. Generally, it is done through both formal methods like evaluating test results, questionnaires, discussions and interviews, and informal means like chatting or comments. As a common practice, ESP teachers, the learners, the sponsors or a special body evaluate the course. They have many options like during the course, at the end of the course and even after the course.

10. Role of an ESP Practitioner

ESP involves more than teaching; therefore, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) use the term “practitioner” rather than “teacher” to emphasize that ESP work involves much more than teaching stressing the varied role of the ESP teacher. Generally teachers’ role in an ESP class matches the expectation and needs of the learners. The teacher usually provides information about skills and language and controls the activities. Therefore, teachers are provider of input and activities. They manage rather than control learning. In reality, they are the facilitators and consultants. As a result, they negotiate with students about what is appropriate to include and when to include or what to exclude. Johns (2001) observed that “there is considerable demand for ESP teachers who can perform variety of need assessment tasks, such as collecting authentic discourses and analyzing them, making appropriate observations, and consulting various stakeholders—and then produce curricula sensitive to the students and context” (p. 52). A typical practitioner has four key roles: teacher, course designer and material provider, collaborator, researcher and evaluator.

10.1. As a Teacher

ESP focuses on helping students to learning; therefore, the practitioner is not the primary knower of the content of material. On the other hand, students know more than the teacher. Accordingly, the practitioner has to organize the class, negotiate with the students to exploit the students’ knowledge and skills and their work experience to achieve the objectives more effectively. Since the relationship between teachers and students is more of partnership, traditional IRF (Initiation- Response- Feedback) will not work. In contrast, it is learners who ask and the teachers who answer learners’ questions. ESP practitioners have to be flexible to accommodate what comes up during the lesson. Furthermore, they have to be prompt to respond to the events. Apart from these, they need to take risks in their teaching which is one of the key points in succeeding as ESP practitioners.

10.2. As a Course Designer and Material Provider

ESP practitioners often have to plan their course that they teach and provide material. Generally, they need to choose suitable published materials if there are, adapt materials or even write if there are no materials available.

10.3. As a Collaborator

ESP teachers have to work with subject specialists because ESP often involves using specific subject content material. This can be either a simple cooperation like discussing syllabus or tasks
in the academic context, or specific like integrating specialist subject studies or activities and the language. For example, the teacher uses a chapter on surgery as a reading part of English for medical profession. Here the subject teacher acts as the content provider, whereas language teacher prepares learners for the subject lecture, conference or seminar. In another situation, both content teacher and language teacher can team teach ESP class. To demonstrate, a language teacher and business trainer work together to teach both the skills and the language related to business communication, or a subject teacher and language teacher work together to help students to prepare a project or a thesis.

10.4. As a researcher and a Evaluator

ESP teacher needs to be in touch with research to incorporate new things that ongoing research brings because they are doing need analysis, designing a course or writing materials. Furthermore, they need to do research in order to explore the discourse of the text that the students really need to use. ESP practitioners use various types of evaluation techniques. They evaluate students’ performance, the course and teaching material. They do evaluation while the course, at the end of the course and even after the course.

ESP teachers are not specialists in learners’ specific content material, but they are expert in language teaching. Their main aim is to help students who have better knowledge and skills about their subject and profession and skills than their teachers. ESP teachers enable learners acquire essential skills in their academic studies and profession. Therefore, they need to shift from one subject to another and use authentic, updated and relevant material from learners’ specialized subjects.

11. Conclusion

All four language skills; listening, reading, speaking, and writing, are usually stressed equally in an ESL/EFL classroom, while in ESP it is learners’ needs that decides which language skills are focused, and the course is designed accordingly. ESP students are usually intermediate or advanced adults who already have some acquaintance with English and are learning the language in order to communicate in a particular academic or professional context. Practically, ESP combines subject matter and English language teaching together. Above all the origins of ESP lie in satisfying learners' needs. Therefore, evaluation of the course helps to assess how far the identified needs have been satisfied. There is no dominating movement in ESP now; however, there are different approaches, materials and methods used in ESP. To conclude, ESP always goes with ESL/EFL teaching, but whatever the current trend is it is the responsibility of ESP practitioners to be sensitive to learners’ needs and their learning contexts.

About the Author:
Muhammed Ali Chalikandy is a lecturer at English Department, Al Buraimi University College, Burami, Sultanate of Oman. He has master degrees in Linguistics and English. He holds PGCTE and CELTA. Currently I am working on my doctoral degree.

References


Code Mixing in the KSA: A Case Study of Expatriate Bangladeshi and Indian ESL Teachers

Most. Tasnim Begum
King Khalid University, Abha, KSA

Md. Mahmudul Haque
King Khalid University, Abha, KSA

Abstract
This study investigated English-Arabic code mixing as a socio-professional phenomenon among the expatriate Bangladeshi and Indian English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers at the tertiary level of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). A socio-linguistic perspective was drawn to determine functional aspects of code mixing usage between the expatriate teachers and the native Arabian speakers. The study also examined the teachers' attitude towards the effect of code mixing in their socio-professional life. A triangulation method was adopted for the investigation: questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and observation. The findings of this study recognized the hypothesis that code mixing serves as a highly functional linguistic tool in the socio-professional life of the expatriate Bangladeshi and Indian ESL teachers in the KSA. It also identified code mixing as a common speech pattern in the communicative dynamics of these teachers’ campus discourse through an analysis of domain exposure to code mixing. The study unfolded a significant socio-linguistic and socio-professional aspect of campus communication: how code mixing is intertwined with that of the professional and social needs of expatriate teachers in monolingual situations as in the KSA. This study clicked on the current linguistic situation in the KSA education and thus showed how far the English only educational language policy is effective in its implementation phase in higher education. The researchers believe that the teachers' attitude would provide supplementary data for the language policy makers and educators in the Kingdom to consider this phenomenon into deciding pragmatic institutional language policy in higher education.

Keywords: Code Mixing (CM), Socio-linguistics, Language and Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), English as a Second Language (ESL) in the KSA.
Introduction

The study of code mixing in educational backgrounds exposes assorted social, psychological, and linguistic attributes. Investigations on code mixing in academic domain have been carried on in many of the bilingual and multilingual settings like India (Kanthimathi, 2009), Pakistan (Abbas, Aslam, and Rana, 2011), Hong Kong (Chen, 2005), Malaysia (Jdetawy, 2011), China (Leung, 2010), etc. However, the English-Arabic code mixing in the verbal repertoire of the expatriate Indian and Bangladeshi teachers in the context of Saudi Arabia is yet to be traversed. English-Arabic code mixing is prevailing in the verbal repertoire of the Indians and Bangladeshis, who form the bulk of expatriate population in the kingdom. This study focused on these teachers' motivation and perception to English-Arabic code mixing usage in their socio-professional communication. A sociolinguistic perspective into this code mixing manifestation is significant in understanding the language contact phenomena in the campus setting and into getting the mindset of the code mixers.

The researchers hypothesized that code mixing serves as a highly functional linguistic tool in the socio-professional domain of the expatriate Bangladeshi and Indian ESL teachers in the KSA. Additionally, frequency and use of this sort of mixing is deeply associated with the perception and attitude of the teachers. To get the insight into this language contact phenomena, the best way is to investigate the functional and attitudinal aspect of these instances.

The Linguistic Background of the KSA: An Overview

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is a virtually monolingual country where Arabic, the L1, is the medium of all sorts of spoken and written communication. This predominant Arabic monolingualism is also deeply associated with the native Arabian’s religious and cultural identity. The native speakers of Arabic take pride in their language as it is the language of the Holy Quran and the language of the last Prophet(sm). Arabic is the national-official language that is used as a medium of communication, education, government, and law and mass media (Khan, 2011). However, being one of the Gulf Cooperation Council states (GCC), the country is placing increasing importance on English and English Language Teaching (ELT) recognizing the role of English in achieving excellence in science and technology, white-collar jobs, higher education and international communication. Multibillion dollars are being invested in ELT to produce highly competent English speakers (Al-Issa, 2011). Students must attain a level of proficiency in English in order to be able to pursue their studies. Foreign language classes in KSA commence at the fourth grade and English is one of the subjects taught in nearly all government-sponsored and private elementary education (Alsamaani, 2012; Rahman, 2011).

This emphasis is picturesquely perceived in the higher education sector. Students from all disciplines in higher education now have to undertake basic courses on developing English language skills. The universities are also running bachelor and master's program in English language and literature. Since 1980, the English departments of Saudi universities have been assigned the task to train Saudi English teachers. As an ongoing part of flourishing the ELT field, the education ministry is also hiring competent English teachers from countries like India and Bangladesh (Javid, Farooq, and Gulzar, 2012; Al-Zubeiry, 2012). Despite the obvious emphasis, English finds a very limited use and has a very restricted purpose in the everyday lives of the Arabians since Saudis speak their native language at home and during their interaction with their friends, peers, and classmates. Consequently, the South Asian expatriate Indian and Bangladeshi teachers find a 'bleak chance' to communicate virtually in English in their socio-professional communication with the native Arabian speakers (Ansari, 2012; Khan, 2011). Because of this
stark Arabic monolangualism in the Kingdom, these expatriate teachers soon develop English-Arabic bilingualism. Therefore, in their regular verbal repertoire, English-Arabic code mixing instances frequently occur.

In this background, it is worth investigating how this code mixing phenomena is functioning in the socio-professional life of these teachers. Hence, this present empirical study endeavours to explore these teachers' perception and attitude to the code mixing instances in their socio-professional life. The research approaches to address the following questions:

1. What are the reasons and functions of code mixing in the communicative dynamics of the Bangladeshi and Indian teachers' campus discourse at tertiary level of education in the KSA?
2. What perceptions and perspectives do the expatriate Bangladeshi and Indian teachers have towards the effect of code mixing in their socio-professional life in the campus setting?

Literature Review

**Code and Code Mixing (CM):**

Code is a neutral term that implicates languages, dialects, language varieties, styles and mixed languages. Myers-Scotton (2006), Romaine (1995), and Rahman and Hossain (2012) echoed almost the identical proposition when delineating code. To Romaine (1995), the idea of code is confined not only to different languages but also to varieties of languages and styles. Myers-Scotton (2006), used code as a cover term for separate languages, dialects and styles. Rahman and Hossain (2012) added certain types of mixed languages to the range of code.

In steady bilingual and multilingual communities, code mixing replicates a consistently systematic pattern of speech in the verbal repertoire of the bilinguals and multilinguals who 'make use of both the languages with the same interlocutors, in the same domains and within the same conversational topic' (Poplack and Meechan, 1998, p. 128). Muysken (2000) propounded that code mixing designates “all cases where lexical items and grammatical features of two languages appear in one sentence.” (p. 1). In other words, code mixing is that manifestation of bilingual interaction where the lexical and grammatical properties of one language are incorporated into the 'utterances' of another language (Appel and Muysken, 2005, p. 117). Poplack and Meechan (1998) defined code mixing as 'any use of two or more languages in the same discourse' (p. 127).

**Types of code mixing:**

Classifying code mixing occurrences poses the greatest controversy in the analysis of language contact phenomena. Linguists and researchers overlap and expose disagreement as regards code switching and code mixing. Principally, two types of switches have been proposed by linguists and researchers: intra-sentential and inter-sentential. Intra-sentential type of mixing occurs within a sentence and within clausal boundaries, whereas inter-sentential type of mixing occurs in between sentences.

Some linguists preferred the term code mixing only for intra-sentential and intra-clausal switches and claimed code switching to be a cover term for all types of switches, Poplack (1993), Grosjien (1996), Myers-Scotton (2006), while some others used code mixing as a cover term for any type of language contact phenomena, Muysken (2000). Some others, for example, Clyne
(2011) used the term 'transference' as covering mixing at all linguistic level: phonological, morphological and syntactic.

To Muysken (2000) code mixing is a cover term for all types of switches: insertion, alternation and congruent lexicalization. He characterized insertion as the process of incorporating lexical items of one language into the structure of another language. By alternation, he meant the juxtaposition of grammatical structures of two languages. Congruent lexicalization is related to the style shifting of languages. He claimed that code mixing is a more appropriate cover term for all types of switches since code switching is suitable for only alternational type of mixing. Unlike Muysken (2000), Poplack (1993) used code switching as the cover term for both intra-sentential and inter-sentential mixing of two languages when she indicated code switching to include switches at all level of linguistic structures, "Code-switching may occur at various levels of linguistic structure (e.g. sentential, intra-sentential, tag) and it may be flagged or smooth" (p. 255). In Grosjen's (1996) definition, the cover term is code switching that involves switching in 'word, phrase and sentence level'.

Muyers-Scotton (2006) involved both inter-sentential and intra-sentential switches as instances of code switching. She explicated inter-sentential switching as containing complete sentences in the clause boundaries. She preferred the term Intra-clause switching rather than intra-sentential switching for the reason that intra-clause switching involves switching within one clause rather than switching between two clauses.

The present study is based on Muysken's (2000) definition and classification of code mixing.

**Functions of code mixing**

Code mixing is no longer seen as the manifest of bilinguals' want of language proficiency rather it is empirically and ethnographically proved that with "great fluidity and ease' code mixing occurrence takes place in specific points and carries characteristically social, psychological and linguistic properties (Muysken, 2000; Appeal and Muysken, 2005). Perspectives drawn from sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic and structural analysis of code mixing instances unfolded that code mixing is a systematic process of bilingual interaction and it denotes particular social and cultural meaning in specific settings.

Michael Clyne (2011) denoted that bilingual speakers 'cluster' languages together for reasons as such, 'religious and dietary ones and chain migration'. Grosjen (2013) clustered the general reasons behind every type of switching as: using the right word or expression, filling a linguistic need, marking group identity, excluding or including someone, raising status etc. Myers-Scotton (2006) depicted that in the business world, code mixers intend to expose their multi-dimensional persona, solidarity with customers, to assert their modernity and power dimension through mixing the codes.

Leung (2010) found that mixing English with Cantonese and Chinese is the norm in Hong Kong advertising industry. Commercial print advertising draws on visual and linguistic resources to attract consumers to 'achieve positive country-of-origin effects'. Baynham (1985) noted that bilingual usage of languages functions as a communicative resource in the ESL teaching in UK and mother tongue is considered as an useful tool to classroom teaching and learning. Creese and Blackledge (2010) has argued that flexible blend of languages is as an instructional strategy to make links for classroom participants between the social, cultural, community, and linguistic domains of their lives. Pedagogy in these schools appears to
emphasize the overlapping of languages in the student and teacher rather than enforcing the separation of languages for learning and teaching.

In the sociolinguistic milieu of Bangladesh, Alam (2006) explored that Bangla-English code mixing characterized the socio-professional identity of the white collar professionals. Both intra-sentential and inter-sentential code mixing take place in their conversation for the following reasons: spontaneity, to draw the attention of others, to show off, to impress for professional purpose, to impress the opposite sex, to alienate a particular group or to take the advantage of knowing a separate language, lack of translation equivalent, and euphemism. She identified the following arena of code mixing: social party, official party, club, every situation, out in shopping mall, writing Short Message System (SMS), family party and chatting. She conveyed a 'complicated attitude of the people towards code mixing'. Even though, they accept language alternation only in official environments, they apprehended that code mixing will 'eclipse Bangla, which is an essential part of Bangla culture' (p. 65).

Investigation in educational domain showed forth distinct functional and attitudinal dimension of code mixers.

Kanthimathi's (2009) study exposed that Code mixing of the mother tongue and English is a common speech behavior used by bilingual people in India. Code mixing in the form of lexical insertions is frequently found in the discourse of Tamil-English bilinguals. Less fluent bilinguals resort to mixing of nouns, verbs, or use the English words with Tamil inflections. Mixing is leading to a new hybrid language system. This study showed that the mixed code, called Tanglish (Tamil-English mix), is becoming popular among the youngsters.

**Research Problem**

Despite the English only institutional language policy at tertiary level of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, expatriate Bangladeshi and Indian ESL teachers are engaged in English-Arabic code mixing uses in their campus discourse. Whereas there is no formal instruction for bilingual use of Arabic and English in campus discourse, the teachers are found to do regular code mixing in their campus. This is worth investigating so as to apprehend why the ESL teachers are employing this language behavior and what attitudes they nurture towards code mixing in campus communication. Therefore, the researchers aimed at giving a sociolinguistic perspective into the socio-psychological orientation of the teachers behind their code mixing usage in campus discourse.

**Hypothesis**

Code mixing serves as a highly functional linguistic tool in the socio-professional life of the expatriate Bangladeshi and Indian ESL teachers in KSA.

**Objectives of the study**

This study primarily aimed at investigating English-Arabic code mixing phenomena at tertiary level of education in the KSA. It attempted to test the hypothesis which claimed that code mixing serves as highly functional linguistic tool in the socio-professional life of the expatriate Bangladeshi and Indian ESL teachers in the KSA. It also endeavored to explore these teachers' attitudes towards the effect of code mixing in their socio-professional life. Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

- To identify the domains of code mixing occurring as a regular speech pattern of conversation
Significance
Investigation of this sort bears significance on both theoretical and practical level. At theoretical level, the study seeks to fill the gap on the sociolinguistic aspect of code mixing in educational context. It will also render pedagogic implications in the field of ELT by adding its significance and effects in teaching and learning environment. On the practical level, this study sheds light on the existing contradiction between the formal language instruction and the actual language use in educational context. This is expected to provide vital data for the Ministry of Higher Education, and language policy makers in the Kingdom to address the issue of bilingual campus discourse in the language policy.

Method

Participants
The study centered on a pool of 30 Indian and Bangladeshi ESL teachers at King Khalid University (KKU) situated in the Asir province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The ESL teachers were prudently chosen on account of their unswerving involvement in code mixing phenomena in the campus context. Among the participants, 10 were Indian teachers and 20 were Bangladeshi teachers. The mean age of the teachers is 28-40. Bangla is the mother tongue of all the Bangladeshi teachers; the Indian teachers have different mother tongues: Hindi, Urdu, Kashmiri, Asami. The mean year of their teaching in the Kingdom is 1-10 years. English is a second language to all these teachers. The study covered the university campuses situated in the following places: Abha, Boulquarn, Dahran, Mahayl, Khamis, Ahad Rufaida, and Al Namas.

Procedure
In this study, the researchers adopted a triangulation method to safeguard validity and reliability of the collected data. Data emerged from three primary sources: questionnaire survey, online interviews, and participant observation. Permission to conduct data collection in the campus was sought from the Dean of the researchers’ respective campuses.

Questionnaire
The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts- Section A, B and C. Section A sought demographic information of the participant teachers. Section B was designed to identify the domain usage of code mixing. Section C contained 15 statements to test the teachers' attitude towards the effect of code mixing in their socio-professional life. To measure their attitude, they were given five-Point Likert-scale options of choice- Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire was circulated online among 30 teachers; instruction to fill the questionnaire was illustrated in the email letter. The participants filled the questionnaire anonymously and emailed back to the researchers.

Semi-structured Interview
Interviews with 10 teachers were conducted online over Skype application on prior appointment to generate more personalized, in-depth information and free responses on the code mixing issue (Seligar & Shohamy, 2003). These teachers were given pseudonyms to sustain anonymity and confidentiality. The pseudonyms are: Sami Salman, Minal Mansoor, Tanya Hasin, Abeer Ali, Ryan Khan, Rana Islam, Saad Sharifullah, Fatma Zubaida, Nashid Ahmed, Plabon Barua.

Observation

The researchers carried on a month long ethnographic participant observation data collection procedure in our respective campus during the second semester session of the year 2013. Being participant observant, they got ample space to collect audio-taped samples in naturalistic socio-linguistic context (Punch, 2005). Although the 30 teachers were the unit of analysis three teachers were chosen for observation in the researchers’ campuses.

Results and Discussions

Domain Analysis: Code Mixing Exposure

To recognize code mixing as a regular speech pattern among the teachers, this part of the questionnaire presented a total of ten campus situations: department colleagues, colleagues of other departments, students, administrative staffs, authority, canteen, classroom, library, computer lab, guards and caretakers.

Figure 1: Domain analysis of code mixing exposure

The dominant domains of code mixing occurrences are indicated by positive response: colleagues of other departments (17), students (25), administrative staffs (20), in the classroom (25), and in the library (18). By contrast, lowest usage of code mixing is indicated by negative response; department colleagues (20), guards and caretakers (26), authority (20), and in the computer lab (20). Conversation with students and classroom teaching are the highest scoring domains of code mixing; this is indicative of the real need of teachers to mix codes to communicate with students for pedagogic issues. Administrative staffs and library
are the second highest scoring domains. This finding indicates that the teachers mostly use code mixing to accomplish their pedagogic and professional purposes.

**Attitude towards code mixing**

The questionnaire data is analyzed under four principal themes: code mixing and language proficiency, language pedagogy, acculturation, and professional growth. Frequencies were produced manually and fed into Excel spreadsheet for percentages. Detailed results are presented using 2-D bar graphs in terms of percentages. The teachers expressed a highly positive attitude towards code mixing in relation to its functional role in their socio-professional life.

**Figure 2. Code mixing and language proficiency**

1. Mixing of English and Arabic lessens my English language proficiency
2. Mixing of English and Arabic should not be practiced since it distracts the language structure of both the languages

In Figure 2, the highest score for item 1 appear to be in the positive (64% agreed) while highest scores in item 2 and 3 appear to be in the negative, 53% and 67% disagreed. This finding clearly indicates that the teachers perceived code mixing to have a negative impact upon their English language proficiency; yet interestingly they did not encourage a complete stopover of code mixing in the campus communication.

**Figure 3. Code mixing and language pedagogy**
4. Mixing of Arabic and English makes me a better teacher in the classroom.
5. Mixing of Arabic with English solves communication gap with the Arabic students.
6. Mixing helps to clarify complex lesson content in classroom teaching.
7. Code mixing in classroom context increases student's level of motivation.
8. Code mixing lessens students learning anxiety since they understand the teacher more through code mixing.

Figure 3 presents the teachers' highly positive attitude towards the functional role of code mixing in language pedagogy. The teachers agreed upon all the statements in higher percentage: 53% in item 4, 80% in item 5, 60% in item 6, 77% in item 7, and 77% in item 8. This denotes that code mixing functions as a helping tool in teaching the Arabic students and in effect it acquires positive attitude of the expatriate teachers.

**Figure 4. Code mixing and acculturation**

9. Mixing adds fun, humour into the conversation with Arabic students and colleagues and office staffs.
10. Mixing of Arabic words brings comfort and happiness of students, office staffs, and colleagues who have little proficiency in English.
11. Mixing is an effective way to acquire Arabic language.
12. Mixing helps to get exposed to the Arabic culture.

Figure 4 shows that participants agreed with the statements in higher percentage: 47% in item 9, 87% in item 10, 56% in item 11 and 46% in item 12. This again recognizes the social and cultural application of code mixing in the social life of the teachers. The teachers have perceived it to be a need for acculturation with the Arabic speakers in the campus.
13. Code mixing helps me to solve spoken and written official tasks.

14. Mixing provides me with better understanding with the college staffs and authority and helps me grow professionally.

15. Without mixing Arabic into English, my survival is challenged due to the linguistic constraints with the native staffs in the campus.

In Figure 5, the participant teachers recognized the role of code mixing for their professional activities and growth, 50% in item 13 and 60% in item 14 agreed. However, they have neutral standpoint regarding the role of code mixing in their professional survival, 67% expressed neutrality in item 15. This indicates the teachers’ state of doubt on how far code mixing is progressive for their professional survival.

In brief, these findings indicated that code mixing in a greater way functions as a facilitative tool in the socio-professional life of the Indian and Bangladeshi teachers. They perceived it to be highly facilitative in classroom communication and acculturation. They found it to help them deal with their professional tasks. Hence, they discouraged a complete discontinuation of code mixing in campus communication.

Interview Findings

Reasons of code mixing

1.1 To ease communication with the native Arabian speakers: A commonly-perceived reason of code mixing in the campus discourse is to expedite communication with the Arabic speakers. They identified that except a few, most of the Arabic interlocutors cannot communicate in English and a potential communication gap inevitably emerges while they speak to them. To fill this gap, mixing is inescapable. This has been reflected in the following expressions:

- "It's mainly due to communication gap... Mixing the two languages facilitates the communication. This process helps the native Arabians understand me better." (Nashid Ahmed, Khamis)
Except the teachers of English department and a very few from departments like Computer Science, Chemistry and Mathematics, nobody in the campus understands English. So, in order to communicate with other staffs and co-workers, mixing is inevitable. (Fatma Zubaida, Mahayl)

1.2 To define the key terms in conversation: Most of the teachers exemplified that mixing some Arabic words into their conversation aids clarification of their message to the interlocutors. They recognized that mixing in defining key terms has solved some of their professional problems in the campus:

I had some terrible experiences in the first few days in my campus. For example, regarding my first plane ticket from Bangladesh to KSA, I had to struggle several times to make the man in the administration understand that I was not getting my ticket refund. So, I talked to my colleagues about it and learnt the Arabic words for the words like Plane, Ticket, and Money and then again when I talked to him, he understood and the problem was solved. (Plabon Barua, Bisha)

1.3 To exploit the pedagogic benefits of mother tongue in classroom: All the teachers denoted how code mixing is useful in the context of classroom communication with the Arabic students. One teacher explicated how code mixing increases the students' level of motivation and comprehension:

...I observe that when I continuously use English, students look blank, and some of them go bored and feel sleepy because they understand nothing. So I mix some Arabic words to make them active and get their attention. (Rana Islam, Bisha)

1.4 To meet students' expectations: One teacher reported that code mixing is inspired by the expectations of the students and their guardians:

The guardians and the students expect code mixing from me. In the class I have varieties of students and they are of different linguistic levels. So at the end of the class, I do mix codes. (Sami Salman, Khamis)

1.5 Students' linguistic level: Another reason outlined by the teachers is that the beginner students do not meet the required level of language proficiency to understand the lecture fully in English. In some cases, there are mixed-ability students in a single classroom. This requires code mixing uses on part of the teachers to accommodate students' linguistic level.

2. Code mixing as a necessity

A common view among the teachers is that code mixing is a necessity in the campus setting. They pointed to the pedagogic and social benefits of code mixing in the campus. They exemplified how over the year’s code mixing has helped them manage the students and the Arabic staffs. Some of the comments are as follows:

It’s a necessity for our survival in the campus setting. I always have the fear that may be the students will complain that they didn’t understand anything in my lecture. Since it is a monolingual setting, I have to mix code; otherwise the communication is meaningless. (Minal Mansoor, Dahran)
I believe that code-mixing is a linguistic compromise in the campus. It may also regard as a middle-way to make people/students able to understand the text/discourse. (Saad Sharifullah, Abha)

3. **Code mixing and English language proficiency**

The teachers expressed a mixed reaction concerning code mixing effect on their linguistic repertoire. 6 of them felt it to have no negative influence on their English language proficiency and they considered it as a resourceful practice to achieve skills in another language, while 4 of them felt to lose their English language proficiency gradually. Some of the comments are as follows:

- It lessens my proficiency since I go very slow and mix Arabic words. (Fatma Zubaida, Mahayl)
- It's degrading our linguistic status as English language teachers. (Abeer Ali, Ahad Rufaida)
- It doesn’t have any negative influence on my own language; rather I am learning one more language too. (Rana Islam, Bisha)

4. **Students Motivation and Learning Anxiety**

All the teachers opined that code mixing has a great facilitative influence in flourishing students motivation and lessening learning anxiety.

- I do mixing deliberately in introducing the topic. I make sure they get to know what they are going to learn. This helps me take them into the text. I must say this does motivate them. (Tanya Hasin, Dahran)
- Their anxiety is reduced because it's kind of fun, because whenever I code mix and make some mistakes in Arabic pronunciation they laugh and they want to teach me Arabic. So this way it's fun. (Sami Salman, Khamis)

5. **Institutional Language policy versus code mixing**

The teachers expressed mixed reactions concerning the relevance of code mixing and the implementation of the institutional language policy. Three of them perceived the policy to be less pragmatic in its implementation phase and advocated code mixing uses in campus discourse. Their comments are as follows:

- Theoretically, mixing can be discouraged, but the reality does not allow us to do so, because most students have very little knowledge about English. Even, some of them don’t know the meaning of read and write. In this context, code mixing is very important. (Rana Islam, Bisha)
- I think there is a gap between the policy and the practical situation. We cannot blame the teachers because at least the teachers are honest enough to teach the students something through code mixing. So the policy should reconsider all these issues. (Minal Mansoor, Dahran)

Seven of them spoke in favor of the policy and forwarded their suggestions to educators and language policy makers. However, they did not discourage mixing Arabic words until the interlocutors reach a certain level of linguistic competence in English.

In case of higher education, the policy is absolutely ok. If we use only English, there will be no problem, and in the course of time, it will be their habit to
understand everything in English. So, my suggestion is that, in higher education the teachers should use only English. (Abeer Ali, Ahad Rufaida)
My suggestion is something quite different. I would suggest to improve the primary and secondary the standard of English in primary and secondary level of education. Trimming the trees will not do much rather attention should go on what is happening in the root level. (Ryan Khan, Khamis)
English is a very widely accepted policy. I believe it to be a very effective. But use of learner's mother tongue cannot be banished completely until the learners reach a certain level of proficiency in target language. (Sami Salman, Khamis)

Observation Findings

Patterns of code mixing

1. Intra-sentential code mixing:
The teachers were observed to do intra-clausal mixing through the process of insertion i. e. where mixing occurs in word level within clausal boundaries (Myesken, 2000). The following is one selected manifestation:

Ia Gaeta, come here… I want Shaei with Halib. And fi chips? Give me itnan chips, Ok.
(Hello, Gaeta, come here... I want tea with milk. And do you have chips? Give me two chips, ok).

(Utterances in the college canteen in conversation with the Arabic canteen girl)

2. Inter-sentential code mixing
The teachers also employed inter-sentential code mixing. The mixing in this case occurs at sentence level.

Ostada Fatma, ana bukra fi ikhtebar. But no rooms for two sections at 11 O’ clock. Please see if any room is free at 11O’cloc, Ana abga itnan kaa.
(Teacher Fatma, I have exam tomorrow. I want two rooms for two sections. Please see if any room is free at 11 O’clock.)

(In the control room with the Arabic Examination controller)

Functions of Code Mixing

Following are two adapted recorded transcripts to analyze the social meaning of code mixing:

Recorded Sample 1

1 T: Kullu, talibat ismaee. Today I will discuss 'Adverbial Clause'. Hada very
2 important for exam, ok. There are four types of adverbial clause: Adverbial clause of time
3 tani Adverbial clause of purpose baden Adverbial clause of reason, Adverbial clause of
5 S: Adverbial clause of time, adverbial clause of purpose

6 T: Now, see, Adverbial clause of time kalam time. when, before, till are used for this7 clause.
Maslen,":" I met him when he came to my college."Hina WHERE mouzud, so hada
adverbial clause of time. \textit{Hada} Adverbial clause of time because \textit{hadakalam} time.

9 RanaMisfer, read hada example

10 S: "I met him when he came to my college."

11 T: \textit{Ok. So hada khalas}.

(T refers to the teacher and S the students.)

This is an excerpt of code mixing phenomena in pedagogic context. The teacher, an Indian ESL teacher in the campus, is found to be a frequent code mixer. He is mixing Arabic in his grammar class to clarify the grammatical items clearly (Lines: 6, 7, 8). Additionally, he is strategically doing the mixing to accomplish a number of classroom tasks: asking questions (Line: 4), giving order (Line: 9) seeking students' attention (Line: 1, 4).

The following is another adapted sample between an Indian ESL teacher and an Egyptian Arabic Physics teacher. The Indian teacher mixes code to explain her problem, to make question and to inquire about certain official information.

\textbf{Recorded Sample 2}

T1: Dr. Ashjan. Can you tell me what I have to do now for resignation?

T2: \textit{Inti} write letter to \textit{jamiah}?

T1: yes, yes, letter, \textit{khalas}. Now, \textit{alan esh kalam} to do?

T2: Now. We wait. After one month, \textit{jamiah} send form, \textit{o baden kalam ruh Abha}.

T1: Ah! \textit{Ruh Abha, Lazem}?

T2: \textit{Aiuh, laser}. After \textit{kullu} finish \textit{baden ruh Abha}. \textit{Jamiah} tell you when go to Abha, ok.

(T1 indicates the ESL teacher and T2 the physics teacher.)

\textbf{Limitations}

The researchers have some limitations concerning this research. All the ESL teachers of the concerned university could not be included due to the problem of access with the teachers of different campus in different regions of the Kingdom. Only code mixing occurrences among the Indian and Bangladeshi teachers have been investigated, whereas it is also found among teachers of other nationalities for example: Egyptians, Sudanese, and Romanians. However, this leaves space for further research into this language contact phenomena.

\textbf{Conclusion}

This study designated how code mixing can serve a functional and facilitative role in the communicative dynamics of educational context in monolingual countries like Saudi Arabia. The participant teachers’ highly positive attitude recognized the functional role of English-Arabic code mixing in their socio-professional life. Thus, the study exposed a significant socio-linguistic issue concerning the socio-professional life of the Bangladeshi and Indian ESL teachers in KSA.

The teachers have regular exposure to code mixing uses in different context in their campus conversation. They purported some pragmatic reasons behind their code mixing application in campus exchange. Being expatriates they found English-Arabic code mixing to be highly facilitative for acculturation, language pedagogy and professional growth. As non-Arabic expatriates, they observed mixing of Arabic as a helping tool for communication with the native Arabic speakers who have little proficiency in English. This led to the conclusion that code mixing is a need-based bilingual behavior for the expatriate non-Arabic professionals in KSA. This further recognized the role of code mixing in education as part of bilingual education.
The study also left some significant implication towards the language policy for education set by the Ministry of Higher Education in KSA. The suggestions and observation forwarded by the participant teachers not only concern the linguistic situation of tertiary level of education but also include the primary and secondary level of education in the Kingdom. For a smooth implementation of the English only language policy in higher education, the ministry needs to consider the present bilingual situation. This necessitates further investigation, especially into the relevance of language policy and code mixing issue while deciding the medium of campus conversation in higher education. Hence, the researchers recommended further investigation into this bilingual phenomenon so as to find out some more distinct aspect of code mixing in education setting. This sort of investigation will help build a mutually cohesive professional environment for the educators in the Kingdom.

About the Authors

Most. Tasnim Begum is lecturer in English at King Khalid University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She achieved MA in English Language Teaching (ELT) from the Institute of Modern Languages (IML), University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Her research interest includes: Socio-linguistics, Second Language Acquisition, Educational Psychology, E-learning, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Language Testing and Evaluation.

Md. Mahmudul Haque earned MA in English Language and Literature from Rajshahi University while specialized in English Language Teaching (ELT). Currently, he is lecturer in English at King Khalid University, KSA. His research interests include Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Teaching Foreign Language and Cultures, the use of technology for language instruction and E-Learning and EFL teaching.

References


The Reproduction of Racialization and Racial Discrimination in Classrooms and its Impact on ELLs' Social Interactions and L2 Development

Ayesha Mohammed Mudhaffer
English Language Institute
King Abdulaziz University
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Abstract
The consequences of racialization and racial discrimination against English Language Learners (ELLs) in many schools and classrooms are reflected in their degree of socialization in the academic community which ultimately affects their English language development. Since second language acquisition is a social rather than an individual process, ELLs may not find the support they need for essential progress (in the second language they are learning) in their classrooms due to the limited opportunities for social engagement. Inferiorizing newcomer ELLs and discriminating them due to their difference of skills, orientations, and actions will also affect ELLs' degree and forms of participation in the practices of the classroom community. Ignoring such an issue can result in the reproduction of the marginalized social status of newcomer ELLs and the reproduction of the dominating and accepted forms of cultural capital. In the light of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory that supports the social development of language learning, the different forms of discrimination which students are subject to can have a negative impact on learners' social and language development. Racialization decreases opportunities for healthy socialization and thus limits students' development in their L2 and access to the classroom practices.

Keywords: English Language Learners, marginalization, racial discrimination, racialization
Introduction

Many second language (L2) studies have focused on the role of students' motivations, investment, attitudes, orientations, and skills in enhancing or limiting social interactions and language development (Gillette, 1994; Norton, 2000). Other studies examined the role of teachers' scaffolding, feedback, and teaching strategies on L2 learners' social and academic success in second language learning (Sullivan, 2000; Linn, 1999). While both students and teachers are the primary members of the classroom who impact learners' social interactions and L2 learning, the classroom environment (the social context) in which the learning occurs is also an important component which influences the success of social interactions and language learning for English language learners (ELL). In this sense, schools are considered by families, educators, and researchers as important sites for promoting the acquisition of knowledge, language, and building social relationships. They are considered 'safe spaces' for new encounters, interactions and learning opportunities. However, schools (and the classroom environment) can not only facilitate, but can sometimes hinder language development and social engagement. In fact, Duff's (2002) study shows that "large numbers of minority students in schools worldwide are at considerable risk of alienation, isolation, and failure" (p. 316). ELLs who study in foreign countries and who come from diverse backgrounds and races with orientations and skills incompatible with those of native speakers' (NS) and institutions are often subject to different forms of marginalization that impacts their social interactions and language development, and one of the most profound constraints is the racial discrimination existing in schools worldwide.

The question is: Why are schools reproducing the same oppressive conditions that marginalize newcomers? And what are the manifestations of racialization and racial discrimination done by teachers and students against ELLs? How can we, as teachers, not reinforce such racialization and racial discrimination in schools in order to provide a healthier learning environment for ELLs?

In this paper, I argue that while educational institutions are considered 'the safe environments' for ELLs to develop socially and linguistically, they can be the very sites that hinder social engagement and limit language development through the reproduction of various manifestations of racialization and racial discrimination by teachers and peers. As theoretical frameworks of this paper, I will begin by reviewing Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of cognitive development and its relation to language development to show that learning occurs in and through social interactions in schools and classrooms, and that social engagement plays a significant role in successful language development (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Johnson, 2004; Storch, 2002). Bourdieu's concept of social reproduction will also be part of the theoretical framework because it helps explain the continuance of racialization and racial discrimination of ELLs in educational settings (Lin, 1999; Richardson, 1986; Tzanakis, 2011). I will then explore the meanings of the notions of racialization and racial discrimination in order to lay the foundation for this paper, and I will offer some examples of its manifestations against newcomers (ELLs). I will conclude by discussing some possibilities of decreasing racialization and racial discrimination, and what needs to be done by leaders and teachers to overcome such a serious issue.

Theoretical frameworks

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Throughout the field of second language acquisition, many theories have been developed to explain how the process of learning English occurs. Some theories focused on the effect of
learners' external environment on language learning and regarded learning as a "habit formation" (Behaviorism, for example). Other theories focused on the innate ability of learners to acquire language (Chomsky 1965, 1980, 1981 in Johnson, 2004). Vygotsky, however, proposed a new theory of second language learning: learning occurs in and through social interactions.

The basic and most fundamental premise of Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development is that "development is social": Learning is constructed through the internalization of the interactions that occurred between individuals of a society (Storch, 2002, p. 121). According to Vygotsky (1978), social interactions have a deep impact on individuals' cognition and understanding of the world (cited in Gnadinger, 2008). In fact, one of the fundamental tenets of sociocultural theory is that "human mental activity is essentially a mediated process in which socioculturally constructed artifacts, the most pervasive of which is language, play an essential role in the mental life of the individual" (Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994, p. 467). In a classroom context, learners can interact with their teachers or peers. The collaborative work between ELLs and their teachers and peers in order to reach higher levels of consciousness of L2 or any subject matter helps L2 learners internalize that knowledge and enables them to use that knowledge individually in the future. Zinchenko (1985) refers to the process of internalization, or in other words appropriation, as "the bridge between external and internal activity" and explains that internalization is not simply appropriating the knowledge of others, rather it "transforms the process itself and changes its structure and functions" (cited in Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994, p. 4).

From the definitions and explanations provided previously, the essential role of social interaction on learners' cognitive development and thus language learning is clear. In schools and classrooms, ELLs interact with teachers (experts) and old-timer students (either old-timer ELLs or old-timer native speakers NS) where old-timer students can also act as experts in supporting each other. I agree with Storch (2002) when he claims that this is not only helpful for newcomer ELLs, but old-timer ELLs, as well because "the act of teaching or explaining to others may help L2 learners construct a more coherent and clearer representation of their own L2 knowledge" (p. 122). This suggests the importance of collaborative work for ELLs among themselves and with NS students. It shows that social interactions are essential for all learning and specifically learning a second language. However, not all classrooms or schools have or can create a harmonious learning environment for ELLs where they can successfully, socially engage and develop language competence without being positioned for their different cultures, histories, and languages. ELL's unique cultural capital, which is different from the dominant and accepted forms of cultural capital, can sometimes be used against them to position them and/or discriminate them. When this kind of positioning and downgrading continues without attempting to solve the problem, the inferior social status of ELLs in schools continues. Bourdieu's notion of social reproduction will better explain the problem ELLs face in English speaking schools worldwide.

**Bourdieu and Social Reproduction**

ELLs come from different educational backgrounds, cultures, and traditions. As they move to different countries, they transmit with them their existing cultural values and norms from generation to generation. This transmission, continuity, and sustainability of cultural experiences across time are referred to by Bourdieu (1990) as *Cultural Reproduction*. As children internalize certain practices, skills, and dispositions "endowed with by virtue of
socialization in their families and communities" they are gaining and shaping their Cultural Capital (Lin, 1999, p. 394). As Bourdieu further explains, cultural capital is "the forms of knowledge, skills, education, and advantages that a person has, which give them a higher status in society. Parents provide their children with cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed in the current educational system" (Richardson, 1986, p. 47). Through the disparities of such cultural capital that some students have (students of socioeconomic elite), and others do not, community stratification results. This aspect of society (class) when transmitted through generations leads to Social Reproduction. Thus, cultural reproduction leads to social reproduction because inequalities in cultural capital reflect inequalities in social class, and thus community stratification (Tzanakis, 2011). How is this related to schools and educational institutions?

Schools facilitate the reproduction of social inequalities through the various practices of teachers and students who possess the dominant cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1998, cited in Hattam, Brennan, Zipin and Comber, 2009). Students with the 'right' cultural capital that fits in with the school curriculum and social and cultural norms are valued and praised depending on how near they are to the 'standard' of school curriculum and norms, whereas students with weaker, non-normative, or less desirable cultural capital tend to be labeled by teachers and students as 'disadvantaged' and far from the standard. I argue that this categorization of students results in community stratification and thus racial discrimination.

The educational system . . . maintains the preexisting order, that is, the gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital. More precisely, by a series of selection operations, the system separates the holders of inherited cultural capital from those who lack it. Differences in aptitude being inseparable from social differences according to inherited capital, the system thus tends to maintain preexisting social differences. (Hattam, et al., 2009, p. 304).

When ELLs come with dispositions, skills, knowledge, and educational backgrounds that are different from the school learning methods and contents, they are often labeled as disadvantaged. Their unique forms of cultural capital are not "utilized to fit with the culturally arbitrary selections that are valued by school" (Hattam et al., 2009, p. 304). Rather, schools try to help them adapt to the dispositions and skills that the school considers 'right' for successful social engagements, language learning, and thus a successful future. Inability to match the standard cultural codes that are dominant in the schools' mainstream curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment marks ELLs as 'failures', and through the reproduction of this acceptable, standard cultural capital results the reproduction of the marginalized social statuses of ELLs.

The reproduction of the curriculum also causes social reproduction of marginalized students. When the curriculum does not make connections with ELLs "learning in their community context, there becomes no intrinsic value to engage them in the educational experience" (Hattam et al., 2009, p. 304). The problem is that although most policy and institutional structures, curriculum designers, and teachers are aware of the lack of connection curriculum makes with students' worlds, they sometimes fail to change or transform the school curriculum. The curriculum continues to legitimize only certain forms of cultural capital and thus contributes to the reproduction of inequalities.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and social reproduction helps to explain the continuity of racial discrimination of ELLs in schools worldwide. The injustice of treatment caused by teachers and students against ELLs has an impact on the degree of social engagement
ELLs have with native speakers or old-timer ELLs, and since social interactions is an essential part of language learning (Vygotsky), this reproduction of racialization (intentionally or intentionally) can be seen to hinder ELLs' language development in the classroom community. I agree with Mills (2008) that "the injustices of allowing certain people to succeed, based not upon merit but upon the cultural experiences, the social ties and the economic resources they have access to, often remains unacknowledged in the broader society" (p. 84). The notions of racialization and racial discrimination are examined in the following section.

The Notions of Racialization and Racial Discrimination

As mentioned previously, the classroom is an important site that can facilitate as well as hinder social interactions and language development for ELLs. In Sharkey and Layzer's (2000) study examining the factors that affect language learners' access to academic success and resources, ELLs considered the ESL (English as a second language) room as "a safe haven, a second home" (pp. 352, 353) where their various forms of cultural capital were valued and respected. ELLs often came back to the ESL classroom even after they transitioned out of the program just to be in a friendly environment (Sharkey and Layzer 2000). Many ELLs do not feel this way in their mainstream classrooms due, sometimes, to the racialization they are subject to by native speaker students (old-timers), teachers, and school officials. In such cases, schools are considered places where learners are marginalized due to their different backgrounds and cultural capitals. As Talmy (2010) claims,

Schools are key institutions where [people] “make each other racial”. . . not only are [they] central places for forming racial “identities,” but they are key places where we rank, sort, order, and differently equip our [students] along “racial” lines even as we hope for schooling to be the great societal equalizer (p.39).

From the many scholars who explore these notions, Miles and Brown (2003) believe "racialization can be defined simply as racial categorization, a dialectical process by which meaning is attributed to particular biological features of human beings, as a result of which individuals may be assigned to a general category of persons that reproduces itself biologically" (cited in Kubota and Lin, 2006, p. 477). Markose and Hellstén (2009) believe that racialization involves "processes, attitudes and behavior which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping" (p. 62). The two definitions show that there are different forms of racialization. Miles and Brown believe it can be merely the categorizing of people according to their biological features, and this categorization is reproduced throughout the generations. On the other hand, Markose and Hellest'en believe that racialization is based more on attitudes and actions that can lead to categorization of groups according to difference and is associated with discrimination. What the two possible definitions have in common is that racialization is a process by which certain groups are categorized either due to their color and the way they look, or due to their different conducts and manners, or their national and cultural backgrounds. It is based on individuals' histories, cultures, and orientations (cultural capital) and is sometimes learned through the society. "Thus, [racialization] produces [and reproduces] and legitimates difference among social groups based on perceived biological characteristics, yet it is a dynamic and historically situated process in which racial significations are always shifting" (Kubota and Lin, 2006, p. 477). The shifting nature of categorizing people and groups helps explain why some categorizations of ELLs are created, some are transformed, some are destroyed, and some are reproduced in schools worldwide.
Because racialization can be more than mere categorization, it can sometimes lead to discriminatory actions. Categorizing people according to certain racial features and stereotyping them without taking into consideration their unique differences and individual cultural capital is racialization. However, when certain attributes of people, their actions, their cultures, their language, and their ways of thinking are inferiorized and used against them, it is an act of discrimination. People with different forms of cultural capital are considered unique, but when sometimes their differences are negatively or unfairly compared to the so called 'normal' or standard or probably mainstream behavior and traits, then that is considered racial discrimination.

As mentioned previously, racial discrimination against ELLs can have different forms as well as various causes. ELLs' accents, their biological features, their unique but different cultural capital, their degree of accepted English language proficiency, their actions or even non-actions and silence can all be causes for their racialization and marginalization in classrooms. It involves the personal racialization between students and students or students and teachers (e.g., avoiding, silencing, making offensive jokes, insulting, name calling, and even through physical violence with members of racially identified groups) or can be as simple as treating ELLs in a 'rude' manner. Racialization and racial discrimination also involve the institutional racialization of policies, curriculum, and discussion topics that intentionally or unintentionally discriminate newcomer ELLs. In this paper, the examples I draw on to illustrate racialization and racial discrimination in classrooms are the stereotyping of certain nationalities, laughing and teasing, harassment, resentment and being disrespectful to ELLs. Exploring the notions of racialization and racial discrimination helps us understand ELLs' limited social interactions and its effect on their language development in a setting that is established to promote them. These different forms of racialization and discrimination affect ELLs' engagement with peers and limit their classroom interactions which are essential aspects of effective language learning (Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of language learning).

**Manifestations of Racialization and Racial Discrimination in Classrooms**

**Teachers**

In order to make ELLs feel included in classrooms practices, some teachers put endless efforts in trying to achieve engagement and inclusion. Some teachers focus on group discussions, others prefer pair activities, and some teachers make an effort by focusing on discussion topics that are related to ELLs' cultures and histories. In the attempt of raising interesting discussions that will help learners interact, teachers can unintentionally racialize students and make them feel discrimination. This will not only affect their participation in classroom practices, but will also limit their language development. More importantly, unawareness of the influence certain discussion topics have on ELLs especially describing the issues in a negative manner leads to the reproduction of the curriculum, in particular an insensitive curriculum, and thus the social reproduction of community stratification.

In Duff's (2002) study of examining issues of respect and integration of newcomers into classroom practices, the author focused her analysis on one classroom and teacher, Ms. Smith, who taught Canadian Social Studies 10 (SS10) in a Canadian secondary school (grades 8-12). Concentrating on events in two lessons "that illustrate issues of variable participation, socialization, and positioning in-and through- classroom discourse", Ms. Smith undertook various approaches to integrate ELLs more fully in class, but also considered it a challenge for her (p. 295).
In one of the lessons where students saw a film about an aboriginal student who was trying to negotiate her own cultural values which the school tried to eliminate, Ms. Smith raised a discussion about the racial term 'banana' in relation to the topic 'turning white' and the issue of being "caught in between cultures" for aboriginals (Duff, 2002, p. 308). Her awareness of the issues of intercultural differences existing in the school, her desire in implementing "respect for cultural diversity and difference, social justice, and empathy for others", and her interest in finding ways to engage ELLs into classroom discussions encouraged her to raise such a topic. In asking the students about their understanding of the term 'banana', Bradley (Chinese/Honk Kong, NNES) responded 'I don't know?', Mary (Chinese/Taiwan NNES) said "it means ummm…", and Liz (2nd generation Asian/UK) very quietly answered "usually refers to Chinese" (p. 307). In the discussion that followed about 'being caught in between cultures', Kim (first generation Korean) chose not to participate in the discussion by responding 'no' three times to the teacher's question "Have you ever experienced any of that (caught in between cultures)?" (p. 309).

In this example, Ms. Smith aimed to engage ELLs in whole class discussions by relating the lesson to their cultures and personal experiences. It is important to note that before relating both topics to ELLs' personal experiences, she described 'turning white' and 'being caught between two cultures' as being "totally lost" and as a "hideous" position to be in, and that the people from aboriginal students' own culture consider them now doing things in a "different, weird, and funny way". Unfortunately, Ms. Smith's negative description of the situation of aboriginal students unintentionally made ELLs feel that they are not only racialized as 'bananas', but also made them feel discrimination. This feeling of racial discrimination was probably the reason behind ELLs' such responses and limited participation. As Duff (2002) states, Kim "persistently rejected being positioned as someone 'caught between two cultures' or perceived by self/others as 'a banana'" (Duff, 2002, p. 309). She was not willing to negotiate her strong sense of belonging to her Korean identity and neither was she open to accepting a label imposed upon her by others. The teacher's insensitive description of the topic of discussion made Kim and other ELLs feel racially discriminated against.

Another topic was about corporal punishment for aboriginal students in residential schools. The topic speaks for itself, but Ms. Smith added that "it is hard to imagine" and that it's a "theory that is totally dead in the world". She then assumed that some ELLs experienced such punishment and related it to specific countries "Taiwan and Hong Kong and possibly Korea" (p. 302). Connecting such a topic to specific countries made some ELLs feel racialized and discriminated.

The teacher's primary intention of connecting racial issues to ELLs' cultures and personal experiences was to maximize ELLs' interaction in classroom discussions. Her aim was to raise consciousness of some racialized problems existing in the school, and make connections to show how racialized students feel towards such discrimination. Her sincere intentions to engage ELLs into class discussions and bringing the connections into consciousness sometimes positioned them in a discriminatory manner, especially describing such situations negatively. Although her purpose may have been to transform the social order and intercultural issues existing in the school, she unintentionally reproduced the discriminatory position (the social order) by negatively describing the situation of aboriginal students and connecting serious issues (corporal punishment) to ELLs' cultures and countries which made them feel discrimination. I agree with Mills (2008) that
those involved in reproducing the social order often do so without either knowing they are doing so or wanting to do so. In particular, teachers frequently do not see and often do not intend the social sorting that schooling imparts on students (p. 84).

More importantly, such positioning and discrimination impacts ELLs’ forms of participation which relatively affects their language development because social engagement is essential for language learning. Although silence can be a strong form of participation, in Kim's case, her non-participation was a form of protecting her cultural capital and her unwillingness to connect the discriminatory position of aboriginal students to her personal experiences and history.

While some teachers unintentionally racialize ELLs and sometimes make them feel discrimination, other teachers deliberately racialize them. Since racialization can have different forms, the following example shows how one teacher simply ignored the fact that one of her ELLs was marginalized in her classroom. During Ms. Giles' social studies class in a Canadian high school, Edouard (an immigrant refugee from Rwanda and the only ELL in the class) "never spoke during the lecture format, and during group work his desk was physically outside of the small circle of his group" (Sharkey and Layzer, 2000, p. 362). The classroom teacher should have encouraged Edouard to take part in classroom discussions or she could have encouraged the native speakers to include him in group activities and discussions and raise the sense of community among her students. She was aware about his situation but simply chose not to act upon it. As she mentions "I have a feeling that he [Edouard] is a little bit left out. He has moved his seat to the back row and I don't force assigned seats because [very softly] I don't care [laughs] ... I just haven't tried to manage the situation basically" (p.362). This kind of action from teachers makes ELLs feel more marginalized than they already are and prevents them from socially interacting with classmates and taking part in classroom practices. In this kind of situation (Edouard's case), I believe teachers hold full responsibility for ELLs' marginalization.

Many ELLs are categorized as quiet, shy, and not very social and this is usually in relation to their cultural backgrounds. This can sometimes be true, as in the case of the Vietnamese participants in Phans' (2007) study. They were students of a TESOL program in an Australian university and they strongly valued the traditions of the education system of their home country which is based on respecting instructors and asking only meaningful questions. They considered asking not meaningful and unnecessary questions disrespectful for the educator. Their limited interaction in class discussions was not due to marginalization, but due to their respect to their own cultural capital. These reasons for not asking questions are often not recognized by teachers. As for Edouard, his non-interaction was due to the unfriendly atmosphere of the classroom, but he was positioned likewise, as a typical ELL (quiet, shy, not social). Just as the teacher did not undertake any effective strategies to include him in classroom practices, students also reproduced his social status and did not seek his inclusion. Perhaps this is the reason why most ELLs prefer their ESL classrooms and often returned just to be in a friendly environment free of racialization, judgments, and community stratification. As Edouard describes his ESL classroom, "It's like a home. Who wouldn't want to come back here?" (p. 356).

Although Edouard has transitioned out of the ESL classroom, social interaction is still essential for him to maintain his language development. Social engagement should be facilitated by the teacher, especially in Edouard's case since he is the only ELL in the classroom. Unfortunately, his social status as a newcomer or ELL was not transformed despite his progress in the ESL classroom. The teacher simply did not care about his position in the classroom, and did not take on any action to transform the social order in her classroom.

Arab World English Journal
ISSN: 2229-9327
Native Speaker Students

Racialization among peers can be caused by the inequalities of cultural capital that students have. Since ELLs are considered newcomers and they are in the phase of learning the language, their lack of language competence can be used to racialize them and sometimes discriminate against them, as well. Old timers (NS) use their language proficiency and the so called 'standard' accent to racialize ELLs and make them feel discrimination. Qin, Way, and Rana's (2008) study of adolescent Chinese American students in Boston and New York is a great example that illustrates racialization and discrimination of ELLs by old-timer native speaker students. The aim of the study was to explore the reasons behind the racial discrimination Chinese Americans were subject to from their peers. The authors believe that discovering these reasons "can help … protect students from perpetual harassment and victimization" which will improve their socialization and thus language development (p. 30). One of the findings of the study indicates that some students were subject to peer discrimination (from NSs) due to their English accent, or for speaking Chinese at school: "When I was in sixth grade, people would always say that I was speaking Chinese with others. They would imitate what we said and laugh about it" (16-year-old Tina). Or else students would feel discrimination for making mistakes while speaking: "The most difficult thing is English. My English is still not as good as my classmates’. If I make a mistake while I’m talking, they laugh at me." (Tommy) (Qin et al., 2008, p. 33). Asian students also "reported being called names, and close to 50% reported being excluded from social activities or threatened as a result of their race" (p. 29). Stereotyping of Chinese Americans such as use of the term "Chino" and maintaining that "Typical Chinese can't speak good English" were forms of racial discrimination used against ELLs in the study. Old timers tended to always find ways to marginalize ELLs. The examples from Qin et al.'s study made me realize the truth of Mathews' (2008) study that "ideological and discursive processes of racialization deploy images, symbols, terminology and classifications that make skin color, ethnicity and nationality distinct, meaningful and able to be inferiorized" (p. 38).

Qin et al.'s (2008) study also suggests that teachers themselves can be the cause of racialization and discrimination among peers. Although some ELLs are considered non-proficient language speakers of English, they are stereotyped by some teachers as "so hardworking and so respectful, always on time, just such a delight to work with! If they get me to teach students like this, I will never retire for the rest of my life!" (p. 35). Such explicit statements and high expectations of ELLs caused frustration and anger for non Chinese students (in this study) "and they vented their anger on the Chinese American students themselves" (p. 35). Teachers are human beings and they are going to have preferences. However, in delicate situations like this, what teachers need to do is not express those publicly in front of other students, and they need to behave in a non-discriminatory fashion.

High academic achievement can also be the cause of the racial discrimination ELLs are subject to from native speakers. The Chinese Americans in Qin et al.'s (2008) study are usually stereotyped as “being too smart,” being “geeks,” “nerdy,” “studying too much,” and “not having fun” as indicated by the ELLs during their interviews. NSs related these features to ELLs' nationalities and they teased, resented, and harassed ELLs for their academic skills. Although their academic achievements are validated by their teachers, ELLs felt "isolated and shunned by their peers" (p. 34).
Old-Timer ELLs in ESL Classrooms

ELLs can also be exposed to racialization by old-timer ELLs. This can be seen in Talmy's (2010) study of the ESL program in a Hawaii public high school (Tradewinds High) and the examination of the "racializing and racist conduct directed at Micronesian students by a group of old-timer ESL students, primarily of East/Southeast Asian inheritance" (p. 36). Old-timer ELLs constructed their identities on the expense of the 'difference' between themselves and newcomer ELLs. Newcomers were positioned as FOBs ("fresh off the boat") for various reasons, such as their lack of cultural knowledge about Hawaii and U.S. schools and their low degrees of English proficiency (as well as lack of expertise in Pidgin which is the local language of Hawaii). This racial discrimination also took different forms such as mockery of newcomers' mistakes in English, making racist jokes, teasing them about their clothing, hairstyles, and some practices that teachers and non-Micronesian students found odd, such as "eating Kool-Aid drink powder straight from the packet; applying liberal quantities of perfume during class; frequently massaging moisturizer onto themselves and their friends; and chewing betel nut" (Talmy, 2010, p. 46).

To further illustrate how old-timers racially identified the Micronesian newcomers and constructed their identities based on this discrimination, I will draw on an excerpt from Talmy's (2010) observations of one of the ESL classes in Tradewinds High. In the following excerpt, students were assigned to give an oral presentation, which includes both a visual diorama and a written report, about a unique holiday from their countries. Two of the Micronesian girls, G-Koput and Star, have prepared their presentation well on New Year's as celebrated in Chuuk State (one of the Federated States of Micronesia). Ms. Ariel is the ESL teacher and China and Nat are old-timer ELLs from China and the Marshall Islands, respectively.

01. G-Koput: okay. Mine is about New Year. I did New Year at my country.
02. Ms. Ariel: and your country is?
03. G-Koput: oh, [Chuuk.
04. ☞: [Chuuk.
05. Ms. Ariel: okay.
06. China: that’s a country?
07. Ms. Ariel: Chuuk?
08. G-Koput: yeah. It’s a country, yeah.
09. China: It is?
10. Nat: It’s a island.
11. ☞: [country!
12. G-Koput: [country!
14. G-Koput: Okay. ((holds up the pop-up)). This is a guy with a sack and a stick.
15. ☞: ((giggle))
16. G-Koput: okay. I’m gonna read it. okay. Happy New Year. um, I do mine on Happy New Year. (reading) Okay people. I am going to present my presentation about Chuuk. the New Year. On the first day of the New Year, the people of Chuuk go to church first. then after church some people walk around or cruise around in car and they yell, sing Happy New Year everybody. In New Year, for our country, we use cab. that’s all.=
17. China: =((loud, exaggerated clapping))
18. ?Ss: ((clapping))
20. China: YAAAAOOOOWW! ((laughs))
21. Raven: ((sarcastic)) That was good. (Talmy, 2010, pp. 46, 47).
In the previous excerpt, the author shows how "subtle [old-timer] ESL students’ racialization of Micronesian classmates could be" (p. 47). The first is downgrading the status of Chuuk from a country to an island due to the fact that there is some question about whether or not Chuuk is a national entity, especially in that in a previous assignment, Micronesian students specifically had had a difficult time finding reference materials about their country and their flag (Talmy, 2010). Old-timers took advantage of this fact to racially discriminate against the newcomers and identify them in comparison to their own countries whose status is not in doubt (e.g., China, Taiwan, Korea, etc.). This comparison suggests that Chuuk "is less well known; less worthy, perhaps, of being known, an association that binds to students who are 'from' there" (p. 47). The ridicule implied by the exaggerated applause made by China, and the sarcastic comment by his friend Raven is also a form of racialization.

The ridicule made by the three old-timer ELLs is not only an example of verbal peer discrimination to identify new timer ELLs as FOBs, but it also shows how stratification occurs in a classroom community. I agree with Talmy (2010) that this kind of ridicule does not only cause categorization of students from different countries into certain subordinate groups, but also sets a hierarchy among students. Such stratification based on difference in cultural capital is itself a form of racial discrimination.

While students are usually discriminated by the old-timers of the target language community, the previous example shows that old-timer ELLs can also be the cause of positioning new comer ELLs. Rather than supporting them in the process of language development and social interaction, old-timer ELLs used their dominant cultural capital (as they assume) to discriminate new comers. Old-timer ELLs did not utilize the opportunity of helping newcomer ELLs to discover their own language abilities and maximize social interactions for themselves. Rather, old-timer ELLs rejected newcomer ELLs, identified them as FOBs, and constructed new local identities for themselves based on insensitive comparison with the newcomers. By doing this, they reproduced the social order of newcomer marginalization.

All the reasons that may cause teachers, NS students, or old-timer ELLs to marginalize newcomer ELLs and discriminate against them in one form or another have an inevitable effect on learners' language development, especially when viewed from the Vygotskian perspective. Newcomer ELLs are in a critical point of their language learning and they need all the support they can get from their teachers and peers. What they learn in their ESL classes is not enough. They need to engage in social practices outside the ESL classroom because language learning is a social process not a merely cognitive and individual one. ELLs need to internalize the knowledge they received in their ESL classrooms through social interactions in order for this knowledge to become part of who they are not just something they learn and forget. According to Johnson (2004), internalization is a complex process where learners move from the interpersonal "(social, historical, institutional) plane" to the intrapersonal plane "(the individual)" through the internalization of the "patterns of the social activities to which the individual has been exposed" to (p. 111). Internalization is an essential aspect of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of language learning, and social engagement helps learners appropriate the language. Unfortunately, the patterns of racialization and racial discrimination newcomer ELLs are subject to decrease their opportunities for social engagement with old-timers which lessens their opportunities for improving the language they are learning and internalizing it because, as Vygotsky puts it, "learning is the internalization of the social interaction" (Storch, 2002, p. 121). Negative remarks, unfair treatment, an insensitive curriculum, ignoring, and any other forms of racialization and racial discrimination have a negative impact on ELLs' appropriation of the L2.
In fact, they can cause "high levels of depression, low levels of self-esteem, and poor levels of social adjustment" (Mills, 2008, p. 38). And when these causes are ignored or not appropriately dealt with by teachers or administrators, racialization and racial discrimination against ELLs, the marginalized social statuses of ELLs, the disvalue of their unique yet different forms of cultural capital becomes reproduced throughout the generations.

**Implications: (Teachers/ Leaders, Students, Curriculum)**

After exploring the notions of racialization and racial discrimination against ELLs and how they manifest in classrooms by teachers and students intentionally or unintentionally, it is now important to examine how schools can decrease the rates of such racialization and discrimination in order to provide a healthier learning environment for ELLs. Since teachers, leaders, students, and the curriculum are all important constituents of the school and classroom community, I will suggest how each component can play an effective role in amplifying ELLs' social engagement which is important for facilitating language learning, and thus transforming the social structure rather than reproducing it.

First, school leaders (principal, vice-principal, social supervisors ... etc.) need to be aware if racialization and discrimination exists in their schools. More importantly, they need to know what racialization and racial discrimination is and how they manifest. Through periodical meetings with ELLs and their families, issues of racialization and language learning can become apparent. These meetings can also provide opportunities for discussing possible solutions from the learner's perspectives, especially those who are being racialized against. Although parents and ELLs are not always likely to be open and candid about such issues, these kinds of meetings will require sensitivity on behalf of the leaders. More importantly, if marginalized ELLs know that they can find the support of both their families and leaders, they are more likely to be open and candid about these problems. Also, the consciousness that leaders can gain from such meetings can help them undertake various actions to help overcome or decrease the problem. Holding school events such as a 'cultural day' or a 'multicultural festival' where students from different backgrounds can share their histories, languages, educational backgrounds, cultures, and traditions can take part in raising awareness of the existing diversity among students and teachers, but they might even contribute to unintended racialization due to their occasional reoccurrence. Therefore, such ‘cultural days’ need to occur daily and be an established part of the norms of the school. When students and teachers observe how leaders appreciate and respect difference of appearance, language, skills, and orientations of ELLs on a daily bases, students (NSs and old-timer ELLs) and teachers will also learn to show consideration of diversity and learn to value it, as well. Leaders need to be models that represent positive attitudes towards ELLs' unique forms of cultural capital in order for students and teachers to reproduce ELLs' social statuses as legitimate and equal members of the school and classroom community. Leaders need to show that they value difference, although it might not always work to eliminate marginalization, but it would definitely help reduce it.

Leaders can also minimize racialization and discrimination through their close observation of classroom practices. Taking part in some practices, and becoming members of the classroom community is a great way of showing that there should not be a hierarchy among members of the school what exists are different roles members take upon themselves and hold responsibility for. Visiting the classrooms and other school sites (e.g. cafeteria, gym, etc.) regularly can also bring to consciousness the practices or discourses that unintentionally racialize or discriminate ELLs by students and teachers.
Second, since leaders are not always in direct contact with and have observation of classroom practices, both ESL teachers and mainstream classroom teachers can create better learning environments for ELLs through various approaches. Usually, when teachers notice discrimination of ELLs, they advise discriminators not to engage in it. Their attempt to prevent racial discrimination among students is through not accepting discriminatory behaviors, words, or attitudes. What teachers should do is confront students for the reasons they are positioning their peers and treating them in a rude manner. Teachers should work together with students who are treating their peers unfairly to find solutions for creating a healthier learning environment for everyone. Confrontation should not only be between students who are marginalizing their peers and teachers, but also include the marginalized students to show discriminators the inappropriateness of their behavior, and help them sense what ELLs are experiencing. Confrontation should not only be by asking *why* students are racially discriminating their peers, but should also be by asking them to imagine they are in that position … how would they feel?

Another possible way for teachers to lessen racial discrimination among students and prevent them from categorizing and stereotyping newcomers is through maximizing activities that require NSs and ELLs to work together. Group discussions are a great activity that can provide opportunities for social engagement. However, if not well organized by teachers or group leaders, they will not be an effective strategy for ELLs. Teachers should not only give clear instructions about the purpose of group discussion and its benefits for both NSs and ELLs, but should also facilitate how the discussions are undertaken, who is dominating the discussion, who is being left out, and can also take part in some discussions. Teachers can also choose the members of the group that they believe might work best for all sides (combination of weak or quiet, strong or dominating). Listening to conversations and sharing opinions is also an effective strategy teachers can carry out. Maximizing collective scaffolding is considered a successful approach for increasing social interaction among learners and supporting language development (Donato, 1994).

As for the curriculum, "instead of being a site of ‘disjunction and dislocation’, schools can relate curricula to students’ worlds, making the classroom more inclusive" (Mills, 2008, pp. 84, 85). This was evident in Ms. Smith's classroom, and, although, it did not always have a successful outcome, her purpose of implementing a hidden curriculum was thoughtful. As Naicker and Balfour (2009) claim, "the strategies that an educator employs can have either a positive or negative impact on the language learner" (p. 343). However, to ensure the success of a hidden curriculum and teaching strategies, teachers can discuss with ELLs before class to see if any connections between the lesson or topic and their backgrounds exists. This can be done through e-mail or during the same periodical meetings that leaders hold for ELLs and their families. They can organize a special time to discuss the curriculum. It can raise teachers' and leaders' awareness of how ELLs feel about the curriculum, and can probably prevent any discrimination or positioning. Through such dialogue, teachers and leaders can become enlightened on how to transform the curriculum or integrate learners' different forms of cultural capital rather than reproduce the same curriculum and teaching strategies that marginalize and discriminate ELLs deliberately or by mistake. Leaders should allow teachers to bring to class their lived experiences and engage with the "lived curriculum" rather than following the "curriculum as plan" (Aoki, 2005, p. 159).
Conclusion
The consequences of racialization and racial discrimination against ELLs in many schools and classrooms are reflected in their degree of socialization in the academic community which ultimately affects their English language development. Since second language acquisition is a social rather than an individual process, ELLs may not find the support they need for essential progress (in the second language they are learning) in their classrooms due to the limited opportunities for social engagement. Inferiorizing newcomer ELLs and discriminating them due to their difference of skills, orientations, and actions will also affect ELLs' degree and forms of participation in the practices of the classroom community. Ignoring such an issue can result in the reproduction of the marginalized social status of newcomer ELLs and the reproduction of the dominating and accepted forms of cultural capital. In the light of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory that supports the social development of language learning, the different forms of discrimination which students are subject to can have a negative impact on learners' social and language development. Racialization decreases opportunities for healthy socialization and thus limits students' development in their L2 and access to the classroom practices.

The classroom environment needs to be a healthy environment that promotes equality between teachers and students and students with their peers, and a respectful environment where students' different forms of cultural capital are valued. Schools need to establish a positive climate and "a learning community in which all [students are] included and valued" (Hite and Evans, 2006, p. 102). Collaborative work between school leaders and teachers to help raise cross-cultural awareness and consciousness of the negative effects and consequences of racialization and racial discrimination against ELLs can be an effective start to overcome such an issue.

About the Author:
Ayesha Mohammed Mudhaffer is a Graduate Teaching Assistant at the English Language Institute (ELI) in King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Saudi Arabia. She received her BA in English Language at KAU and her M.Ed in TESL at Simon Fraser University in Canada. After spending a year at ELI, she joined the exam preparation unit. Currently, She is a member of the grading committee.

References


The Effects of Metacognitive Awareness-Raising on Learners’ Reading Proficiency and Strategy Use: Case of First-Year LMD Students at Abou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen

Yassamina HAICHA – ABDAT
English Department
Tlemcen University
Algeria

Abstract

Within the field of education, one of the most important responsibilities that each teacher needs to assume consists in equipping the learners with all the necessary tools to cope with the demands of an ever-changing world. With no doubt, for a more successful fulfillment of such a prominent responsibility, the learners need to be consciously aware of the true nature of the learning process as well as the crucial role of acquiring skills and strategies that would certainly engender an effective learning process. These two concerns have led to a plethora of research on how to help the individuals become successful learners, and what teachers can do to assist their learning. Bearing all this in mind, the present exploratory research endeavours to elucidate the major effect of an explicit and integrated instruction of metacognitive reading strategies on learners’ English as a Foreign Language reading proficiency and strategy use. The researcher has randomly chosen ten Algerian speaking students studying at the Department of English in Abou Bakr Belkaid University of Tlemcen. Data were collected by means of three essential data-gathering tools, namely questionnaire, proficiency tests and think-aloud protocol (TAP). The researcher confirmed that metacognitive reading strategy instruction had a positive effect on the learners’ reading proficiency and strategy use which was empirically verified during the implementation of the Think Aloud protocol.

Key words: metacognitive awareness, reading strategies, explicit teaching. EFL learners, TAP( think Aloud Protocol)
Introduction

It would be with no exaggeration to note that English functions as a universal language due to its pervasive importance in this changing time of globalization, and has consequently become the language widely adopted for political, technological, social and educational development. Similarly, it has witnessed such development in its role in the Algerian educational context since 1962, and more importantly after the advent of globalization process in the early 1990s.

Yet, within the field of education, more specifically in EFL process a significant number of oriented studies has clearly shown that learners still encounter some serious issues throughout their studies that are in some part due to the unsuccessful equal consideration of four fundamental linguistic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Despite all the efforts and much time consumed by EFL teachers, the results seem strikingly unsatisfactory, and the learners still display low achievement in English language use. Perhaps inspired by this thought, the present article endeavours to review theoretically the significance of the teaching / learning of reading skill at university level paying due attention to elucidating and unearthing to what extent the explicit and integrated metacognitive reading strategy instruction at awareness-raising level may affect positively the learners’ reading proficiency and strategy use.

Theoretical Background

1. Reading Comprehension

Over the last few decades, a set of considerable investigations in Foreign Language reading have been conducted that have provided numerous insights for FL reading theories and reading instruction. The basic rationale of such research was to seek for the most suitable definition of reading. It has led to the argument that reading can be defined from two standpoints: common knowledge, and scientific view.

For the popular literature, reading is the ability of processing one’s aptitude or capability to recognize the shape of a finite number of letters and alphabetical symbols that are connected to form an infinite number of meaningful words, clauses and sentences respecting the punctuation and division of paragraphs. In this respect, the process of reading follows a common sense description of three related dimensions:

As an opening stage, the learner recognizes the written characters he/she meets in print, which are organized in particular spatial order; (from the left to the right when speaking about all Indo-European languages, while it is completely the reverse for Hamito- Semitic ones); and masters their pronunciation.

In the subsequent phase, he/she combines them into meaningful conventional items and sentences respecting the rules of syntax that may not resemble those of his/her native language. Additionally, the mastery of the printed words can be done successfully through a consistent vocabulary and syntax activities, which should not be underestimated for they contribute well in enhancing learners’ comprehension of reading.

Once the recognized written symbols are combined into meaningful items and sentences, the learner can successfully understand and interpret the entire meaning of the given sentence (s). In such a case, the three related dimensions discussed above are then closely related to three linguistic skills i.e. recognition with phonology (how to pronounce sounds in various combinations), structuring with syntax (rules that govern word order), and interpretation with semantics (when the learner assigns the accurate meaning of the printed symbols, then comprehension takes place).

However, from the scientific perspective, numerous neurological researchers notice that reading is not merely a product-oriented approach that constitutes language form, but also an intricate process actively involving both hemispheres of the brain that endeavours to negotiate understanding between the learner and the writer of the text. Here, reading is merely regarded as an end product or a process-oriented approach that deals with language content.

Urquart and Weir have endeavoured to summarize the complexity of this process as follows: “Reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print.” (1988, p. 22).

Reading as a Language Skill

It is pertinent to note that reading strives not only to teach the learner how to establish components necessary for reading process, but attempts also to model this process by specifying
these components, and reveal correlations between them. According to Hoover (1990), “reading consists of only two components; one that allows language to be recognized through graphic representation and another that allows language to be comprehended.” (p.01).

For the sake of communication to take place, there should be, however, a direct association and interaction between the interlocutors, i.e. the learner being ‘the reader’ of the text, and the writer. In this respect, the learner necessitates both ability, and proficiency to understand the message conveyed by the writer of the text. In the same line of thought, Davies (1995) assumes that, reading is private. It is a mental, or a cognitive process which involves a reader in trying to follow and respond to a message from the writer who is distant in place and time. (p.01)

However, it is unrealistic to believe that reading can be acquired without special effort i.e. as a passive skill, as it requires the learner’s mental and experimental input than is suggested by the mere decoding of symbols. In this context, Goodman (1973) maintains that, the learner: “As a user of a language interacts with the graphic input as he seeks to reconstruct a message encoded by the writer. He concentrates his total prior experience and concepts he has attained, as well as the language competence he has achieved.” (p.162)

2. The survey of reading strategies (SORS)

Before classifying reading strategies, it would seem undeniably wiser to consider the question: what is meant by the term strategy? And what makes it different from a skill?
The term ‘strategy’ can be operationalized as learning techniques or behaviours that help learners iron out the frequent difficulties encountered whenever learning is taking place, and enable them to effectively and efficiently interact with the written passages. This concept has been defined differently by numerous specialists in this field of research. Anderson (1991), on deliberate cognitive steps that, “[…]readers can take to assist in acquiring, storing, and retrieving new information”, (p.460).

Therefore, it can be obviously stated that reading strategies are paramount for they enable readers to better tackle different reading tasks, and construct meaning from the written passages as competently as possible. These strategies may involve a wide range of cognitive mental activities which can be summarized as follows:

“The strategies may involve skimming, scanning, guessing, recognizing cognates and word families, reading for meaning, predicting, activating general knowledge, making inferences, and separating main ideas from supporting ideas.”, (Phan 2006, p. 01)

Furthermore, there are other more recently recognized text-processing strategies such as activating prior knowledge, and recognizing textual organization, which have been added to the list of strategic behaviours. These strategies discussed above have been later grouped by Carrell (1989) as ‘local’ bottom-up decoding types of reading strategies and ‘global’, top-down types of reading strategies. As the former, it concerns sound-to letter correspondence (phonetics-based approach), the latter has to do with readers’ activated background knowledge (readers-driven types of information processing) and recognizing text structure.

Reading researchers generally typify reading strategies into two main categories: cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. Cognitive strategies serve as primordial learning techniques that assist learners in constructing meaning from the text, which are made up of bottom-up and top-down strategies. In the case of using bottom-up reading strategies, the learners’ minds

“Repeatedly engage in a variety of processes … Readers start by processing information at the sentence level. In other words, they focus on the identification of the meaning and grammatical category of a word, sentence, syntax, text detail and so forth.”, (Salataci, 2002, p.02)

Whereas top-down strategies consist of integrating one’s background knowledge to the reading process to construct meaning from a text rather than passively identifying words in the text, predicting and getting the gist of text or skimming. In this sense, ‘reading is asking questions of printed text, and reading with comprehension becomes a matter of getting your questions answered’ (Smith, 1975, p.105).

Metacognitive reading strategies, on the other side, function as a valuable means to monitor and regulate cognitive strategies which include “ checking the outcome of any attempt to solve a problem, planning one’s next move, monitoring the effectiveness of any attempted action, testing, revising and evaluating one’s strategies for learning. (Brown et al,1984, p. 354)

Reading researchers, later could obtain some strategies through other several case studies that successful readers generally employ to enhance reading comprehension and overcome comprehension failure. These strategies will be shown in the following list.
Table 1. *Strategy Coding Scheme: reading strategies (strategy type + strategy behaviour)* Singhal (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY TYPE</th>
<th>STRATEGY BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive</strong></td>
<td>Paraphrasing/Summarizing.</td>
<td>• The reader rephrases content using different words but retains the same sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anticipating/Predicting.</td>
<td>• The reader predicts what content will occur in succeeding portions of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previewing Text.</td>
<td>• The reader previews the text to see how it is organized and related to what they know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employing Context Clues.</td>
<td>• The reader uses clues in the story in order to make predictions or increase understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repeating Words</td>
<td>• The reader repeats unknown words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analyzing Word Division.</td>
<td>• The reader analyzes word structure, grammatical structures or expressions to determine the meanings of these words/sentences/expressions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using Illustrations.</td>
<td>• The reader divides the words into parts to make it comprehensible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using Titles.</td>
<td>• The reader uses illustrations/graphs, etc. in order to facilitate understanding of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using Connectors.</td>
<td>• The reader uses connectors to identify continuing ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rereading.</td>
<td>• The reader rereads parts of a text several times in order to facilitate comprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compensation</strong></td>
<td>Guessing / Hypothesizing</td>
<td>• The reader guesses the general meaning of a word by using context clues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Memory</strong></td>
<td>Associating.</td>
<td>• The reader creates an association between new material and what is already known.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Word Grouping.</td>
<td>• The reader places the new words in a group with other similar known words to determine meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Word Associating.</td>
<td>• The reader associates a word with a known word in order to determine meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Language Associating-Cognates</td>
<td>• The reader remembers a new word by identifying it with a word in their first language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metacognitive</strong></td>
<td>Monitoring.</td>
<td>• The reader self-monitors their own understanding / pacing/ pronunciation of words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correcting Errors.</td>
<td>• The reader tries to correct their language/reading errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Word Recognition.</td>
<td>• The reader is able to recognize unknown words by repeating them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recognizing/Important.

- The reader recognizes what is important and not important and can skip those words or information.

**Affective**

Self-Encouragement

- The reader makes encouraging statements to his/her students and pays attention to factors that may interfere with performance or comprehension.

**Social**

Clarifying

- The reader asks for clarification when something is not understood.

Verifying

- The reader asks for verification that something has been understood or said correctly.

Seeking Feedback.

- The reader asks others for feedback about his or reading, responses, etc.

**Textual**

Reacting to Text

- The reader can react to a text and express opinions about the text and characters.

Interpreting Text

- The reader draws a conclusion about the text in terms of theme or interpretation of text.

Emotional Reaction

- The reader reacts emotionally to the text.

The importance accorded to these strategies can be shown in numerous empirical case studies which have been conducted by SL/FL researchers seeking to understand why some learners are likely to be more successful readers than others. (Hosenfeld, 1977; Knight, et al 1985; Block 1986; Jimenez, et al 1995). In a qualitative study, Hosenfeld attempted to identify the direct relation between certain types of reading strategies and successful or less successful learners. The results obtained have clearly demonstrated that the differences lie in the fact those successful learners:

- kept the meaning of the passage in mind during reading.
- read in broad phrases.
- skipped words viewed as unimportant to total phrase meaning.
- had positive concept of themselves as readers (Hosenfeld, 1977,p. 110).

In contrast, the unsuccessful learners tend to be those who:

- lost the meaning of sentences as soon as they were decoded.
- read in short phrases.
- skipped words as unimportant and viewed words as equal in their contribution to total phrase meaning.
- had a negative self-concept as a reader (Carrell, 1989, p. 03)

4. Metacognitive Awareness and Reading Comprehension

Although studies on SL / FL reading strategies are a major trend of second / foreign language research, recent research interest has focused on language learners’ metacognitive knowledge or awareness of strategies, and the primordial role it plays during reading process. Yet, before tackling this effect, it would be indeed helpful to provide at first definitions-based on the concept of metacognition, and have a brief and synchronized look at its history.

The term metacognition has been variously defined as ‘cognition of cognition’ (Carrell, et al, 1989, p.647), ‘the conscious awareness of cognitive processes’ (Bernhardt 1991:52), and ‘knowledge about learning’ (Wenden, 1998, p.516). In the context of learning reading comprehension, ‘metacognition is the knowledge that takes as its object or regulates any aspect of any cognitive endeavour’ (Flavell, 1979, p.08).

Historically speaking, metacognition has its root in research conducted prior to 1976 during which Flavell’s pioneering work greatly helped in giving form of this concept and provided an impetus for its study. During this period, research occurred in the field of developmental and educational psychology whereby to offer more sophisticated methodologies for asserting metacognition (Nelson, 1988). The studies based on metacognition were grouped into four categories, the former category incorporates studies of cognition monitoring whose purpose consisted in examining people’s knowledge of their knowledge and thought processes, and how accurately they can monitor the current state their knowledge and processes, the second category stresses on ‘regulation of one’s own thinking processes in order to cope with changing
situational demands. The third category of metacognitive research has examined how people regulate their choice of strategies and recently, the fourth category stressed on the ways in which metacognitive theory can be applied in the educational settings. In the context of teaching / learning of reading, metacognition can be divided into five primary interrelated components of which none of them can function in isolation. These components concern:

- Preparing and planning for reading.
- Deciding when to use particular reading strategies.
- Knowing how to monitor strategy use.
- Learning how to orchestrate various strategies.

Those processes were and are still considered to be part of metacognitive skills which play a great role in self-regulated monitoring that takes place during reading comprehension. By practising and applying these components, learners will unquestionably become good readers and capable to handle any text across a curriculum. As explained in Flavell’s study, metacognitive knowledge can be categorized into two components: knowledge about cognition and regulation of cognition (1978, p.08). Knowledge of cognition includes three related components that are involved within any learning task. They have been labelled: ‘declarative’, ‘procedural’, and ‘conditional’ components.

- **Declarative knowledge**: refers to ‘knowing what’ strategy to use in specific learning task e.g. one may know what is skimming or scanning.
- **Procedural knowledge**: refers to ‘knowing how’ to perform various activities or putting the knowledge into action e.g. how to sum up a text, how to skim (to get the gist of the selected passage) or how to scan (to spot the information required by the learner)... and so forth.
- **Conditional knowledge**: refers to ‘knowing why’ to use a particular strategy, and when it would be applicable and transferable effectively and appropriately in another language area, or new task to be mastered.

Whereas regulation of cognition is directly related to those processes involved within metacognitive strategies, i.e. planning, monitoring, problem-solving and evaluating. Philip presented those major macro metacognitive strategy categories which include planning, comprehension monitoring, problem-solving and evaluating and modifying in the table below:

Table 2. Processing framework (Philip et al, 2006, p. 23)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Micro strategy</th>
<th>Macro strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Planning (PL)** | (PL 1) analyse goals.  
(PL 2) Identify relevant and useful LS.  
(PL 3) Deciding and implementing on strategies.  
(PL 4) Planning strategic moves.  
(PL 5) Making preview / overview.  
(PL 6) Scanning information in text.  
(PL 7) Skimming for gist of information in text.  
(PL 8) Predicting content of text. |
| **Comprehension Monitoring (CM)** | (CM 1) Monitoring one’s strategy use.  
(CM 2) Double-checking on one’s comprehension.  
(CM 3) Relating one’s prior / Background knowledge.  
(CM 4) Relating one’s academic knowledge.  
(CM 5) Attending selectively to important / familiar terms to facilitate comprehension. |
| **Problem-Solving (PS)** | (PS 1) Infer from contextual clues.  
(PS2) Make logical and intelligent guesses.  
(PS 3) Integrate information into a summary.  
(PS 4) Seek clarification from teacher.  
(PS 5) Question peers and cooperate with them. |
| **Evaluation (EVA) / Modification (MOD)** | (EVA 1) Evaluate the effectiveness of strategy.  
(EVA 2) Identify most useful feature (s) of strategy.  
(EVA 3) Reflect on context within which strategy successfully implemented. |
Modify strategy based on task demands.
Evaluate on strategy best combination.
Assess suitable conditions (when) to use strategies.
Evaluate ways to re-implement unsuccessful strategic moves.

**Rationale of the Present study**

This project has the following research objectives:

- To identify the main causes behind learners’ comprehension difficulties.
- Explore the usefulness and the effect of explicit / integrated instruction of metacognitive strategies on learners’ reading proficiency and strategy use.

**Participants of the Study**

The informants chosen for this experimental-based research were ten (10) students enrolled in the English Language Teaching Department at the Faculty of Arts, Human and Social Sciences of Abou Bakr Belkaid University, Tlemcen. The study was carried out during the beginning of the academic year (2008-2009). Male represented 30% percent (3) of the sample and 70% percent (7) females. Their chronological age ranges from seventeen to twenty-three years old. Two of them were in the Literature and Islamic sciences whereas the majority belongs to Arabic literature and foreign languages whose coefficient is 3 and Literature and Human Sciences. They have been exposed to the learning of English Language for five to seven years so far.

**Research Instruments**

This empirical study was carried out via three-attention worthy tools: questionnaire, tests and think-aloud protocol.

**Questionnaires: Description and Administration**

The present investigation has been conducted through a questionnaire which was distributed to first year university EFL learners. Conducting a metacognitive questionnaire to first year university EFL learners was of paramount importance since it helped to elicit from the respondents their retrospective data about:

- their profile, proficiency level and reading background and their learning preferences.
- their potential difficulties and needs in reading comprehension.
- the main strategies they often orchestrate in problem solving tasks to sort out these difficulties.

**Proficiency Test Description and Administration**

The informants, chosen as population sampling, were tested before training them through metacognitive strategy instruction. The aim of conducting the pre-training proficiency test consists in assessing their current abilities in the area of reading comprehension, whereby to yield the results about:

1. their ability to orchestrate different strategies appropriately and in meaningful manner, prior to reading strategy training sessions.
2. the sources that threaten their reading proficiency.

During reading proficiency test, the learners were provided with a text followed by a set of comprehension activities related to the text content, and which were replied during one session. After completing this pre-test, learners’ performance of reading was or measured, elicited, and then evaluated by the researcher.

**Think-Aloud Protocol: Aims and Procedure**

Within classroom and research contexts in general, especially in terms of language learning / teaching strategies, research tools may be numerous, nonetheless, the use of introspective methods seem is to be increasingly the most prevalent ones. Think-aloud technique is often said to be an advantageous introspective data gathering method for any researcher trying to unveil and describe one’s conscious mental processes undertaken while performing a specific language task rather than his / her own outcomes or product. Think-aloud, according to Chamot, “is a technique in which a person verbalizes his or her own thought processes while working on a task … Generally, these processes are the person’s strategies for completing language task” (1999, p.68).
Therefore, within this empirical phase, the researcher selected reading passage followed by a set of comprehension activities taking into account the type of the tasks which should be challenging to require the application of some reading strategies.

**Results Analyses**

*Learners’ Questionnaires Results*

Admittedly, the analysis of learners’ responses to this metacognitive questionnaire clearly revealed a variety of strategies they reported using while dealing with reading passages which can be precisely summarized and thoroughly described in the table: Table 3. *Types and frequency of learners’ strategies employed in the questionnaire.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners' employed strategies</th>
<th>Strategies classification</th>
<th>Number of students (out of ten)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scanning (analyzing particular points).</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using external resources.</td>
<td>Support strategies</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rereading.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategies</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guessing from context.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategies</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconsidering the problematic part of the text.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategies</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activating background knowledge.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategies</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguishing important from less important details.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategies</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategies</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategies</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying the purpose of the task.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategies</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proficiency Test Results**

As previously noted, the test was a second step undertaken prior to the strategy training instruction sessions which consisted in assessing learners' reading proficiency, their linguistic level, as well as their capability in utilizing adequately the five reading strategies of predicting, skimming, scanning, inferring and contextual guessing. During this procedure, the researcher relied more on the quantitative approach for analyzing the data obtained from this test. It consisted of an informative text followed by a set of nine comprehension questions related to the content. The number of respondents who could respond correctly on the required tasks was counted. And then, the researcher through the analysis could differentiate between the proficient and less proficient readers. The results could be better illustrated in the following table: Table 4. *Frequency of learners’ answers to test questions prior to the instruction phase*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predicting</th>
<th>Skimming</th>
<th>Scanning</th>
<th>Inferring</th>
<th>Guessing from context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.F</td>
<td>R.F</td>
<td>A.F</td>
<td>R.F</td>
<td>A.F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>70 %</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the analysis of predicting question, seven students out of ten could respond correctly to the present question since the topic tends to be very famous history that was known by almost all learners at different levels. Nevertheless, the three remaining students could not respond which is probably due to their inability to extract even one idea from the given title.

Skimming strategy was examined through question two during this activity, the learners were encouraged to make predictions over the content by reading through it quickly. As shown
in the preceding table all the informants could perform the skimming strategy and thus gave the convenient answer about the main idea.

Similarly, scanning was processed through question three, four and five, during which the informants were required to read the text quickly but for different purposes. Five learners could be able to find the answers required for these scanning questions in a very short period of time, whereas five other students could not respond correctly especially to question four since the term strategy is still new and unfamiliar.

Inferring strategy was inspected through question six and seven during which the learners were required to read carefully to be able to adequately infer what was implied in this passage. The analysis has shown that only three students could be able to perform this strategy in a convenient manner. Conversely, seven students, through their written answers have really displayed a difficulty in providing the correct answers to the present inference questions.

This strategy was processed through the last two remaining questions where only four students were able to guess the meaning of the selected words from their context (30 %) while the remaining were unlikely to understand their contextual meaning from the given passage. All in all, the number of the subjects who could respond correctly to the provided tasks representing 30 % of the total number, which may be taken to mean that these learners can be characterized as proficient readers.

**Think-Aloud Protocol Results**

In order to answer the third research question, both quantitative and qualitative data analyses were deployed. First of all, results generated by the implementation of think-aloud were carried out immediately after completing the pre-training proficiency test. Therefore, each learner while being interviewed was given enough time to think and report exactly what he/she was thinking about while reading. It is probably due to this factor which led to the absence of vocalizing inner speech, i.e. hum, ok, ah ... etc. Yet, the analysis of these protocols clearly revealed that the learners suffered and are still suffering from some striking linguistic deficiencies since the researcher has transcribed each word uttered and produced by the learner while listening to their recorded speech from the tape.

Before discussing and analysing the data obtained from the learners’ verbalized protocol, the researcher as a starting point provided two pre-planned questions during which the learners were required to answer. The first question “What kind of strategies do they use before reading a text?” was analysed. Thus, it was clearly observed from their verbalized answers that the majority of the learners could not offer any answer to this question. To prove it, it is worth considering the following answers provided by the learners themselves during which they relied heavily on mixing code approach (using Arabic, French, English and even dialectal Arabic) from time to time whereby to purposefully make the invisible processes of reading visible.

- كيفاش - آه شانديد مفهومش بلاك شوق شحال من paragraphe و تعاواد تشووف كيش داير النوع ما دام ما تعرفش على الموضوع ما كاش حتى plan.

- أه، اه، كف الشبل. ما كااش، ... كيفش اه ما تشويه، حتماً ما كااش الإعلان، ما كا什 plan.

- Je réfléchis, imagine about the type of the text, then ... hum. no plan. (student B).

These answers may be taken to mean that the non-strategic readers tend to read without setting a purpose, thus no self-planning strategy was utilized. On the reverse, three out of ten students responded as follows:

- Ah ... bon, ... imagine about the type

I try to get the meaning from the title and think (Student F, appendix G)

These results may be taken to mean that the non-strategic readers tend to read without setting a purpose, thus no self-planning strategy was utilized. On the reverse, three out of ten students responded as follows:
Before reading a text, the first step I should normally go through is to read the title, I try to simultaneously activate my content schemata about the topic the text discusses; in addition, I will circle or underline the key words of the title.

These learners may be classified among the strategic readers since they could notice the crucial importance of self-planning strategy as a primordial metacognitive process that each learner should go through prior to reading activity for enhancing better reading performance. As for the frequency of strategies mentioned under the question “What do you normally do when you don’t understand a part of reading text?” Almost able reported using some comprehension monitoring strategies like rereading, willing the key works, and guessing their contextual meaning by reading the section around them to figure out their meaning which was evidenced several times. Yet, only one student assumed that using either social strategies or support strategies may be the most convenient solution for solving the problem under consideration. Thus, they responded as follows:

- I try to understand the whole text.
- I underline the key words.
- I read the text several times or

As for the analysis of the answers obtained from the five cognitive strategies (predicting, skimming, scanning, inferring and contextual guessing), the rationale of examining these answers during think-aloud procedure consists in providing insights on the metacognitive strategy used by the selected participants during their actual reading process. Because of the fact that the strategy changes for different purposes, frequencies and percentages are determined for each strategy type used by the participants which are presented in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy unveiled</th>
<th>Strategy classification</th>
<th>R.F</th>
<th>A.F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activating background knowledge</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategy</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategy</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategy</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-management.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategy</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underlying key words of the title.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategy</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance organizing.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategy</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, it might be obvious and well observed that on the whole, the respondents made use of more types of cognitive strategies than metacognitive ones, while performing predicting strategy. The examples of cognitive and metacognitive strategies the learners reported using them prior to the strategy training instruction can be well explained through the following answers:

- عرفت من معرفتي السابقة، وإضافة، تخرجت للأفلام شاهدًا مرة، أه... ما عائشة كيس، الصفحة لا (Student A).
- جابوا فيها Titanic، أه... أتيفك كل각سة من ذهب، ومعناه، شيطان (Student A).
- تفتقذي الأحداث تبع الفيلم بالعربية، وبدبيت نترجم بالإنجليزية

Concerning skimming strategy, the learners made use of set of strategies that can be categorized into cognitive and metacognitive strategies which are exposed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy employed</th>
<th>Strategy classification</th>
<th>R.F</th>
<th>A.F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding key words.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategy</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategy</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. Type and frequency of strategies employed in skimming strategy
As shown in the above table, when the frequency with which these students used such strategies was analysed, it was seen that the most frequently employed strategy when performing skimming was ‘identifying the key words’ (cognitive strategy) which was employed by seven students, whereas the use of metacognitive reading strategies which was clearly employed once the learners were interviewed during the think-aloud was ‘integrating one’s background knowledge’ which was employed by three students as far as the second question of the pre-test was concerned. To prove it, one may consider the following answers as exactly recorded on the tape:

- I have read the text twice, and since the word ‘Titanic’ represents the key word, I went straightforward to highlight the main ideas that are related to ‘Titanic’. (Student A)
- I have read the text several times ... and I still remember the events of this story. (Student B).

Concerning scanning, the respondents rely on a set of cognitive and metacognitive strategies which are clearly identified and thoroughly explained in the following table:

Table 6. Type and frequency of strategies employed in scanning activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy employed</th>
<th>Strategy classification</th>
<th>R.F</th>
<th>A.F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rereading.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategy.</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective attention.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategy.</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking sound with imagery</td>
<td>Cognitive strategy.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighting main ideas.</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategy.</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding key words.</td>
<td>Cognitive strategy.</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore, to prove the idea that the already elicited strategies explained above were put into practice during think-aloud, it might be worthwhile to consider their answers which were of course provided using mixing code approach.

- I focus on the main ideas (especially those imprising numbers, events and characters). (Student B).

As regard the use of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies when performing inferring activity, which were unveiled during think-aloud by the participants, it is clearly felt by the researcher that most of them neither reply the question of the pre-test that required the utilization of this strategy nor unveil any particular strategy to help them solve such problem, claiming that the lack of vocabulary was more influential than the effect of background knowledge. Through the story of ‘Titanic’ was well known by almost the majority of people, it was hard for some to understand the entire content of the text because of several unfamiliar words. In addition, it was even difficult and complex for them to infer the meaning implicitly stated in the text. The results are to be shown in the table:

Table 7. Type and frequency of strategies employed in inferring activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy employed</th>
<th>Strategy classification</th>
<th>R.F</th>
<th>A.F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As obviously shown in the present table, only two students out of ten respondents tended to use self-management metacognitive strategy. However, the least frequent of all the cognitive strategies observed in the TAP1 circling the key words and re-reading strategies, which were employed more than one time. Thus, one may consider what was exactly uttered by the learners themselves while performing ‘inferring’ strategy during the think-aloud procedure.

As shown in the above table, concerning the use of metacognitive strategies with the ten students in think-aloud, the most frequent strategies were trying to integrate one’s background knowledge (employed twice), and self-management strategy (also employed two times). However, the least frequent strategies, which were both employed only one time. On the other hand, the remaining students could neither provide answers during the pre-test nor unveil any particular strategy as noted as follows:

- I have read the section around these words to figure out their meaning and guess also their contextual meaning. (Student A).

- I have already known that the word ‘colossal’ has a Latin origin, (in French colossal), so I could understand its meaning.

- Our teacher, of the secondary school, acquainted us with this story, and I could remember the meaning of floated. (Student C).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predicting</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Integrating one’s background knowledge.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Making inferences.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identifying key words.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Advance organizers.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Planning ahead.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Translation.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Self-management.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Re-reading.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skimming</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Finding key words.</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summarizing.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Self management.</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Skipping unnecessary details.</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Re-reading.</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Integrating one’s background knowledge.</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Directed attention.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reading with a purpose.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Skimming as needed.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Selective attention.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Translation.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scanning</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Scanning.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Re-reading.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Selective attention.</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Highlighting important ideas.</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Linking sounds with visual imagery.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identifying key words.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ignoring unnecessary details.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Self-management.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inferring</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Re-reading.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summarizing.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Self-management.</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Circling key words.</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Self-questioning.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Selective attention</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion of the Results

In an attempt to consider the results obtained from think-aloud in the pre-training and post-training phases, one may notice that the most frequently used metacognitive strategy was integrating one’s background knowledge; which was employed ten times during the first and seven times during the think-aloud protocols; while the least frequent metacognitive self-management, directed attention, and self-monitoring strategies which were all evidenced not more than three times as far as the strategies unveiled while performing the five reading strategies of predicting, skimming, scanning, inferring and guessing.

Apart from the most frequent and least frequent metacognitive strategies explained previously, it was obviously noticed during the learners’ protocols that they did rely on a set of cognitive strategies (as already shown in the table above) among which the most frequent strategy was re-read (employed six times), and circling and identifying key words (employed four times). However, the least frequent of all the cognitive strategies observed in think-aloud TAP1 and TAP2 were skimming and scanning as needed (employed solely in the think-aloud two times), summarizing, and linking sounds with imagery (employed one time), knowledge transfer, translation and note-taking strategies as well.

All in all and to put it in a nutshell, it might be worthwhile to note down the following points:

- First of all, the qualitative and quantitative analysis obtained from think-aloud data has proved the fact that some participants, if not all, have already possessed some strategies which can be categorized into cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which socio-affective ones could not be unveiled during their verbal protocol.
- Secondly, some strategies; which are clearly identified and objectively explained from the inventory compiled from the works of Barker et al (1984), Wilson (1981), Hosenfeld (1977, 1979) as well as the inventory which comprises a set of learning strategies categorized into metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective strategies, which are themselves made up of some sub-categories have not been employed by the learners when being interviewed individually during think-aloud procedure.
- Finally, the results which were discussed and interpreted in a step-by-step process during this assessment verify the validity of the fourth hypothesis which states that the explicit / integrated strategy instruction can have to some extent positive effect on learners’ reading proficiency in EFL setting though results obtained in the present study have not shown statistically significant and remarkable difference in terms of the types and frequency of strategies employed which is probably due to the fact that the learners may have already learnt or possessed effective strategies before coming to the university.

Conclusion

The present article at hand has endeavoured to deal with the results and has offered interpretations for the various findings. It was designed under four research questions that the study has set out to answer. Thus, in the first part the results obtained from learners’ questionnaire have helped in answering objectively the first research question which sought to unveil the real causes behind learners’ comprehension deficiencies. Then the results, that helped to yield information about what the second research question aimed at revealing, have been considered through analysing the learners’ scores of the pre training proficiency test as far as the five reading strategies were concerned. While the third research question which has sought to assess whether the learners are metacognitively aware of the usefulness of reading strategies could be empirically answered once implementing think aloud prior to the strategy training.
The Effects of Metacognitive Awareness-Raising

HAICHA – ABDAT

instruction. The last research question, on the other hand, which was set out to unveil the possible effect of an integrated and direct instruction of metacognitive strategies in reading at awareness raising level on the learners’ reading proficiency at EFL setting was answered though a post test and another think aloud making use of course both quantitative and qualitative data whereby to analyse the type and frequency of strategies deployed as well as comparing the result obtained before receiving explicitly strategy training instruction with those obtained once strategy instruction was completed.

Thus, in an attempt to offer convincing answer to the first question, and at the same time confirm the validity of the first stated hypothesis, one may notice that the real causes behind learners’ comprehension weaknesses can be either due to:

- Their incapability to utilize adequately and effectively some cognitive reading strategies and how to transfer them in newly provided situations that condition their application
- A dilemma which faced the learners particularly when employing the embedded approach which was evidenced by numerous researchers whose findings have clearly proved that such approach generally leads to little use and transfer of strategies to other tasks.

As for the second research question which sought to assess whether the learners already possess some reading strategies or not, the analysis of the pre-test clearly proved that some learners are unable to utilize some reading strategies in the required activities, while others could utilize them in the most convenient way whenever necessary.

As regards the third research question which sought to find out whether the learners are metacognitively aware of the usefulness of the strategies employed during the pre-test, the answers could be empirically and objectively provided once the first think-aloud protocol was conducted. Their verbalized data have proved that not all the learners were consciously aware of the strategies employed, while the others were not. This difference can be regarded as a factor that helps characterize the difference between strategic learners and non-strategic ones.

As for the fourth research question, the researcher confirmed the validity of the last hypothesis which states that metacognitive reading strategy instruction at awareness-raising level had to some extent an effect on the learners’ reading proficiency and strategy use which was empirically verified during the implementation of the second think aloud protocol.

About the Author:
Mrs Yassamina HAICHA – ABDAT has a master degree in Applied Linguistics and TEFL. She has been concerned with educational linguistics, Didactics, ESP and Research Methodology. She has a five years’ experience as a teacher of English in Tlemcen University. Her research field involves: reading skill, foreign language teaching, ESP and needs analysis.

References
The Effects of Metacognitive Awareness-Raising


APPENDIX A: Learners’ Questionnaire

Dear students,

The following questionnaire submitted to you attempts systematically to collect information about your current difficulties you commonly encounter when reading an English text, and assess the strategies you may incorporate to face up these frequent issues.

Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions by checking on the answer you think it is more appropriate, and make comments when necessary.

1- Age…….
2- gender: male  female
3- Stream of secondary school studies.................................
4- Do you enjoy the Reading Comprehension Module?
   ➢ Yes       
   ➢ No

Write why ..............................................................................

5- During reading sessions, what kind of materials do you find yourself much more motivated in?
   ➢ General
   ➢ Culturally based Algerian
   ➢ British
   ➢ Others Specify..............................

6- What do you do if you encounter a word you do not understand?
   ➢ Use other words around it to figure out its meaning
   ➢ Use other reference materials such as dictionaries and textbook indices
   ➢ Pinpoint my problem by sounding it out
   ➢ Ignore it temporally, and wait for clarification

7- What do you do if you come across an entire sentence which you cannot understand?
   ➢ Keep on reading, and hope for further clarification
   ➢ Spot the unfamiliar words and look for their contextual meaning
   ➢ Disregard it completely
   ➢ Read the problematic part of the text

8- When reading an English text, what do you do to remember specific information?
   ➢ Relate it to your prior experience and knowledge
   ➢ Ignore the secondary details
   ➢ Realize I need to remember one point rather than another

9- Before you start to read, what kind of plan do you make to help you understand better?
   ➢ No specific plan is needed
   ➢ Think about what I already know about the topic
Think about why I am reading

10- Why would you go back and read the entire passage over again?
   - I cannot understand the overall meaning of the text
   - To clarify a particular idea
   - To summarize the passage

11- According to you, which sentences seem not important in reading passage?
   - Almost all sentences, otherwise they would not be mentioned at all
   - The sentences that contain details or facts
   - The topic sentences that have close relation with the main idea

12- The best reader, according to you, is the one who is capable of ….
   - Recognizing words
   - Using dictionary
   - Integrating the information in the text with what you know already
   - Differentiate between the supporting details and the unnecessary ones

13- According to you, what are the most important strategies that help learners who have
difficulties with reading better understand the text and therefore complete the tasks in
appropriate ways?
Metacognition: Components and Relation to Academic Achievement in College

Amine Amzil
Faculty of Education, Mohammed V University-Souissi
Rabat, Morocco

Elizabeth A. L. Stine-Morrow
University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, USA

Abstract
We report an investigation into the relationships of metacognition with academic achievement in college and with confidence in academic achievement. Based on a three-component model of the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI by Schraw & Dennison, 1994), findings indicated that both metacognitive monitoring and control are good predictors of academic performance in college, while metacognitive knowledge is not. Moreover, consistent with the idea that relatively poor monitoring skills contribute to lower academic achievement, ratings of confidence revealed that low achievers tend to over-estimate their performance.

Keywords: academic achievement in higher education, metacognition, metacognitive regulation
Metacognition: Components and Relation to Performance in College

Metacognition can be defined as the ability to think about and control one’s own learning and mental processes. It is widely argued that metacognition plays an important role in learning because it enables learners to reflect on and guide their learning (Schraw, 1994; Sperling, Howard, & Staley, 2004; Young & Fry, 2008). Although most research that has investigated the relationship between metacognition and achievement has been done with school-aged students (Artzt & Armour-Thomas, 1992; Meyers, Lytle, Palladino, Devenpeck, & Green, 1990; Olshavsky, 1976–1977), there is evidence that college students with higher metacognitive knowledge and skills are more likely to perform better on a number of measures of learning and performance than peers with low metacognition (Steinberg, Bohning, & Chowning, 1991; Maki, 1998a; Commander & Stanwyck, 1997). However, research relating metacognition and long-term academic achievement, such as measured by grade-point average (GPA) have produced inconsistent findings (Sperling et al., 2004). The present study set out to investigate this issue, by specifically focusing on the roles of the distinctive components of metacognition in academic achievement.

Metacognition: Definition and Components

According to Flavell (1976, 1979), metacognition refers to thinking about one’s own cognitive processes and comprises two aspects: (1) knowledge or awareness of cognitive processes, and (2) control of cognitive processes. This definition set the foundation for a later and widely adopted theory of metacognition suggested by Brown (1987), which conceptualized metacognition as a combination of knowledge and regulation of cognition. In fact, most modern research frames metacognition as a construct comprising knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition (Baker, 1989; Cross & Paris, 1988; Jacobs & Paris, 1987; Lin & Zabrucky, 1998; Nelson & Narens, 1990; Otani & Widner, 2005; Pareira-Laird & Deane, 1997; Schraw, 1997; Schraw & Dennison, 1994; Sungur, 2007). Knowledge of cognition refers to what learners know about themselves, their cognitive capacities, abilities, and limitations. This knowledge can be of three types: declarative, procedural, and conditional. Declarative knowledge corresponds to statable knowledge about one’s general thinking and processing abilities, as well as learning strategies (e.g., one’s knowledge that he/she does better in multiple choice questions than inference questions, that he/she performs better in a quiet environment, or that background knowledge facilitates learning new information). Procedural knowledge refers to knowledge about how to use strategies and procedures in order to optimize learning, and conditional knowledge corresponds to knowledge learners have about when and why to use strategies (Schraw & Dennison, 1994).

Regulation of cognition, on the other hand, refers to the active tracking of cognitive processes as they occur and the use of regulatory heuristics to facilitate cognitive performance (Baker & Brown, 1984; Flavell, 1979; Schraw & Moshman, 1995). According to Schraw (1994; also cf. Artzt & Armour-Thomas, 1992; Baker, 1989), regulation of cognition involves a number of specific skills, including planning, information management, monitoring, debugging, and evaluation all of which could be labeled either monitoring of cognition (one’s on-line awareness of comprehension and task performance, and the ability to engage in periodic self-testing while learning) or control of cognition (the conscious and non-conscious decisions that we make based on the output of our monitoring processes) (Nelson & Narens, 1994). Research in metacognition
Metacognition: Components and Relation

Amzil & Stine-Morrow

focuses on three main skills: knowledge of cognition, monitoring, and control (Pressley & Ghatala, 1990; Schwartz & Perfect, 2004).

Although there seems to be general agreement on what the components of metacognition are, there is also consensus that the relationship between these components remains largely unclear and under-investigated (De Corte, Verschaffel, & Op’t Eynde, 2000, Winne & Perry, 2000). This lack of insight into the relationship between metacognitive components constitutes a challenge to the development of the construct, its measurement, and its translation into training models in applied settings. Thus, in the present study, we set out to examine the interrelationships among the three metacognitive components (i.e., knowledge, monitoring, and control) as well as their distinctive contributions to academic achievement. In other words, given the key role of metacognitive sub-processes such as monitoring and control in learning, we have decided to examine metacognition under a three-component model in order to assess how it relates to/predicts college achievement. We hypothesize that breaking down regulation into its two main processes will give us a better insight into how it relates to performance.

Metacognition, Learning, and Academic Achievement

The relationship between metacognition and learning has been widely researched in the field of cognitive psychology, educational psychology, and classroom pedagogy. Compelling evidence from the metacognition literature suggest that metacognition is a strong predictor of academic success, and that metacognitively aware learners are more strategic and perform better than unaware learners (Pressley & Ghatala, 1990; Ruban, 2000; Smiteley, 2001). In general, metacognition has been investigated from two main perspectives: (1) the extent to which knowledge and regulation of cognition relate to achievement, and (2) the malleability of metacognition and impact of interventions on metacognitive skills and academic achievement. In the following paragraphs, we focus our discussion on the first perspective which is central to the present study.

Within the first perspective, researchers have adopted two main approaches to measure metacognition: the first approach focuses on paper-and-pencil instruments such as inventories, questionnaires, and self-reports that tap awareness of metacognition. This approach is used in order to look at relationships between metacognitive awareness and different achievement measures (Schraw and Dennison, 1994; Sperling et al., 2004). The second approach on the other hand examines metacognitive judgments and monitoring accuracy and their relation to various reading and memory tests (Everson & Tobias, 1998; Nietfeld, Cao, & Osborne, 2005; Schraw, 1994).

In a study examining the relationship between metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation, Schraw (1994) measured metacognitive knowledge by asking students to give estimates of their monitoring ability (Knowledge of their monitoring ability) on a series of multiple-choice reading tests. Metacognitive regulation was measured both at the local level through students’ accuracy ratings after each test, and at the global level, that is rating accuracy after completion of the eight tests. Results from this study suggested that adult students do not vary in their metacognitive knowledge as much as they do in the regulation skills. Results also suggested that metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation develop independently and that knowledge of cognition does not necessarily translate into a high degree of regulatory competence. Finally, Schraw found that differences in metacognitive knowledge translated into significant differences in test performance, confidence, and regulation of cognition, meaning that high monitors performed better and showed more confidence and accuracy than low monitors.
Everson and Tobias (1998) were interested in the relationship between metacognitive regulation in the form of knowledge monitoring accuracy and learning in college. Knowledge monitoring ability was measured as the mean differences across students’ estimates of their knowledge in a particular domain (procedural and declarative) and their actual knowledge and skill as determined by their performance on a test. Learning was measured as grade-point average. Results from this study showed significant correlations between monitoring ability and end of course grades in English, the humanities, and students’ overall GPA.

Schraw and Dennison (1994) developed a self-report measure of metacognition called the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI). The 52-item inventory tapped metacognitive knowledge and regulation. Schraw and Dennison used the MAI to examine relationships between the two components and explore its ability to predict performance. Results showed that there was strong support for the dissociation of two factors, the knowledge of cognition factor and the regulation of cognition factor. Interestingly, they found that the knowledge of cognition factor was related to higher test performance while the regulation of cognition factor was not.

In another study, Sperling et al. (2004) used the MAI to assess metacognitive knowledge and regulation in college students and reported correlations between the MAI and measures of academic achievement such as SAT scores and high school GPA. The results showed a significant correlation between the knowledge of cognition factor and the regulation of cognition factor, but no relation was found between MAI scores and academic achievement. On the other hand, the findings showed a negative correlation between MAI scores and credits dropped during the fall semester, which lead to the conclusion that metacognition as measured by the MAI may be related to the ability to manage the collegiate system. Finally, the findings showed a strong correlation between the MAI and the Learning and Study Strategies (LSS) Inventory.

Young and Fry (2008) examined the extent to which the knowledge and regulation components of the MAI relate to both broad and single measures of academic achievement in college, as measured by GPA and course grades, respectively. Results showed that both the knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition factors (as well as the composite), were predictive of both GPA and course grades, which supports a monolithic model of the MAI in contributing to performance. However, the two scales were differentiated in comparing graduate and undergraduate students in metacognition, who showed significant differences in scores on the regulation factor but not the knowledge factor. Results from this study provide support for a two-factor model, even though these factors are correlated.

While findings from the research reviewed here suggest a close relationship between metacognition and academic performance, the nature of this relationship is still not clear and research has not yet come up with definite findings as to which of the main components of metacognition has a more direct impact on achievement. Findings from researchers such as Everson and Tobias (1998), Nietfeld et al. (2005), and Schraw (1994) claim a significant correlation between regulation of cognition and measures of academic achievement such as GPA, whereas other findings from Schraw and Dennison (1994), and Young and Fry (2008) show that the relationship between metacognition and achievement at university relates more to knowledge of cognition than regulation of cognition.

The Current Study

As it has been mentioned above, the present study is an attempt to examine relationships among three metacognitive components namely knowledge of cognition, monitoring, and control, and how each of these relates to academic performance as measured by grade-point average.
average (GPA). In the same vein, it further examines the MAI as a measure of metacognition and its ability to predict performance for high and low achieving college students. In other words, we investigate the existence of any logical links that make students’ awareness of their cognition (the metacognitive knowledge dimension) and ability to control and monitor it (the metacognitive skills dimension) account for academic achievement at university level. Finally, the study explored the characteristics of high and low achievers as to metacognitive knowledge, regulation, and prediction of performance; the latest is investigated in order to find out the extent to which results from the present study corroborate findings attesting that both high and low achievers have low accuracy prediction of performance (Grabe, Bordages, & Petros 1990; Jacobson, 1990; Maki, 1998b), and that low achieving students tend to be over-confident on pre-test predictions because they have low monitoring skills (Hacker, Bol, Horgan, & Rakow, 2000).

Method

Participants

Sixty-eight students from the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences and 20 students from the Faculty of Education-Rabat, a total of 88 third-year university students were the participants in this research. The group consisted of 38 males (43.2%) and 50 females (56.8%) with an age range between 19 and 28 years, inclusive (M= 21.34, SD= 1.68).

The choice to include only third-year university students was motivated by a number of reasons: first and mainly, third-year students have accumulated enough experience with learning so that they would have a relatively mature understanding of their own learning processes, enabling them to meaningfully engage with the metacognitive statements in the inventory. Second, the accumulation of course grades over the two previous years in college provided a relatively stable measure of achievement measure. Finally, given the fact that Morocco is an Arabic-French bilingual country, English department students were selected to participate in this study to avoid the limitations and reliability issues related to translating existing instruments.

Measures

Data for the first phase of the present study consisted of scores from the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) and the students’ cumulative GPA in their first two years at university.

The Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI). The Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (Schraw & Dennison, 1994) is one of the most comprehensive surveys that assess metacognitive awareness for adult learners. This comprehensive inventory (see Appendix 1) consists of 52 statements allowing an in-depth assessment of metacognition. The MAI was selected because it provides a reliable assessment of metacognitive awareness among older students, it has good psychometric properties, and easily adapts to the three-component model of metacognition tested in this study.

Its two component categories, namely Knowledge and Regulation of Cognition can be divided into 8 sub-components, which allow computing scores for individual subcomponents. While the Knowledge component comprises statements of declarative knowledge (knowledge about self and strategies), procedural knowledge (knowledge about strategy use), and conditional knowledge (why and when to use strategies), the regulation component provides statements about planning (setting goals), information management (organization), monitoring (assessment of learning and strategy use), debugging (comprehension-error correction strategies), and evaluation (end of task analysis of performance and learning effectiveness ). Statements from the
inventory are rated in a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1: I never or almost never do this, to 5: I always or almost always do this.

Since one of the objectives in the present study is to test a three-component model of metacognition (knowledge, monitoring, and control) as opposed to Schraw’s two-component model (knowledge and regulation), the items in the MAI were grouped to form the three above-mentioned factors. While no changes were made to the knowledge of cognition scale, items from the regulation scale were divided into monitoring and control subscales based on whether the items reflected monitoring or control processes. The monitoring scale included items such as: “I ask myself periodically if I am meeting my goals”, “I consider several alternatives to a problem before I answer”, and “I ask myself if I learned as much as I could once I finish a task”, and the control scale comprised items such as: “I consciously focus my attention on important information”, “I ask others for help when I don’t understand something”, and “I organize my time to best accomplish my goals”. The rationale behind testing the three-component model of metacognition is to look closely at the interaction between monitoring and control and how it relates to performance. (Cronbach’s alphas for the reliability of the MAI originally and within the three-component model are presented in the results section)

Confidence Rating. One item tapping achievement confidence was added at the end of the MAI. This confidence in academic achievement was measured by asking participants to rate how well they thought they would perform in upcoming final exams that were scheduled one week hence. Ratings were on a 4-point scale (1=very well, 2=quite well, 3=average, 4=bad).

Students’ two-year GPA. Academic performance of the participants was measured by their cumulative GPA for the two years spent at university. In Morocco, (following the French system) successfully completing two years at university gives students the chance to join what is called “les grandes écoles” (literally translated into “the big schools”: Schools of engineering, architecture, and commerce). As proof of the successful completion of the two first years at a university, students get a ‘Diploma of General University Studies’; the translation of the French ‘Diplôme d'études universitaires générales’ (DEUG). In this system, DEUG GPA scores range from 0 to 20 with 10 being the average score and 12+ being the criterion for distinction at the end of the second year.

This mark is a cumulative average of 16 modules the students have taken during their first two years. The “DEUG” GPA was used as a measure of academic performance rather than a one-time test that would not reflect the students’ real academic level and would not be reliable enough to help categorize students as high and low achievers (in the present study we use DEUG scores and GPA interchangeably). Finally, a number of studies in the area of metacognition and self-regulated learning used cumulative GPA as a measure of academic performance and argued that it is a reliable measure in research (Everson & Tobias, 1998; Nietfeld et al, 2005; Schraw, 1994; Trainin & Swanson, 2005; Young & Fry, 2008).

Procedure
Participants were tested just before final exams of the Fall term. A meeting with the students was arranged, with the head of the English department and the professor who was teaching them. Professors were both briefed about the research objectives and data collection procedure prior to meeting the students. Students were informed about the researcher’s visit in the beginning of the class period and an explanation was given to them as to the purpose of his visit which is to collect data using a questionnaire and recruit students for a workshop (the latter is reported elsewhere). Near the end of the class period, the researcher introduced himself to the
students and explained to them the importance of participating in similar studies as a way to contribute to research. In addition to that, the researcher explained how important it was to understand each item of the inventory before answering, and rate it as accurately as possible.

Prior to completing the inventory, respondents were asked to provide their age and gender information in a section attached to the inventory. The researcher distributed the inventory and explained to the students that the information they would provide would remain confidential and used only for the purpose of the research. Participants were informed that data analysis would be conducted in the United States and that their information would be de-identified. Finally, the researcher explained the scale and encouraged students to ask questions if they had problems understanding the inventory items. Indeed, students asked questions about a number of items, particularly Item 4 of the inventory, which probed the ability to “pace oneself during study,” so the researcher provided an explanation and a few practical examples. Students were then asked to make their confidence ratings. The item was explained and students were told to be as accurate as possible. Finally, permission was secured from the students to obtain records of grades (DEUG scores) from the department office.

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the MAI Total and its subscales. The first row shows the total MAI mean for the whole group. This mean score includes students’ ratings of the 52 items of the MAI. The second and third rows respectively have mean scores and standard deviations for knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition based on Schraw’s two-component model of metacognition, while the fourth and fifth rows have means and standard deviations of monitoring and control relating the three-component model of metacognition suggested in the present study.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for MAI Scores for All Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAI Total</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Cognition</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation of Cognition</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first goal in this study was to examine scale reliabilities for alternative models of the MAI component scales and to investigate the relationships among the knowledge and regulation components of metacognition. Cronbach’s alpha for the total 52 items of the MAI was .89, and based on Schraw’s two-component model of metacognition, the knowledge of cognition factor has a reliability of .76, while the regulation of cognition has a reliability of .87. Based on the three-component model suggested and adopted in the present study, knowledge of regulation has a reliability of .76 while the two subcomponents of regulation have a reliability of .81 for control and .79 for monitoring. This model was suggested in order to look at how the two main components of regulation differentially predict achievement in college.

The second goal of the present study was to examine the extent to which metacognition predicts academic performance. The correlations among MAI scales and between MAI scales and GPA are presented in Table 2.
Table 2. *Inter-correlations among Subcomponents of Metacognition and GPA*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MAI Total</th>
<th>Knw. of Cog.</th>
<th>Reg. of Cog.</th>
<th>Monitoring</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knw. of Cognition</td>
<td>.77**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. of Cognition</td>
<td>.95**</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>.86**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.90**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>.92**</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>.96**</td>
<td>.75**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The knowledge of cognition and regulation scales were moderately inter-correlated, however, the knowledge of cognition scale was relatively less correlated with the whole instrument and with regulation and its components. More importantly, while results show that MAI can be a good predictor of GPA, correlations between subscales of the MAI and GPA clearly indicate that this correlation is driven by the monitoring and control scales rather the combination of these and knowledge of cognition. The latter does not predict GPA at all.

To better visualize the role of metacognition within subgroups of high- and low-achievers, students were categorized based on the DEUG score. This was done based on the DEUG criterion for distinction in the Moroccan and French educational systems where a distinction starts at the score of 12 out of 20 (12/20) and above (as explained in the measures section). Students with DEUG scores of 12 and higher were classified as high achievers (n=38); students with DEUG scores lower than 12 were classified as low achievers (n=50). Table 3 shows means and standard deviations for the MAI and its subscales among high and low achievers.

Table 3. *Means and Standard Deviations of the MAI among High and Low Achievers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Achievers</th>
<th>Low Achievers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAI Total</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Cognition</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation of Cognition</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show a significant difference between high and low achievers in MAI total, \( t(86) = 3.22, p < .05 \), however, the differences between high and low achievers were specific to the regulation components. Scale scores for the MAI were analyzed in a 2 (Academic achievement group: high, low) x 2 (MAI scale: knowledge, regulation) repeated measures ANOVA, in which the MAI scale was measured within-subjects. The interaction between metacognition scale and achievement, shown in Figure 1, was significant \( F(1.86)= 22.10, p < .001 \). This shows that the metacognitive advantage among high-achieving students was totally driven by the regulation factor of metacognition. To examine whether the advantage of high achievers could be further localized to the monitoring or control component of regulation, we analyzed metacognitive scores in a 2 (Academic achievement group) x 2 (MAI scale: monitoring, control). This interaction was not significant \( F(0.00044)= .001, p=.98 \) showing
that the advantage in regulation among high achievers was equally attributable to the two sub-components of regulation namely, monitoring and control.

Figure 1. *MAI Scale Scores as a Function of Academic Achievement*

The third and last goal of the present research was to examine the relationship between confidence rating and achievement both for the whole group and groups by achievement. Results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *Correlations for Performance Confidence with GPA and with Metacognitive Component Scores.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>MAI Tot.</th>
<th>MAI Kn</th>
<th>MAI Reg</th>
<th>Monitor</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL PARTICIPANTS</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>-.33**</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.36**</td>
<td>-.39**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Achievers Only</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Achievers Only</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>-.35*</td>
<td>-.38**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlations among Confidence judgment, GPA and metacognitive components for all participants were calculated. Results show an overall negative correlation between GPA and confidence rating. However, examining correlations between GPA and confidence rating in high
and low achievers shows that confidence rating is negatively correlated with GPA for low achievers while it shows no correlation in high achievers. Results also show that confidence rating is negatively correlated with the MAI and all its subscales for low achievers while they show no relation for high achievers.

**Discussion**

The present study explored relationships among components of metacognition, and between metacognition and academic performance measured by GPA. In the same vein, it examined the extent to which confidence relates to metacognition and academic performance.

For the first objective here-above, findings indicate a strong correlation among metacognitive components both in the two-component and the three component factors. These findings support previous attempts to look at relations among metacognitive factors in the MAI (Schraw, 1994; Sperling et al., 2004, Young and Fry, 2008).

When it comes to the relation between achievement and metacognition, high achievers showed more awareness of their metacognitive knowledge and skills than low achievers, and while scores for general metacognition are not significantly different, scores for metacognitive regulation and its subcomponents show a wider gap between the two groups. This finding supports those of Schraw (1994) and Young and Fry (2008) who found that more experienced and less experienced learners differ in metacognitive regulation but not in metacognitive knowledge. The results also show a significant correlation between overall metacognition and GPA, as well as a strong correlation between regulation and GPA. These results support the findings indicating that metacognition is set of skills that are highly correlated to academic success (Garcia & Pintrich, 1994; Pintrich 1994), and that metacognition is a strong predictor of academic success in college (Ruban, 2000; Smitely, 2001). It also corroborates with research indicating that metacognitively aware learners are more strategic and perform better than unaware learners (Garner & Alexander, 1989; Pressley & Ghatala, 1990). However, a closer look at the interaction between achievement and sub-components of metacognition showed the correlation between metacognition and achievement to be driven only by the regulation component of metacognition. This finding raises questions as to the inconsistency in the literature on metacognition and achievement which could be due to the varying involvement of knowledge in measuring metacognition, while the operative elements are really only monitoring and control.

Regarding the third goal of this study, results indicate that, in the whole sample, there was a negative relationship between confidence and both metacognition and GPA but when one looks at group differences among high and low achievers, the negative correlation was only true for low achievers, since confidence results for high achievers show no relationship with neither metacognition nor GPA. This is in support of findings by Jacobson, (1990), and Maki, (1998b) indicating that both high and low achievers have low accuracy prediction of performance, and that low achieving students tend to be over-confident on pre-test predictions because they have low monitoring skills (Hacker et al., 2000).

**Implications and future research**

As findings from the present research indicate, metacognition and more particularly regulation of cognition is central to effective learning. Consequently, it is essential that instructors devote time to tapping their students’ metacognitive knowledge and regulation, and accordingly plan subsequent metacognitive training for those lacking metacognitive skills. This
can be easily done via the MAI, the easy-to-use instrument in classroom settings which is not only a reliable tool for measuring metacognition, but a rich metacognitive-strategy base for planning remedial training that targets specific aspects of metacognition. Furthermore, the MAI could be used as an instrument to predict students’ performance in college if it is administered with placement and/or entrance tests in college. This could provide instructors with a strong and reliable tool to anticipate students’ low performance and remedy to it through both effective placement of students or tutoring programs for at-risk students. Future research should use experimentation to examine effective methods of training students in metacognitive skills that link to academic achievement. Moreover, it would be interesting to design a metacognitive intervention that is based on the skills in the MAI to assess the extent to which metacognition, as measured by the MAI, links to performance in an experimental setting.

Acknowledgments
We thank the Fulbright Commission and the Moroccan-American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange for providing this wonderful research opportunity at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Special thanks are also due to Dr. Badia Zerhouni from the College of Education “Faculté des Sciences de l’Education- Rabat, Morocco” for her contribution to this modest work which is part of a doctoral dissertation.

References


Appendix 1: *the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory*

**The Inventory**

The information hereunder shall remain confidential and used only for the purpose of the present research.

Full Name:  
Age:  
Gender:  M  F

Email address:

**Section 1**

**Directions:** Listed below are statements about what people do while learning. Five numbers follow each statement (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) below and each number means the following:

1 means “I never or almost never do this.”
2 means “I do this only occasionally.”
3 means “I sometimes do this.” (About 50% of the time.)
4 means “I usually do this.”
5 means “I always or almost always do this.”

After reading each statement, circle the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that best describes you, using the scale provided. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers to the statements in this inventory. It is a simple matter of what is true for you.

Thank you very much for your participation!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I ask myself periodically if I am meeting my goals.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I consider several alternatives to a problem before I answer.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I try to use strategies that have worked in the past.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I pace myself while learning in order to have enough time.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I understand my intellectual strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I think about what I really need to learn before I begin a task</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I know how well I did once I finish a test.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I set specific goals before I begin a task.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I slow down when I encounter important information.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I know what kind of information is most important to learn.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. I ask myself if I have considered all options when solving a problem. 1 2 3 4 5
12. I am good at organizing information. 1 2 3 4 5
13. I consciously focus my attention on important information. 1 2 3 4 5
14. I have a specific purpose for each strategy I use. 1 2 3 4 5
15. I learn best when I know something about the topic. 1 2 3 4 5
16. I know what the teacher expects me to learn. 1 2 3 4 5
17. I am good at remembering information. 1 2 3 4 5
18. I use different learning strategies depending on the situation. 1 2 3 4 5
19. I ask myself if there was an easier way to do things after I finish a task. 1 2 3 4 5
20. I have control over how well I learn. 1 2 3 4 5
21. I periodically review to help me understand important relationships. 1 2 3 4 5
22. I ask myself questions about the material before I begin. 1 2 3 4 5
23. I think of several ways to solve a problem and choose the best one. 1 2 3 4 5
24. I summarize what I’ve learned after I finish. 1 2 3 4 5
25. I ask others for help when I don’t understand something. 1 2 3 4 5
26. I can motivate myself to learn when I need to 1 2 3 4 5
27. I am aware of what strategies I use when I study. 1 2 3 4 5
28. I find myself analyzing the usefulness of strategies while I study. 1 2 3 4 5
29. I use my intellectual strengths to compensate for my weaknesses. 1 2 3 4 5
30. I focus on the meaning and significance of new information. 1 2 3 4 5
31. I create my own examples to make information more meaningful. 1 2 3 4 5
32. I am a good judge of how well I understand something. 1 2 3 4 5
33. I find myself using helpful learning strategies automatically. 1 2 3 4 5
34. I find myself pausing regularly to check my comprehension. 1 2 3 4 5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know when each strategy I use will be most effective.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask myself how well I accomplish my goals once I’m finished.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I draw pictures or diagrams to help me understand while learning.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask myself if I have considered all options after I solve a problem.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to translate new information into my own words.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I change strategies when I fail to understand.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the organizational structure of the text to help me learn.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I read instructions carefully before I begin a task.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask myself if what I’m reading is related to what I already know.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I reevaluate my assumptions when I get confused.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I organize my time to best accomplish my goals.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learn more when I am interested in the topic.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to break studying down into smaller steps.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I focus on overall meaning rather than specifics.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask myself questions about how well I am doing while I am learning something new.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask myself if I learned as much as I could have once I finish a task.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I stop and go back over new information that is not clear.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I stop and reread when I get confused.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 2**

Please underline the answer that applies to you.

1. How well do you think you will do in the upcoming finals?
   - very well
   - quite well
   - average
   - bad
Perceptions of Bilingual Identity among Arabic-English Speakers in North America

Jamie Elizabeth Gabrini

Department of Education
D’Youville College, Buffalo, New York
USA

Abstract
This grounded theory study results from interviews with seven bilingual Arabic-English adults living in the United States. Participants were interviewed about their experiences as bilinguals, their perceptions of bilingualism, and their interpretations of American perceptions. Data was compared against previous research about bilingualism and relevant news stories were considered. Based on participant experiences, the overarching theme was the experiential dichotomy between men and women and how shifted identities affected home-culture relationships.

Keywords: Gender, identity, intercultural communication, bilingualism
Introduction

Arabic, as a language and as a culture, is still addled with confusion in the United States. Due to post 9/11 hostilities between the US and the Middle East, Americans have exhibited a tendency to blur the delineations between Arabic and Islam and extremism and terrorism. Too often, media depictions are limited to violent fundamentalists, thereby creating a threatening stereotype in the American public consciousness.

Middle Eastern image problems are particularly salient in Western New York. Lackawanna, a suburb of Buffalo, became infamous for ‘The Lackawanna Six,’ a group of childhood friends arrested and sentenced as terrorists for visiting a training camp run by Osama bin-Laden before 2001 (Buffalo News, 2009). Western New York also witnessed the gruesome case and conviction of Muzzammil Hassan for beheading his wife in early 2011 (Huffington Post, 2011). Despite strong evidence of severe domestic violence throughout the course of the Hassans’ marriage, popular media debated whether Aasiya’s death was an ‘honor killing,’ an act supposedly justified by the Qu’ran to preserve family honor.

Since language and culture are so deeply interwoven, it is difficult for non-Arabs and/or non-Muslims to understand nuances and delineations. Aburumuh, Smith, & Ratcliffe explored confusion of terminology and ideology in North America reporting that many participants were unsure of popular concepts about the role of women in both Islamic and Arabic societies. What does it mean to be Arab? What does it mean to be Muslim? And how is that expressed by Arab bilinguals currently in the States?

Literature Review

Understanding how language can affect self-view is complicated because language penetrates every aspect of our consciousness. Although thoughts are abstract, the human ability to express thoughts within the parameters of a language provides shape and structure to such abstractions. Can the possibilities and limitations of a given language, then, shape possibilities for understanding the surrounding world?

Although considered strictly behavioristic in his work, Whorf (1941) explored how words elicit certain behaviors based on the ways people have come to understand their meanings. The implications are important because words give shape to abstraction and the meanings attached to utterances are internalized enough to elicit responses without further direction. This indicates that language can affect the way in which different people conceptualize the world.

Boroditsky (2001, 2009, 2010) has performed several studies about the inextricability of language and cognition, including how varying spatial descriptions of time that are culturally based (2001) and gendered descriptions of objects that vary by culture (2009). Boroditsky’s work implies that the words available in our languages provide boundaries to possible descriptions, therefore limiting our perceptions, as well.

Despite the large role language plays in developing culturally bound perceptions, is it the only factor? What other factors could shed light on our preconceptions of self and of others?

Expressing identity via discourse is both intentional and inevitable; even if one attempts to adopt an accent to mask his/her true background, this masking speaks volumes about his/her intentions. This intentional construction of identity occurs via indexicality, which requires speakers to provide cues, or indexes within an interaction context to be understood by a listener (Bucholz & Hall, 2005). Indexicality depends on cultural beliefs to be understood; in other words, indexes are the cues used among members of the same speech community as indicators of symbolic competence and meaning. Indexes may very well be available to all speakers of the
same language, but they will only be interpreted as intended by members of the same speech community. Indexicality can, then, be used as a tool of exclusion or inclusion depending on a speaker’s intentions. Indexicality may be used by speakers of subordinate linguistic communities to express pride of heritage or ethnicity, or as a way to distance oneself from the oppressive, dominating culture.

Indexicality is a powerful tool in identity-construction, but only if understood as intended. The interpretation relies upon the audience, and they provide another partial account. This partial ‘other,’ or partialness (Bucholz & Hall, 2005), is a crucial component of identity construction because it provides the catalyst for reaction: if one is seen as, for example, African-American, he/she will be treated as such, despite his/her indexes intended to be viewed as Dominican. Our partial views of ourselves will likely affect the way in which we as people assess our interactions, and alternatively, other’s partial views of us will affect their assessments of those same interactions.

Indexicality and partialness help explain the dichotomy between self-view and societal view, which is important when one considers interpretations of speech and speech communities. This dichotomy provides a bit of insight into the chasm between popular conceptions of Arabs and Muslims: the indexes provided by Arabic or Islamic speakers are not understood by those of other speech communities. Interlocutors then interpret indexes and construct their own partial identities, largely based on media representations.

Despite the influx of immigrants and refugees from war-torn countries in the Middle East, few studies have examined how Arabic speaking adults living in the United States view themselves and their language. Dahbi (2004) claims that in our current post-9/11 world ‘English is also referred to as a major cultural weapon that had been used by the West to impose its domination’ and feels that such perceptions do not allow for genuine discourse ‘as a means of cultural exchange and mutual understanding.’ Due to this lack of discourse, is it reasonable to assume negativity from Arabic speakers towards English? Or, from English speakers towards Arabic? How does this effect speakers of both? Further, how do media representations of women affect speakers’ views? Little research to date has explored any of these questions.

**Theoretical Framework**

This grounded theory study was performed through both constructivist and social constructivist lenses. Specifically, it is informed by the Bakhtinian (1981) view of dialogic discourse. For discourse to be truly dialogic, both or all interlocutors are changed by each other’s input, even if such changes are barely perceptible. Here, the concept of dialogic discourse will support Bucholz & Hall’s sociolinguistic analysis of identity construction through interaction (2005). Bucholz & Hall propose five principles to challenge traditional views of identity construction that allow for flexibility; identity is not static and is in constant, continuous flux. The five principles are (a) emergence, which states that identity is not pre-fabricated but rather an emergent product, (b) positionality, which states that interlocutors position themselves according to local social categories rather than analytical categories, (c) indexicality, which states that interlocutors provide culturally specific indexes that rely upon social ideology to be understood, (d) relationality, which states that identity is constructed in relation to other positions and societal exchanges, and (e) partialness, which states that identity is in part deliberate, but also in part determined by those who interpret it. These works both guide my inquiry and the analysis of my data: how do the five principals of identity construction affect the self-view in the context of Bakhtinian dialogical discourse?
Methodology
In order to best access, understand, compare, and describe the experiences of the participants, I developed a grounded theory study. Grounded theory is well-suited for such work because it relies in part upon theoretical sampling, interviewing, and constant comparison with data and against literature (Creswell, 2007; Glaser, 2002). Despite several well-formulated criticisms of it (Creswell, 2007; Glaser, 2002), a constructivist grounded theory paradigm holds literature as an integral part of analysis and not as a separate entity entirely (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006, p. 29). It also allows for researcher subjectivity within grounded theory analysis: despite safeguards against bias, subjectivity is inherent in interpretation, and the interplay between researcher, participants, and literature constructs meaning and theory (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, p. 26).

Participants
Research participants were seven bilingual Arabic-English adults. The definition of being bilingual is hotly debated, but Baker (1996) posits that bilingualism can take many forms and by abandoning the ‘monolingual’ view of bilingualism we can view the use of each language independent of use of the other. Drawing from this view, bilingualism is here defined as communicative competence in two languages and participants set the parameters for determining the extent of their own proficiencies.

Procedure
Participants were largely recruited through snowball sampling via friends, colleagues, and other participants. One participant clarified that she was a native Farsi speaker and that Arabic was her third language. Both participant and researcher agreed to conduct the interview anyway because it was determined that her experiences are in-line with those of native-born Arabic speakers. This will be further discussed in the findings section.

Data collection
This study is based upon recorded interviews with participants. All interviews, except one, were conducted in person, and the exception was the telephone interview that became necessary when the participant was called out of town. As each interview was conducted, field notes were taken on word choice, hesitations, body language, or any other possible cultural cues that were then expanded into narratives to best capture the essence of each participant’s experience.

The interview questions were based around personal experience with bilingualism, but they served more as guidelines than a strict format. Maintaining ease and naturalness during the interviews was very important, so participants often pursued different topics. Despite being off-topic at times, this approach provided richer descriptions rather than simply recording replies to a pre-fabricated list of questions. It also enabled us to access a wide swathe experiences through story telling which was crucial because participant experiences varied greatly due to age, gender, ethnicity, country of origin, home language, and educational level.

Although the interviews were the primary source of data, data drawn from literature memos on relevant research were also included. Such memos helped situate the data within the context of bilingualism and gender in society.
Data analysis

Data analysis began during the interviews. Recording interviews allowed me to take notes as we talked, which were then expanded and used to help create categories.

After all of the interviews were conducted and transcribed, categories were finalized and data was coded accordingly. Themes were then compared for possible connections or contradictions (Seidman, 2006), which was then linked to media stories and previous research about identity. Finally, after all data was analyzed, coded, and compared, findings were interpreted to develop theory through a social constructivist lens.

The Interviews

The following table displays important demographics about each participant that may influence the experiences and perceptions of each. Participants represented both genders almost equally, a wide range of home countries and included a 20 year span. Such a wide span allowed for varying experiences to be explored.

Table 1. Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>Languages Spoken</th>
<th>Years in US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Iraqi Kurd</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>Kurdish, Arabic, English</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Completed bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>English, Arabic, German</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faid</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Iraqi</td>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>Arabic, English</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aadam</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Palestinian</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>Arabic, English, Hebrew</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibrahim</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>Completed master’s degree</td>
<td>Arabic, English</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roshni</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>Doctoral student</td>
<td>Arabic, English</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zahra</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Completed law degree</td>
<td>Farsi, English, Arabic, Hindi, Urdu</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To follow are descriptions of the interviews in order to provide some insight into their experiences.

Anna

Although not a native-born Arabic speaker, Anna responded to an online ad for participants because she worked as an Arabic tutor and therefore felt close to fluent. She seemed interesting to interview because she would provide a voice for those who chose to learn the
language, rather than those who were born into it. Anna agreed to meet at a coffee shop near her job during her lunch hour on a Saturday.

Anna arrived about five minutes late, apologetic for her tardiness. She was very tall—it seemed over six feet—with her hair pulled back in a braid and a small silver stud in her nose. She was Caucasian with large, expressive hazel eyes lined in black eyeliner. She otherwise wore no make up. She wore a t-shirt from her company with a nametag clipped by one of her shoulders.

Anna sat and listened as the researcher explained a bit of background information about the study and she said she was pleased to be able to participate. She described her own background and educational history, leading up to her learning Arabic and traveling extensively through the Middle East. She never mentioned why, precisely, she was first attracted to Arabic culture but her passion was evident with her word choices and her inflection as she spoke.

Anna’s hands mostly rested in her lap during our conversation, unless she was making a particularly impassioned statement. Her brows would knit with sympathy as she spoke of the suspicion many Arabic-speakers met in America, or as she spoke of her fiancé in Syria. It was a struggle to stay on track with the interview and Anna, too, would often stop and redirect her line of reasoning due to time constraints.

The conversation began to wind down, the discussion turned to a Vogue magazine article about the Syrian president, which she requested to read. She gave her address and asked that she be sent a copy of this article as well. Anna was fascinating and has chosen a challenging path in her life. By converting to Islam, she has created a distance between herself and her family, and by becoming engaged to a Syrian man, she has set herself up for suspicion.

Mohammed

While seeking to recruit participants for this study, an email was sent to a local K-12 Arabic public school. The principal responded that she would forward the email and information to teachers to see if there were interested in participating. Mohammed replied about a week later and said he would be willing to be interviewed. He agreed to meet at a coffee shop near his university midday on a Saturday.

Mohammed was a handsome young man in his early 20s. He carried himself confidently and made eye contact throughout the interview. His ethnic background (Kurdish) seemed to be a source of pride, as was his mastery of English.

Throughout the interview, Mohammed was eating, so some of his answers may have been shorter than they would be otherwise. However, it is possible that this brevity was also an indication of sensitivity: although he seemed comfortable, he was discussing his background with a complete stranger, and so his brevity may have instead been an indication of discomfort or insecurity.

Regardless, Mohammed talked easily throughout the interview, seemingly self-assured and relaxed. He indicated a closeness of family that contrasted with Anna. In fact, the theme of family ties permeated his interview—he mentioned an uncle who sponsored his family to come here, a sister who had struggled a bit more in English than he did, and his father who was currently working on a graduate degree as well. Despite any difficulties Mohammed may have faced, he expressed his self-confidence and satisfaction with his achievements and indicated a desire to further the achievement of himself and his family.

Roshni
Roshni was referred to researcher through a mutual friend. She was contacted, and it was stressed that participation was completely optional and that she was under no obligation to participate. She responded immediately noting that she was happy to help out. Roshni proposed to meet at her office a few nights later.

Roshni appeared to be around 40 or so, with thick black curly hair. She looked tired and maybe even discouraged, but this was a feeling that could have been due to the intensity of her profession.

Roshni had a very strong presence and seemed intelligent, eloquent, and a little short of patience with those not up to par. She talked briefly about frustrations with her studies. Her frustrations could also be part of her tired appearance.

Throughout the interview, Roshni responded slowly and with precision. Not a word was misspoken. She would pause to collect her thoughts before continuing, and would very often give extremely detailed stories in response. However, when she discussed her family, she would shift in her seat or cast her eyes downward, body language that indicated her discomfort.

Roshni’s descriptions about her choices in education were similar to Anna’s descriptions and were in contrast to Mohammed’s descriptions: it seemed that, so far, further education (and the bilingualism that came with it) distanced women from their families by defying familial and cultural expectations. Mohammed, on the other hand, noted the benefits of his bilingualism for his family.

Aadam

The researcher knew Aadam through previous tutoring experiences together. Therefore, when considering participants, Aadam immediately came to mind because: (1) Although he was born in Israel, he is Arab and he is a devout Christian. This combination might provide a unique perspective, and (2) Aadam speaks English without a noticeable accent. His multilingual ease might provide a unique perspective.

Aadam was out of town when first emailed, but he replied that he would be happy to participate when he returned, so a time was arranged. When he arrived for the interview, he was as energetic as ever. Aadam speaks very quickly in English, and one can only imagine his Arabic must be the same. Like Mohammed, Aadam stressed the utility of his bilingualism over any problems that might be linked to it. He mentioned several times that it has enabled him to translate for incoming refugees and at churches. His dedication to community service was evident.

However, unlike other participants, Aadam seemed to have thought about issues related to language before the interview. Perhaps his experiences as an Arabic instructor allowed him to become more self-aware. Whatever the cause, Aadam hesitated less than anyone else and provided many more direct answers.

As the interview finished up, Aadam made the differentiation between language and culture. This was really the essence of the interview: language was often seen as representative of culture. He liked this and offered a few more observations in response.

Zahra

Zahra was the wild card of all participants. She was a native Farsi speaker from Iran and remained committed to Iranian causes. She also spoke Arabic, Urdu, and Hindi. Despite this her multilingualism being slightly off target, we agreed to interview anyway. Her focus on Qu’ranic law might put perceptions in perspective. She offered to meet at her law office.
For the interview, Zahra wore jeans and a t-shirt and explained that she was not seeing any clients that day. She was tall, which thick curly black hair and black-lined eyes and was very elegant and poised, even in her jeans. As this study was explained more fully, she listened thoughtfully. She replied to interview questions slowly and carefully. She did not seem hesitant in any way and she precisely enunciated her words.

Zahra fully explored all of the questions asked and was not brief with any. Since she had been in the US for thirty years, she had many experiences from which to draw. She has also straddled the Iranian and American communities and described criticisms she has received from both. Despite the criticisms, she did not appear upset or bitter in any way.

The issue of family came up once again, just as it had with all of the participants so far. Family ties were growing increasingly complicated. Although Zahra did not note the distance felt by both Anna and Roshni, she said that she had to ask her parents for help with Farsi because hers was frozen at an adolescent proficiency. She noted the discomfort that came with such requests.

Zahra firmly noted that the US is her home. All of her family was now here, and she said that is what ultimately determined home for her.

Faid
Faid already know the researcher for several years before the interviews, so his family history as refugees from Iraq was already known. Because he was called out-of-state during the time of the interviews, he agreed to a phone interview.

It was rather difficult because phone interviews do not allow access to body language. Further, although the researcher and Faid were acquaintances, they were not familiar enough to understand reasons for pauses or breaks in the conversation. For this reason, even field notes were difficult to take.

It is therefore imperative to take note of what Faid did not discuss: Faid had been arrested on petty charges a few years back and spent close to 9 months in jail due to mistaken identity. His name came up as not having a green card, which he does indeed have. He was sent to a state other than the one in which he had been arrested and could not contact his family. According to Faid, the entire reason for the debacle was that he was driving while Arabic.

That said, it is unclear whether this is fact or whether this is how he explained his long absence. Without access to his records, there is no way of knowing what the actual charges were. Was her really profiled, or is that his way of covering up a more serious offense? There is simply no way to know.

Ibrahim
Ibrahim initially emailed in response to an ad placed seeking participants. He replied that he was happy to participate and proposed to host a dinner at his home. Since the researcher and Ibrahim had mutual friends, this seemed a welcome option.

Ibrahim’s family was present during the interview and he proudly introduced everyone. His children were warm and friendly. Ibrahim’s friend Ali was over, who was also originally from Egypt. Ibrahim and Ali discussed general things at first as Ibrahim’s wife, Yasmin, came in to say hello before disappearing into the kitchen to prepare the meal.

When interview began, Ali stayed, which made for a very relaxed and friendly setting. He teased Ibrahim occasionally about his English, and Ibrahim teased Ali back about his Arabic (which apparently is not very strong since Ali grew up in the States.) Ibrahim was very
expressive and did not withhold emotions at all. When he described his feelings about certain things, the emotions registered immediately on his face.

After the interview, Yasmin brought out a large meal and set up the children to eat in the kitchen. Yasmin served a pasta dish, an Egyptian soup, and a salad. Everything was delicious, and their trust and generosity was impressive. The discussion continued for several hours, including everything from politics to education and cultural difference.

Findings

Within each interview, several themes continued to appear regardless of who was being interviewed at the moment. The initially broad categories of ‘distance’ and ‘assistance’ were delineated into the codes of ‘freedom,’ ‘ambition,’ ‘pride,’ ‘benefit,’ and ‘liability.’ For the purposes of analysis and discussion, these terms are defined as follows:

**Freedom** includes the linguistic and cultural flexibility and competencies to maneuver within two (or more) domains to best express oneself.

**Ambition** includes the desire to advance and achieve beyond that which is deemed average, and is a direct result of access provided by bilingualism.

**Pride** includes the self-confidence and satisfaction that come with the knowledge of achieving bilingualism. Pride also includes dissatisfaction when one does not understand or forgets parts of either language.

**Benefit** includes the advantages that one has obtained with bilingualism, either for self or for broader community.

**Liability** includes the disadvantages that have come with bilingualism.

It is important to note that bilingualism is not seen in isolation. Rather, it is representative of the education and circumstances that lead up to mastery of two or more tongues. Indeed, none of these themes occurred in isolation. Pride and liability could be expressed consecutively and are firmly embedded in the participant’s perception. All of these perceptions are also rooted in participant experience with different communities and families.

Bucholz & Hall’s components of identity construction (emergence, positionality, indexicality, relationality, and partialness) are the connectors between themes. Each participant expressed an emerging identity only because identity is never fixed. Their current position, as a graduate student or as a long-time resident, guided their responses at the moment because it is part of the lens through which they currently view the world. Indexicality linked their experiences with those of friends and family; for example, Aadam noted the subtle jokes he could make with bilinguals, all of which would not be possible without the indexes he provided. Relationality situated each participant within the context of interviewer-interviewee, a setting that likely provided insights unlike those that would crop up in natural conversation. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the themes developed here can help explain the fuller picture when one considers partialness: although participants described their experiences, situating them and comparing them against each other and against current events shows that their interpretation is only partial. The interpretation and the perceptions of others reveal a side of identity that they had not.

**Theme: Freedom**

Freedom was a universal theme. All of the participants described their bilingualism as a means of access to opportunities they would not otherwise have. For Anna, Roshni, Mohammed, Zahra, and Ibrahim these opportunities were crucial to their lives. Anna was engaged to a Syrian
man, an event unlikely had she not been fluent in Arabic and traveling through the Middle East. Roshni was in New York studying, another even unlikely without her bilingualism. Mohammed described his ease in English and his ability to work within it to help bewildered travelers, a phenomenon that would not be possible without his fluency in both Arabic and English. Zahra managed to complete a law degree and publish in English, both of which were probably not possible in her native Farsi due to her rather low level of proficiency. Ibrahim was an educator, an opportunity that simply would not exist for him without his bilingualism.

However, Aadam and Faid both downplayed such freedom of expression. Aadam felt that he took freedom of expression due to his bilingualism for granted. Still, even he felt that his bilingualism allowed him to play with language in a way that monolingualism would not permit. Faid, however, only noted the negative image of this: he expressed frustration when he could not find words because he had both languages to work within.

Theme: Ambition

Roshni, Zahra, Anna, Aadam, Mohammed, and Ibrahim all expressed ambition through their interviews. For Roshni, her personal ambition was what led to the distance between herself and her family, a problem that will be explored further under the theme of ‘Liability.’ Anna, too, had set clear goals that Arabic helped her achieve: she loved the language and cultures and therefore converted to Islam and will be marrying into Syrian life. Zahra’s ambition led her to the US, and her ambition was further driving her mastery of language because criticism of her and her ‘Americanness’ was driving her to perfect her academic Farsi. She may not have felt the need to do this without a driving sense of ambition. Finally, Ibrahim wanted to further his education by pursuing a doctoral degree. All of his academic goals had been supported by his bilingualism, and his current ambition, as well.

Aadam’s ambition took a slightly different tone. He was driven to work within both languages, but part of his drive is religious. He was a devout Christian and since most of his evangelical work has taken place in America, he affiliated it more with English. Still, he was keenly aware of the insights that bilingualism have afforded him and noted that he was able to take the best of both cultures in order to be a better person.

Mohammed’s ambition was slightly more subtle. He discussed wanting to further his education here in the US, an ambition that is possible through his bilingualism. Faid was the only participant who did not discuss ambition, beyond that of helping his siblings with their Arabic.

Theme: Pride

Like ambition and freedom, pride was also expressed by almost all participants. Pride took two forms: while all expressed self-satisfaction in achieving bilingualism, Mohammed, Faid, and Ibrahim described shame and embarrassment when they could not recall certain words or structures. In fact, Mohammed was particularly bothered that someone recently noticed his accent. Although the intention was not negative at all, Mohammed still felt that it signified him as an ‘other’ and not as a native speaker of English. It ultimately detracted from his accomplishment. Thus, the pride he had previously felt turned to shame when his self-perception was challenged. Mohammed similarly reported that he does not ‘like to see myself’ as a non-native speaker. He was very bothered if an American noted his accent or other elements of language that indicated his second language learner status. This indicated that his pride was injured because he didn’t note that people made such comments as criticism.
Theme: Benefit and liability

Perhaps the most significant findings from this study are the categories of Benefit and Liability. These two themes clearly fall along gender lines.

All of the participants reported benefits to some degree, but the men described more overt benefits. For example, Aadam described being able to translate for members of his church, and Faid talked about using his linguistic skills to help keep his younger siblings proficient. Ibrahim used his mastery of both to petition that New York State offer Arabic as a Regents-level course, which would allow students to study it for diploma credit.

However, the men did note a few negative experiences associated with language use. Faid briefly mentioned of suspicion among non-Arabic speakers, but it is safe to assume this has happened often enough to make an impression worth recalling during the interview. Ibrahim described Americans yelling ‘This is America – Speak American!’ to him and his wife as they walk down the street speaking Arabic. Although these instances are not due to bilingualism, it is their bilingualism that allowed them to be insulted: they understood the criticisms perfectly well because they were proficient in English.

Although the men described some instances that were most likely the result of ignorance, the women reported negativities that became crucial aspects of their lives and their identities. Despite, or perhaps because of, having higher levels of education then the men, the women interviewed described liabilities associated with their bilingualism, and for each, the liabilities were big. Anna noted ‘lingering animosity’ among family members for her conversion to Islam. She also was questioned by the FBI for her ties to Syria, an experience that certainly sets her apart from most young American women. Anna also felt a responsibility to show Arab culture and Islam as deeper than what most people see on television. She called herself a ‘cultural ambassador,’ a weighty title indeed.

Zahra also described the liability attached to her ‘Americanness’ that none of the men described. She has received criticism from the Iranian community for her lack of Farsi because they see it as evidence of her cultural transformation. In doing so, her extensive studies about – and advocacy for – women’s rights in the Muslim world are belittled as being from the American perspective. Although Zahra did not address this specifically, it is clear that language can lessen the societal importance of her work due to pre-conceived notions.

Finally, and perhaps most drastically, was Roshni. Roshni had the unique experience of being placed in one of the top schools in her area as a child, and then being later chastised for her academic pursuits. She noted several times the distance that her education, which is directly linked to her bilingualism, has forced between her and her home culture. Even her brother has commented on her lifestyle as a single woman. Roshni specifically created more distance between herself and the Muslim population at her university in New York for what she perceived as a snub by one of the male members; although she now admits she may have been too sensitive, her fears are well-founded. As a woman in her 40s who has never married or had children, she has chosen a strange path in the eyes of most Egyptians. Her bilingualism and education have become a liability because she is now past the marriageable age. In a society for which marriage is seen as the ultimate goal for women, Roshni poses a threat to those values.

Discussion

Linking these themes back to the initial research questions, then, it is clear that the participants described a wide range of experiences as bilinguals while living in North America. For the most part, the experiences have been positive because their bilingualism is invariable so
deeply connected to education that they have experienced achievement, both personally and for the larger community. AsShaaban & Ghaith (2003) state, “The use of English… seems to be based on utilitarian and rational considerations rather than emotional or ideological ones” (p. 72). Indeed, all of the bilinguals interviewed seemed well aware of the utility of language and were adept at using it to their advantages.

Despite the tumultuous political climate, only Anna expressed fear. She was also the only participant who mentioned being investigated by the government. The current turbulence of the Arab Spring has left her fearful for the safety of her fiancé, and worried that his arrival will be delayed. Both Faid and Mohammed came to the States as refugees, but neither discussed how the recent war in Iraq has affected them. Similarly, Roshni and Aadam did not mention any personal affects resulting from the revolution in Egypt or the constant hostilities in Palestine, respectively. Ibrahim talked about how his home country of Egypt has declined, but he did not cite recent events in particular. Zahra mentioned that Americans often tell her how ‘lucky’ she is to be in the States, specifically when wars in the Middle East are front-page news. She does appear to be grateful for her life, but she seemed understandably weary of this comment.

One important consideration is that of sympathy: are Americans reacting more or less sympathetically to Arabic-speakers due to the ongoing revolutions? While the interviews focused on overall experiences and not only current ones, recent events can provide a more positive or negative spin on total experience. It would be helpful to revisit each participant in a year and determine if their perspectives have changed at all.

Only Ibrahim described hostility from Americans. Aside from a few negative experiences based on ignorant stereotyping (i.e. Zahra’s experience at the border, suspicion of Faid’s Arabic use in front of monolingual Americans), most of the participants reported Americans as being curious about their language. Anna articulated why she feels Americans are so curious and then surprised when they hear her speaking Arabic; she feels that the only times Americans hear Arabic is when it is screamed by an extremist ‘holding an AK-47’ on television. These images sully the overall image of both the language and the cultures attached. Cahill (2004) a similar phenomenon occurring with Gaelic. Gaelic speakers expressed disdain with the use of their tongue by the Irish Republican Army as a rallying cry for violence. He quotes a Protestant speaker of Gaelic as saying ‘Every time [Gerry Adams] opens his mouth he puts a nail in the coffin of the language for the [Protestants.]’ (p. 161). Anna would surely sympathize.

The findings indicate that the most important variable is that of gender. In this study, gender greatly influenced both self-perception and perceptions of others. Shaaban & Ghaith (2003) note that “… linguistic attitudes’ covers the following variables: perceptions of the utility of the foreign language compared to the native language; language as a status marker; language use in media; language use and cultural identity; language in education and society…” (p. 55). All of the women interviewed described both their own linguistics attitudes and those of others. Interestingly, they described almost no discrimination expressed via American linguistic attitudes; rather, the deepest issues stemmed from gender roles within their home cultures.

Although Sarroub (2005) highlights the differences in Yemeni and American culture, these ideas were extended to the Arabic-speaking world. Sarroub notes that American society emphasizes the individual’s moral responsibility to and for himself, but that in Arabic society, the entire community is responsible for an individual’s moral development. This has strong implications for the behavior of women and girls since modesty is a highly valued commodity. What is deemed modest varies within Arab society, but the burden of maintaining the acceptable levels falls on the shoulders of girls and women, sometimes with brutal punishment for
transgressions, both real and imagined. Although not from such a socially strict country as Yemen, Roshni’s experience with both Egyptian family members and Arab students within her graduate program show the cultural expectations tied to gender that profoundly affect her perception of self and others. Not as drastically, but still quite noticeable, is Zahra’s experience as being ‘American’ in the eyes of the Iranian audience. Was she seen as American because of her lack of Farsi, or was it more because of her passion for gender equality? The two may be so intertwined that her audience would not even be able to untangle them.

Sarroub (2005) also argues that “… the process of identity formation is one of socialization as one gains access to social institutions... but it also means that rules can be suspended and that the notion of self shifts with time and location” (p. 5). While this may be true for the male participants, none of the women seemed able to fully suspend rules about identity, at least not permanently. Roshni is in a location that allows her more freedoms than she would have in Egypt as a single woman, but she is still confronted with pre-existing attitudes about her choices and what they mean about her deeper character. Anna’s choices have lead to animosity among family members and scrutiny by the federal government. Rules of identity formation were never fully suspended for these women and they are facing the consequences.

There are several limitations to this study. The most obvious is that of the number of participants; seven people cannot be representative of the general population, particularly when Arabic is spoken is such a wide range of societies.

The second limitation is that of location. Would Arabic-English bilinguals in a different place, such as a politically conservative American city, differ in their perceptions of Americans, bilingualism, and self? Even without having interviewed any such adults, it can be assumed that the answer is yes simply because local society can certainly affect perception. All of the participants were in a fairly liberal state and were therefore surrounded by certain aspects of American culture and ideology that would likely be different elsewhere.

The biggest limitation to this study is that of educational level. All participants had at least some college classes completed, and most had (or were working towards) advanced degrees. Their bilingualism was crucial to this level of academic achievement, so it is likely that bilingualism is viewed as more of an asset than anything else. Such levels of education also indicate that participants are more likely to be based in a domain that is open to inquiry; the further one pursues one’s education, the more likely one is surrounded by curiosity rather than prejudices.

Despite these limitations, this study indicates that women have very different experiences as Arabic-English bilinguals than men do. Given the separation of the sexes in many Islamic and Arabic-speaking societies, this study raises certain questions for further investigation. Is the experience of the current participants typical of other college-educated bilingual women from the Middle East? How would religious, national, age, or cultural differences affect the findings? How do these women reconcile the benefits with the liabilities tied to their bilingualism? Future studies using discriminative sample to focus solely on similar women would provide more answers.

For the women who participated in this study, the liabilities are ultimately the results of their own choices. The women interviewed had control over their own lives, but what would this study look like if all participants were less educated? Some refugees have a 6th grade education at best. How could this study help us understand the sociocultural environment of such women to help improve their educational chances here in the United States? This is an important consideration because many immigrant women do not have many employment options here.
without English, but how can they begin to study English when they are not literate in their home language? For now, these questions will remain unanswered.

About the Author:
Jamie Elizabeth Gabrini is the Director of TESOL Education at D’Youville College in Buffalo, NY. Her research interests include identity construction among bi- and multilinguals, gendered speech, and intercultural communications.

References
English as a Foreign Language Learning Beliefs and Attitudes of Saudi College English and Non-English Majors

Hassan M. Kassem
Tanta University, Egypt & Shaqra University
Saudi Arabia

Abstract
The primary aim of the present study was to investigate EFL learning beliefs and attitudes held by a group of college Business Administration freshmen at a Saudi college. A second aim was to explore the relationship between EFL learning beliefs and attitudes in the same group of learners. Using a comparison group of English freshmen in the same college, the study also aimed to explore the differences in EFL learning beliefs and attitudes between English and non-English majors. Twenty three Business Administration freshmen and 32 English freshmen completed a 44-item questionnaire probing beliefs and attitudes towards learning English. Factor analysis of the questionnaire resulted in a 5-factor solution. The five factors are: self-efficacy, the importance of learning English, the difficulty of learning English, the nature of learning English, and threat to mother tongue/culture. Results revealed that the beliefs of the non-English majors concerning self-efficacy, and the difficulty and nature of learning English were below average. Meanwhile, their beliefs about the importance of learning English and threat to mother tongue/culture were moderate. A significant correlation was found between the non-English majors' EFL learning beliefs and attitudes, indicating that stronger beliefs about a FL are accompanied by more favorable attitudes towards learning it. As to the comparison between English and non-English majors, significant differences in EFL learning beliefs and attitudes were found between the two groups of language learners. Pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research are reported.

Keywords: EFL learning beliefs, EFL learning attitudes, English majors, non-English majors
Introduction

With the advent of cognitive psychology, the role such learner variables as learning styles, strategies, attitudes and motivations play in language learning began to capture researchers’ interest. One of the more recently investigated learner variables is learner beliefs about language learning, which refer to “general assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners, about factors influencing language learning and about the nature of language teaching” (Victori & Lockhart, 1995: 224). It has been noted that successful learners develop insightful perceptions about language learning, their own abilities and effective learning strategies. On the other hand, learners can develop uninformed or negative beliefs about language learning, resulting in their reliance on less effective strategies and negative attitude towards learning and autonomy (Victori & Lockhart, 1995; Cotterall, 1995), classroom anxiety (Horwitz, 1989; Kunt, 1997; Truitt, 1995), and poor performance (Peacock, 2001; Mori, 1999). For instance, adults who believe that children are better language learners may begin language learning with some negative expectations of their own achievement (Bernat, 2004).

Influenced by their previous language learning experiences and their own cultural backgrounds (Liao & Chiang, 2003), FL learners often hold different beliefs about FL learning. Knowledge of such beliefs may provide language educators with a better understanding of their learners’ “expectation of, commitment to, success in and satisfaction with their language classes” (Horwitz, 1988: 283). Based on this knowledge, teachers can make more informed choices about teaching (Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005; Frugé, 2007) and adopt “a more sensitive approach to the organization of learning opportunities” (Cotterall, 1999, p.494). Another purpose of identifying language learning beliefs is to investigate whether detrimental beliefs contribute to poor performance in a given group of learners, which is the case in the present study.

Research has investigated the relationship between language learning beliefs and such affective variables as anxiety (Tsai, 2004; Kunt, 1998), motivation (Kim-Yoon, 2000; Banya & Chen, 1997), and attitude (Banya & Chen, 1997). Overall, findings revealed that learners who hold positive beliefs about language learning have better affect than learners who hold negative beliefs. The relationship between EFL learning beliefs and attitudes was explored in the present study to identify whether the two variables are interrelated in the current sample. Investigating the relationship of beliefs to other factors, according to Bernat (2006: 203), “bears consequences for possible instructional intervention methods in the classroom attempting to change those beliefs, which may hinder the learning process”.

Research findings concerning the relationship between language learning beliefs and proficiency (as indicated by major in the present study) are not consistent. In a study conducted by Tanaka and Ellis (2003) the correlation between students’ responses to the belief questionnaire and their TOEFL scores was weak and statistically non-significant. Conversely, Bagherzadeh (2012) found that more proficient participants held strong beliefs in the category of “motivation and expectations” and “aptitude”. Similarly, Huang and Tsai (2003) found that there were marked differences between high and low proficiency English learners in four out of the five dimensions of the BALLI. Firstly, high proficiency learners believed that they were more equipped with special abilities for learning English. Secondly, they perceived English learning as an easy task. Thirdly, high proficiency learners perceived access to listening and reading materials, rather than translation, as more important. Fourthly, they enjoyed practicing English
with native speakers. Such inconsistent findings indicate that the relationship between beliefs about language learning and proficiency needs to be further researched.

**Statement of the problem**

Learners’ poor performance in language learning can be attributed, in part at least, to their holding negative beliefs about themselves as learners, factors influencing learning and the nature of language learning. This contention is what urged the researcher to investigate EFL learning beliefs of a group of Saudi college freshmen majoring in Business Administration (N = 23). The investigation was also inspired by the fact that students occasionally voiced negative beliefs about EFL learning, i.e., “English is complicated and difficult to learn”, “Only students majoring in English should study it”, “Some students have a special ability to learn English”, and “poor learners of English will remain so throughout years of study”. The present study therefore aimed to explore those students’ EFL learning beliefs and the relationship that might exist between their beliefs and their attitudes. In addition to this main sample, another sample of English majors (N = 32) was used as a comparison group. The aim of using that second sample was to explore if there were significant differences between the two samples in EFL learning beliefs and attitudes. More specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What are the beliefs that non-English majors hold about EFL learning?
2. What is the relationship between EFL learning beliefs and attitudes of non-English majors?
3. Are there differences between English and non-English majors in EFL learning beliefs and attitudes?

**Literature Review**

With the advent of cognitive psychology, research interest in FL has shifted from teacher-directed instruction to student-centered learning. It is now agreed upon that FL learners bring to the language classroom a complex web of attitudes, experiences, expectations, and beliefs about language and language learning (Benson, 2001). That such beliefs affect language learning has been supported by research studies over the past few decades (e.g. Parviz, 2013; Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Siebert, 2003; Pajares & Schunk, 2002; Zeldin & Pajares, 2000; Mori, 1999). Beliefs about language learning are often described as subjective assumptions, representations, and notions that learners hold to be true about language learning. Such beliefs form a metacognitive framework with certain conceptions that learners hold about themselves, the nature and difficulty of language learning, the role of variables such as age, gender or aptitude on the learning process, and the usefulness of certain learning strategies (Öz, 2007; Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

Researchers identified several sources that shape learners’ beliefs about language learning. These include family and home background (Dias, 2000), cultural background (Alexander & Dochy, 1995), classroom/social peers (Arnold, 1999), interpretations of prior repetitive experiences (Gaoyin & Alvermann, 1995; Kern, 1995), and individual differences such as gender (Siebert, 2003) and personality (Langston & Sykes, 1997). For instance, Gabillon (2005) asserts that beliefs are of social nature in that they are constructed and shaped through interactions between groups in a society. Accordingly, the society’s general vision about language learning, the learner's past educational and personal experiences influence the formation of his/her beliefs and language learning culture. In this same respect, Wenden (1999) confirms that learners’ beliefs can be both conscious and unconscious. They can be acquired
unconsciously through observation and imitation, and consciously through listening to teachers, parents or even partners when giving advice about how to learn.

Regardless of their origins, beliefs FL learners hold about language and language learning can be positive or negative. Positive or supportive beliefs help to overcome problems and thus sustain motivation, while negative or unrealistic beliefs can lead to decreased motivation, frustration and anxiety (Kern, 1995; Oh, 1996). Negative beliefs are therefore debilitative to language learning. An example of negative beliefs that learners may hold is beliefs about the difficulty of language learning. These beliefs were found to associate with foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, 1989; Truitt, 1995) and poor performance (Mori, 1999). Learners who perceived the target language as difficult were found to have higher anxiety than those who believed they were learning an easy language (Horwitz, 1989; Truitt, 1995). Mori (1999) found that learners who perceived the target language as an easy language tended to do better than those who believed that they were dealing with a difficult language.

Another set of negative beliefs relate to foreign language aptitude. Learners who believe that they lack given skills will not engage in tasks in which those skills are required, and these beliefs about their competencies will affect “the choices they make, the effort they put forth, their inclinations to persist at certain tasks, and their resiliency in the face of failure” (Zeldin & Pajares, 2000: 215). Mori (1999: 408) hints to another risky consequence of the belief in the existence of language learning aptitude. She maintains that learners who perceive language learning ability as “uncontrollable” or “fixed” may not exert the required effort to proceed in learning. In her study of learners of Japanese as a FL, she found that learners who believed that foreign language learning ability was innate and could not be improved tended to achieve less in language learning than those who “perceived their own ability as a controllable, increasable entity”. Other beliefs can be facilitative to language learning. Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) found that certain beliefs about language learning have significant effect on learners’ motivation to learn the target language. Similarly, Banya and Chea (1997) revealed that students with positive beliefs about foreign language learning tend to have stronger motivation, hold favorable attitude and use more strategies, which leads to better achievement.

Admitting the significant role that beliefs play in language learning (Frugé, 2007), researchers and practitioners have stressed the importance of identifying learners’ beliefs. Riley (1996) maintains that what learners believe affect their language learning much more than their teachers do. Mantle-Bromley (1995: 382) concludes from her study that learners with realistic or informed beliefs are more likely to behave productively and persist longer with study. On the other hand, students may have erroneous or negative beliefs, which may lead to a reliance on less effective strategies, resulting in a negative attitude towards learning, classroom anxiety and poor performance. Language teachers with an understanding of learners’ beliefs about language learning can help enhance learners’ success in language learning in two ways: by reinforcing their students’ beliefs that are facilitative to language learning and challenging those that are debilitative. Teachers who have access to their learners’ beliefs are better equipped to engage in meaningful dialogues about learning with their learners (Cotteral, 1999).

Four approaches are used to identify beliefs (Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005: 4-5). The normative approach is characterized by the use of Likert-scale questionnaires in the investigation of learner beliefs. Horwitz (1985, 1987) is generally credited with initiating significant research
into beliefs with the development of the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). Since developed, the BALLI has been used extensively in research conducted to examine learner beliefs. The inventory covers five areas of language learning: foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivations. The metacognitive approach employs semi-structured interviews and self-reports to collect data about learner beliefs. The contextual approach is based on variable means of data collection like classroom observation, discussions, discourse analysis, etc. Another recent approach used to explore language learning beliefs is the metaphorical approach (Ellis, 2002; Farrell, 2006) that identifies beliefs by means of metaphor analysis. According to the metaphorical approach, the researcher analyzes the metaphors learners use in their writings about specific topics like expressing their opinions about language learning and the role of the teacher. An example of metaphors mentioned in research is "language learning is a struggle" implicating the difficulty of language learning.

A large number of studies about language learning beliefs aimed to investigate frequent beliefs in different groups of language learners (e.g. Daif-Allah, 2012; Atas, 2012; Peng & Hui, 2012; Fujiwara, 2011; Mohebi & Khodadady, 2011; Boakye, 2007; Bernat, 2006). Another research interest was devoted to the investigation of the relationships between beliefs about language learning and other factors such as language learning strategies (Wen & Johnson, 1997; Yang, 1992, 1999), anxiety (Horwitz, 1989; Tsai, 2004; Kunt, 1998), motivation (Kim-Yoon, 2000; Banya & Chen, 1997), autonomy (Cotterall, 1995; Victori and Lockhart, 1995; White, 1999), attitude (Banya & Chen, 1997), and proficiency (Bagherzadeh, 2012; Huang & Tsai, 2003; Mori, 1999). What follows is a brief account of some studies exploring the relationship between language learning beliefs and other factors that contribute to language learning.

The relationship between language learning beliefs and strategy use was explored in a number of studies using different samples of language learners. Parviz and Nima (2013) investigated language learning beliefs and strategy use among 80 EFL college freshmen (39 males and 41 females) at Roudbar Islamic Azad University. A moderate correlation was found between beliefs and strategies. Ghavamnia, Kassaian, and Dabaghi (2011) examined the relationship between EFL learners’ strategy use on the one hand and three other variables (motivation, proficiency, and learners’ beliefs) on the other hand. Findings revealed a positive relationship between strategy use and language learning beliefs. Li (2010) found moderate correlation between foreign language learning beliefs and strategy use among English major sophomores of vocational colleges in Jiangxi. Chang and Shen (2010) experimented with 250 Taiwanese remote junior high school EFL learners. Again a moderate correlation was found between beliefs about language learning and frequency of strategy use.

Talebinejad and Nekouei (2013) investigated the relationship between beliefs about foreign language learning and foreign language anxiety among 42 children in the Iranian context. The findings revealed that participants held the same idea with regard to BALLI and FLCAS. Sioson (2011) conducted a study to determine which among the subscales of language learning strategies (LLS), beliefs about language learning and anxiety was the strongest predictor of performance in an academic speaking context. The relationship between and among the factors was also explored. Results showed that all the subscales of language learning strategies, beliefs and anxiety were positively correlated with their respective subscales. Beliefs about language learning and anxiety subscales had generally no relationship with each other. Again, the results
of Sioson's study confirm that the relationship between language learning beliefs and such affective variables as anxiety and attitudes need to be further researched. This is why the current study explored the relationship between EFL learning beliefs and attitudes in the Saudi context.

Research results concerning the relationship between beliefs about FL learning and achievement are inconsistent. Tanaka and Ellis (2003) reported a study of a 15-week study-abroad program for Japanese university students, examining changes in the students’ beliefs about language learning (measured by means of a questionnaire) and in their English proficiency (measured by means of the TOEFL). Pearson Product Moment correlations between the students’ responses to the Belief Questionnaire and their TOEFL scores both before and after the study abroad period were weak and generally statistically non-significant. Conversely, low and high proficient SL and FL learners were found to possess different beliefs about language learning. For instance, Mori (1999), in her study of 187 American college students studying Japanese, found significant correlations between some beliefs and achievement. The findings revealed that learners who performed well in the learning of Japanese were those who 1) see Japanese as an easy language and 2) believe that the learning ability is not innately fixed. Bagherzadeh (2012) investigated language learning beliefs of non-English majors with different levels of English language proficiency. The participants were 125 (86 female and 39 male) Iranian non-English majors who were studying biology, geography, accounting and science. The more proficient participants were found to hold strong beliefs in the category of “motivation and expectations”. Also results indicated that there was a significant difference among the aptitude of the four groups of participants. Similarly, Huang and Tsai (2003) used the BALLI together with interviews in Taiwan and found that there were significant differences between high and low proficiency English learners in four out of the five dimensions of the BALLI. Firstly, high proficiency learners believed that they were more equipped with special abilities for learning English. Secondly, they perceived English learning as an easy task. Thirdly, high proficiency learners perceived access to listening and reading materials, rather than translation, as more important. Fourthly, they enjoyed practicing English with native speakers. No difference between high and low proficiency learners in their motivation was found.

Method

Participants

Twenty three Business Administration and thirty two English freshmen at Thadiq and El-Mahmal Sciences and Humanities College, Shaqra University participated in the study. The researcher taught Business Administration freshmen a proficiency course, and taught English freshmen reading comprehension and vocabulary building. The mean age of the participants was 19 years. Their average experience in studying English was six years. The study was mainly conducted to investigate language learning beliefs of the Business Administration students to identify whether their poor performance in language learning can be attributed, in part at least, to their holding negative beliefs. The English freshmen sample was used as a comparison group to explore if there were significant differences between the two samples in EFL learning beliefs and attitudes. The inclusion of the English freshmen sample aimed at shedding more light on the beliefs and attitudes held by the non-English freshmen sample.

Instrument
A questionnaire was developed by the researcher to assess the participants’ EFL learning beliefs and attitudes towards learning English. It has two subscales: one for beliefs and the other for attitudes. Relevant literature helped the researcher in developing the items concerning beliefs (Horwitz, 1985, 1987) and attitudes (Boonrangsri, Chuaymankhong, Rermyindee, & Vongchittpinyo, 2004; Gardner, 1985). Furthermore, the researcher used the comments that learners who took the course before voiced about learning English. The researcher used to jot down any comments relevant to beliefs about learning English in a special diary. There are two important observations about the belief subscale. The first is that beliefs tested are of the general type that can affect attitude to the language and willingness to exert the due efforts to learn it. For instance, items relevant to the nature of learning English tapped general principles (e.g. Success in learning English depends on the teacher, not on the student) rather than such specific aspects as the relative importance of learning vocabulary or grammar rules. The second observation is that this subscale, unlike the BALLI, can provide overall scores. Items that indicate positive beliefs if disagreed to are reverse coded so that higher means indicate more positive beliefs. Hence, a participant can get high means if he agrees to some items and if he disagrees to others. It all depends on the beliefs expressed being positive or negative. Reverse coded items will be highlighted when presenting and discussing results.

The belief subscale that initially included 35 items was content validated by three EFL professors to decide on its validity for probing beliefs about learning English. Based on the recommendations of the specialists, some items were either reworded or deleted. The questionnaire was then piloted on 46 students to check its internal consistency. A factor analysis with Varimax rotation and eigenvalues of ≥ 1 was conducted on the responses of the pilot sample to decide on the items to be included in the final version of the questionnaire. Prior to the principal component analysis, the suitability of the data for the factor analysis was assessed. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was .773, which is larger than the recommended value of .6. This indicates that the relationships among the items are strong enough. The Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity result was significant, $\chi^2 = 884.331$, $p < .000$. All these test results together affirmed that the items are sufficiently intercorrelated to produce underlying factors. Thus the factorability of the data was supported. Items with factor loadings less than .4 or those that loaded significantly on more than one factor were deleted and the correlation matrix was reanalyzed. A five factor solution was found, which accounted for 63.30% of the total variance in beliefs about learning English. Examining the content of items that loaded onto the five factors, the researcher labeled the five factors as follows: (1) self-efficacy (9 items: variance explained: 18.052%), (2) the importance of learning English (6 items: variance explained 16.879%), (3) the difficulty of learning English (3 items: variance explained 12.076%), (4) the nature of learning English (3 items; variance explained: 8.764%), and (5) threat to mother tongue/culture (2 items: variance explained: 7.53%). The alpha estimate of the questionnaire's internal consistency was.88. Details of factor loadings of items constituting each factor are given in Appendix 2. The final form of the belief subscale consisted of 23 items.

The attitude subscale aimed to probe participants' attitudes towards learning English. The items were partly adapted from the attitude questionnaire employed in a study by Boonrangsri, Chuaymankhong, Rermyindee & Vongchittpinyo (2004). Other items were taken from Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) designed by Gardner (1985). Furthermore, some items were developed by the researcher. Items were selected and developed in the light of three aspects
of attitude presented in relevant literature: behavioral, cognitive, and emotional. The behavioral aspect deals with the way one behaves and reacts in particular situations. The cognitive aspect refers to beliefs language learners hold about the knowledge they receive and their understanding in the process of language learning. Inner feelings and emotions of FL learners are included under the emotional aspect. Selecting and developing items within these three aspects was meant to make sure that all aspects of attitude are represented. However, overall scores were only used in statistical treatment of data since, in the present study, attitude comes second in importance to language learning beliefs. The preliminary subscale consisted of 30 items, some of which were negatively worded. It was then submitted to a cohort of TEFL specialists to decide on its validity for assessing EFL learners' attitude towards learning English. Recommended changes were performed by deletion, addition, or modification. This left the attitude subscale with 21 items that were then administered to a pilot sample of 46 students to establish its reliability. Its alpha estimate of internal consistency was found to be .93, which is quite reliable.

The summed rating method was used in scoring the two subscales in the questionnaire. Participants were asked to respond to items by indicating how far they agree to the statements on a five-point rating scale. Each response was associated with a point value, where “Strongly agree” was assigned a point value of 5 and the response “Strongly disagree” a point value of 1. Items with negative statement in the attitude subscale were reverse coded so that higher scores indicate more positive attitude.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data obtained from the 55 completed questionnaires were analyzed using the SPSS 15.0 package program. Percentages were used to identify frequency of target beliefs. The correlations between beliefs and attitudes were computed using means. Means were also utilized to examine the differences between the two groups in beliefs and attitudes.

Results and Discussion

The results section begins with the frequency of beliefs held by Business Administration students. Then the correlation between learning beliefs and attitudes of the same group is presented. No reference was made to English majors here to place more emphasis on beliefs and attitudes held by Business Administration students. The final section presents the results of the comparison between the two samples in learning beliefs and attitudes.

The beliefs that non-English majors hold about EFL Learning

The percentages presented in Tables 1-5 below provides the answer to the first research question “What are the beliefs that non-English majors hold about EFL learning?” The two points (agree and strongly agree) and (disagree and strongly disagree) were grouped together so as to find out whether the participants had positive or negative beliefs on one item. Data concerning each belief factor are presented separately.

Table 1: Self-efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Saudi people are good at learning English</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have a special ability for learning English</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The items in the above table relate to self-efficacy beliefs, i.e., learners' perceived aptitude and competencies. It is obvious that learners' evaluation of their aptitude to learn English and their competence in progressing in language learning is below average. From 39% to 51% of the participants agreed that they had aptitude to learn English (item 3), believed they would ultimately learn to speak English very well (item 5), and had the ability to identify and overcome weaknesses (item 20) and improve their English (item 10). These beliefs about self-efficacy are consistent with a belief 43% of the participants held about Saudi people being good at learning English (item 2). Less than half of the participants (48%) agreed that they learn English well compared to their classmates (item 12). They also revealed moderate persistence in the face of difficulties (item 19). The only somehow strong belief they held was that a poor learner of English does not necessarily remain so throughout years of study. That is, they believed that an unsuccessful learner can promote himself and that no one is doomed to be weak in learning English. Overall, participants' beliefs in their aptitude and competencies proved to be below average.

Table 2: The importance of learning English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. English is the most important language all over the world</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Saudi people respect persons who speak English well</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Saudi people think it is important to learn English</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Learning English should be limited to persons who need it</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Learning English increases one's understanding of the world</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. There's no need for English in my country because Arabic can suffice</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 reveals that participants held moderate beliefs about the importance of learning English. Fifty six percent of the participants agreed that Saudi people think it is important to learn English (item 11) and respect persons who speak English well (item 8). Only 52% of the participants saw English as the most important language all over the world. The reason for this somehow low percentage may be bias towards Arabic. There seems to be a cultural belief in Saudi Arabia that Arabic comes at the top of human languages because it is the language of Islam and Holy Quran. However, more than half of the participants saw that English should be taught in Saudi Arabia (56%) and that its learning should not be limited to persons who need it (52%). A strong belief held by most participants (83%) is that learning English increases one's understanding of the world. Overall, participants' beliefs about the importance of English were moderate. One possible reason for this is bias towards Arabic which they conceive of as a holy language.
Table 3: The difficulty of learning English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. English is a very difficult language</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Learning English is easy to me</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Saudi people think that learning English is difficult</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 provides information concerning participants’ beliefs about the difficulty of learning English. Only 30% of the participants agreed that Saudi people conceive of learning English as difficult (item 21). A bigger number (48%) held the belief that learning English is easy in Saudi culture. However, when it comes to personal experience, more than half of the participants (52%) confirmed that English is a very difficult language (item 6). Concurring with this, only 35% confirmed that learning English is easy to them (item 15). It seems that there is a difference when judgment is based on culture and on personal experience. Learners may hear it around that learning English is easy, but in reality they may be facing difficulty in learning English. This seems reasonable taking into account that participants’ proficiency is poor.

Table 4: The nature of learning English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. It is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Success in learning English depends on the teacher, not on the student</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. You should not say anything in English until you can say it correctly</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4, only 39 percent of the participants agreed that it is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures. A bigger percentage (48%) reported knowing about the culture of English-speaking countries as unimportant. More than half of the participants agreed that learning English depends on the teacher, not on the student. Placing more emphasis on the teacher than on the learner may be used, unconsciously at least, to justify poor performance in learning English. This is evident in students’ comment that they are not good at learning English because they did not have good teachers in their pre-university education. It is beyond doubt that the role of the teacher is important, but the role of the learner is of more importance. The same number of students (30%) agreed and disagreed to the item that you should not say anything in English until you can say it correctly. Perhaps students did not understand that the item meant that one should use language even if he makes mistakes. For this reason, a bigger percentage of students (39%) were neutral to this item. Overall, participants’ beliefs concerning the nature of learning English tended to be negative.

Table 5: Threat to mother tongue and culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Learning English threatens the Arabic language</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Learning English can violate the traditions of the Saudi society</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to items 17 and 23 in Table 5 show that a large percentage of participants did not see English and its learning as threatening to the Arabic language or the traditions of the Saudi society. Only 35% and 26% of the participants agreed that learning English threatens the Arabic language (item 17) and that learning English can violate the traditions of the Saudi
society (item 23) respectively. What should be noted here is that several students were neutral to the two items, indicating that they did not have established beliefs concerning this factor. Students’ beliefs about this factor were inconsistent with the researcher’s expectation that was founded on past students comments.

Based on the descriptive statistics presented in the above section, the present study indicated that Business Administration students held various beliefs about EFL learning. Their beliefs about their self-efficacy, and the difficulty and nature of EFL learning were below average. Meanwhile, they held moderate beliefs about the importance of EFL learning and threat to mother tongue and culture. The unexpected finding in this respect is that beliefs about EFL learning being threatening to the mother tongue and traditions are not frequent among students. The researcher expected that such beliefs would be highly frequent based on past student comments. Those comments did not seem to reflect a mainstream of bias against EFL learning in the Saudi context.

**The relationship between EFL beliefs and attitudes of non-English freshmen**

The data presented in Table 6 below provides the answer to the second research question “What is the relationship between EFL learning beliefs and attitudes of non-English freshmen?”

Table 6: Correlation between beliefs and attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Self-efficacy</th>
<th>Importance of EFL learning</th>
<th>Difficulty of EFL learning</th>
<th>Nature of EFL learning</th>
<th>Threat to mother tongue &amp; culture</th>
<th>Total Belief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.743***</td>
<td>.799***</td>
<td>.562***</td>
<td>.412</td>
<td>.265</td>
<td>.850***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level

As illustrated in Table 6, significant correlations were found between attitude and three belief factors: self-efficacy, importance of learning English and difficulty of learning English. That is, students who have higher self-efficacy, see English and its learning as important, and perceive English as an easy language tend to have more positive beliefs about EFL learning. Nevertheless, no significant correlations were found between attitude and two belief factors: the nature of language learning and threat to mother tongue and culture. The correlation between attitude and the nature of EFL learning was near to significance (r = .412). Overall, data revealed a strong relationship between attitude and beliefs about English learning. This means that students who hold strong beliefs about EFL learning tend to have more positive attitudes towards it.

**The Effect of major on EFL learning Beliefs and attitude**

Another aim for the present study was to find out whether there are any significant differences in learners’ beliefs and attitudes towards EFL learning that are attributable to major. Hence, the ANOVA test was used to probe the differences, if any exists, between Business Administration and English freshmen in beliefs and attitudes towards EFL learning. (See appendix 3 for belief frequency of English freshmen).

Table 7: Differences between the two groups in beliefs about self-efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Saudi people are good at learning English</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have a special ability for learning English</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7 shows that there are significant differences in self-efficacy beliefs between English and Business Administration freshmen in 8 out of 9 items in favor of English freshmen. English freshmen hold stronger beliefs that they have a special ability for learning English, will ultimately learn to speak English very well, know how to improve their English, have the ability to persist in the face of learning difficulties, can identify and overcome their weaknesses in English, and are good language learners. They also hold a more positive view that Saudi people are good at learning English and that a poor learner of English does not necessarily remain so throughout years of study. No significant difference was found between the two groups in item 12 about learning English well compared with classmates. Overall, English freshmen have stronger self-efficacy beliefs than do Business Administration freshmen.

Table 8: Differences between the two groups in beliefs about the importance of EFL learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. English is the most important language all over the world</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Saudi people respect persons who speak English well</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Saudi people think it is important to learn English</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td></td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*13. Learning English should be limited to persons who need it</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Learning English increases one's understanding of the world</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td></td>
<td>.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*18. There's no need for E in my country because Arabic can suffice</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data in the above table reveal that English freshmen have significantly stronger beliefs than their business Administration counterparts in 4 out of 6 items that relate to the importance of EFL learning. Their perceptions are more illuminated concerning English being the most important language all over the world, the importance of EFL learning in Saudi culture, the necessity to extend EFL learning to all students, and the need to learn English side by side with the mother tongue. The two groups share the same beliefs that Saudi people respect persons who speak English well and that learning English increases one's understanding of the world.

Table 9: Differences between the two groups in beliefs about the difficulty of EFL learning
It is clear from Table 9 that the two groups have the same belief that Saudi people think that learning English is easy. However, English freshmen possess stronger beliefs than Business administration freshmen that English is an easy language and that its learning is easy. That EFL learning is easier to English than it is to non-English majors is logical. Students make for specializations that are learnable and enjoyable to them. Perhaps students who made for EFL learning in the university had more successful EFL learning experiences in their pre-university education.

Data in Table 10 shows the presence of significant differences between Administrative and English freshmen in the three items constituting perceptions about the nature of EFL learning in favor of English freshmen. This means that English freshmen are more understandable of the nature of EFL learning. This seems logical taking into consideration that they are English majors. They therefore have stronger beliefs that knowing about English-speaking cultures is necessary for speaking English well, that success in learning English depends more on the student than on the teacher, and that one should not postpone speaking the language until s/he masters it. Undoubtedly, such beliefs make the learner more energetic in his endeavors to learn the FL.

As listed in Table 11, English freshmen have stronger belief, compared to Administrative freshmen, that learning English does not violate the traditions of the Saudi society. However, the two groups of students share the same belief that learning English does not threaten the Arabic language. This is consistent with the moderate beliefs that Administrative freshmen held about the importance of EFL learning. Another possible explanation is that the Arabic language, being the language of the Holy Qur'an, will persist in the face of any other language. This seems to be a common belief in Saudi Arabia and other Arabic-speaking Moslem countries.
Table 12. Differences between the two groups in total scores of belief factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief Factor</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of learning English</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty of learning English</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of learning English</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat to mother tongue and culture</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total belief</td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data in Table 12 confirm that English freshmen have stronger beliefs about EFL learning than do Business Administration freshmen in 4 out of 5 belief factors: self-efficacy, the importance of learning English, the difficulty of learning English, and the nature of learning English. A difference was found between the two groups concerning threat to mother tongue and culture in favor of English freshmen, but it was not significant (F = 13.8, p=.06). This indicates that both groups did not conceive of English as threatening to the mother tongue and culture. Overall, English freshmen held much stronger beliefs about EFL learning than Business Administration freshmen.

The finding that Saudi English majors hold strong beliefs about EFL learning is consistent with the study of Daif-Allah (2012) who used BALLI with a comparable sample, i.e., Saudi first-year English language majors. The finding that English majors hold stronger beliefs than non-English majors is not consistent with the findings of Tanaka and Ellis (2003) who found weak and nonsignificant relationship between proficiency and beliefs. This finding is nevertheless in line with other studies (e.g., Mori, 1999; Bagherzadeh, 2012; Huang & Tsai (2003). For instance, Huang and Tsai (2003) found significant differences between high and low proficiency English learners in four out of the five dimensions of the BALLI. That English majors hold stronger beliefs than non-English majors does not necessarily mean that stronger beliefs alone make the difference between the two groups of language learners. What can be safely contended is that beliefs constitute one of the factors that differentiate low and high proficiency language learners.

Table 13. Differences between the two groups in attitudes towards EFL learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adm.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As listed in Table 13, a significant difference was found between English and Business Administration freshmen in attitudes towards EFL learning in favor of English freshmen. This means that stronger beliefs about EFL learning are accompanied by more positive beliefs towards it. This is consistent with Banya-Chen's (1997) finding that students with positive beliefs about FL learning tend to have strong motivation and hold favorable attitude.
Conclusion and implications

The purpose of this study was to investigate EFL Learning beliefs and attitudes in a group of non-English Saudi college freshmen (Business Administration). It also explored differences between English and non-English freshmen in beliefs and attitudes towards EFL learning. Results revealed that non-English freshmen's beliefs about their self-efficacy, and the difficulty and nature of EFL learning were below average. Meanwhile, their beliefs about the importance of EFL learning and threat to mother tongue and culture were moderate. Contrary to the researcher's expectation, non-English freshmen did not conceive of learning English as threatening to their mother tongue and culture. A strong relationship was found between the non-English freshmen's EFL learning beliefs and attitudes, indicating that stronger beliefs are accompanied by more favorable attitudes. The findings also revealed that English freshmen hold stronger beliefs and more favorable attitudes towards EFL learning than do non-English freshmen.

The study stresses the importance of identifying beliefs in different groups of FL learners. The identification of beliefs, if done prior to teaching a given group of FL learners, can be very valuable to practitioners. Language teachers with an understanding of learners’ beliefs about language learning can help enhance learners’ success in language learning in two ways: by reinforcing their students’ beliefs that are facilitative to language learning and by challenging those that are debilitative. Teachers who have access to their learners’ beliefs are better equipped to engage in meaningful dialogue about learning with their learners. For instance, it can make a big difference if a teacher succeeds through dialogue and practice to dispel a belief that learning a FL is an intricate task in a sense that demotivates learners. Urging learners to be confident in their ability to learn the FL and giving them the feel that they are progressing well can also have a good reflection on their performance. Such decisions and others depend on the identification of learners’ beliefs. The positive relationship between beliefs and proficiency indicates that holding negative beliefs can be partially responsible for poor performance of low achievers. This directs teachers’ attention to an area that needs careful consideration if they wish to help low achieving learners.

The small sample in the present study makes it difficult to generalize the findings of this research to the entire population of non-English majors in Saudi Arabia. Future research therefore needs to be conducted on a wider scale in order to generalize the findings to the entire population. Teachers’ beliefs about language learning also need to be researched to identify their match or mismatch with learners’ beliefs. The match or mismatch between teachers’ beliefs and their classroom practices is also an area that needs to be researched in EFL settings including Saudi Arabia. It is also recommended that teacher education programs be surveyed to explore the beliefs embedded in them concerning FL learning and teaching. Finally, future research is needed to explore other factors that shape learners’ beliefs such as demography and family background.

About the Author
Hassan Kassem is an assistant professor of TEFL at Tanta Faculty of Education, Egypt. Currently, he is teaching reading, writing, linguistics and translation at Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia. His research interests include, among other things, learner variables and language learning strategies.
References


Appendices

Appendix 1: The Attitude Subscale

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Studying English is a lot of fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>I wish I could speak English fluently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>I feel stressed when the English teacher chooses me to answer questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The English language will play an important role in the future of my country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>I think that mastering English is indispensable for a literate person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>I feel more stressed in English classes than in other classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Learning English makes me feel proud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>I will pursue improving my English when I finish schooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>I do not feel enthusiastic to come to English classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>I appreciate good learners of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Learning English helps me to develop good feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>I feel internally motivated to learn English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Learning English is one of my life's important goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>I would like to have friends from English-speaking countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
38. I enjoy doing activities in English
39. To be honest, I am not highly motivated to learn English
40. Studying English helps me to improve my personality
41. My attention is distracted when I study English
42. I do not care much about how others will look at me if I make mistakes in the English class
43. Learning English makes me more self-confident
44. In English classes I think of things irrelevant to the lesson

Appendix 2: Factor Structure of the Learning Beliefs of the Pilot Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>F1</th>
<th>F2</th>
<th>F3</th>
<th>F4</th>
<th>F5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1: Self-efficacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I know how to improve my English</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have a special ability for learning English</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. When I encounter difficulties in learning English, I do not give up</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I do not think that I am a good learner of English</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Saudi people are good at learning English</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A poor learner of English will remain so throughout years of study</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I think I learn English well compared with my classmates</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I can identify and overcome my weaknesses in English</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2: Importance of learning English</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. There's no need for English in my country because Arabic can suffice</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Saudi people respect persons who speak English well</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Learning English increases one's understanding of the world</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. English is the most important language all over the world</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Learning English should be limited to persons who need it</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Saudi people think it is important to lean English</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3: Difficulty of learning English</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Saudi people think that learning English is difficult</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. English is a very difficult language</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Learning English is easy to me</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 4: Nature of learning English</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. You should not say anything in English until you can say it correctly</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Success in learning English depends on the teacher, not on the student</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures</td>
<td>.570</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 5: Threat to mother tongue and culture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Learning English can violate the traditions of the Saudi society</td>
<td>.828</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Learning English threatens the Arabic language</td>
<td>.749</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 3: Frequency of beliefs held by the English freshmen sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Saudi people are good at learning English</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arab World English Journal
ISSN: 2229-9327
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English as a Foreign Language Learning Beliefs</th>
<th>Kassem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. I have a special ability for learning English</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A poor learner of English will remain so throughout years of study</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I know how to improve my English</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I think I learn English well compared with my classmates</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. When I encounter difficulties in learning English, I do not give up</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I can identify and overcome my weaknesses in English</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I do not think that I am a good learner of English</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Importance of learning English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. English is the most important language all over the world</td>
<td>87% 9% 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Saudi people respect persons who speak English well</td>
<td>69% 3% 28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Saudi people think it is important to lean English</td>
<td>97% 3% 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Learning English should be limited to persons who need it</td>
<td>9% 84% 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Learning English increases one's understanding of the world</td>
<td>84% 12% 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. There's no need for English in my country because Arabic can suffice</td>
<td>3% 91% 6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Difficulty of learning English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. English is a very difficult language</td>
<td>25% 72% 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Learning English is easy to me</td>
<td>81% 19% 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Saudi people think that learning English is difficult</td>
<td>25% 72% 3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nature of learning English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. It is necessary to know about English-speaking cultures</td>
<td>84% 13% 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Success in learning English depends on the teacher, not on the student</td>
<td>19% 75% 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. You should not say anything in English until you can say it correctly</td>
<td>13% 81% 6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Threat to mother tongue and culture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threat</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Learning English threatens the Arabic language</td>
<td>19% 65% 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Learning English can violate the traditions of the Saudi society</td>
<td>16% 78% 6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effects of MALL Applications on Vocabulary Acquisition and Motivation

Abdul Aziz I. Fageeh
Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences
King Khalid University

Abstract

Mobile devices can induce increased vocabulary learning and enhanced motivation for vocabulary acquisition by encouraging ubiquitous learning via their portability and access to various activities. The purpose of this study was to explore the benefits of mobile phone applications with regard to their potential for improving vocabulary learning and motivation. Learning theories and cognitive techniques were explored to provide a theoretical foundation for this study. Following a pre-test/post-test design, 27 experimental students and 31 control students participated in this study by using mobile device-based vocabulary applications thrice a week over the course of one semester. The results indicated statistically significant differences in performance between the two groups in post-test scores and increases in the post-test scores of the experimental group indicating enhanced vocabulary learning. A motivation scale was employed to measure the motivation of the participants in both groups at post-test. The results indicated that experimental participants had enhanced motivation perceptions compared to the control participants. While further research is needed, the analysis of data indicates that the use of mobile phones is a viable vocabulary instructional/learning method at the college level. The paper ends with pedagogically informative conclusions, recommendations and implications for teaching and research.

Keywords: Computer-Assisted Language Learning, Digital Texts, Human-Computer Interaction, Learners- Attitudes
Introduction

Since the early 1990s, technology has revolutionized teaching and learning milieus and aids across disciplines via scaffolding, assisting and supplementing traditional classroom learning materials and activities. In addition, the ubiquity of the internet has made these technologies more efficient in revolutionizing language pedagogy. As these newly touted technologies for foreign language learning and teaching have waxed and waned, and as professional concerns have shifted between areas and technologies, the field of computer-assisted language learning (thereafter CALL) has begun to develop a scientifically and empirically grounded basis for emerging research in English Language Teaching (thereafter ELT). CALL is a discipline whose insights have historically been largely anecdotal and idiosyncratically descriptive, but this discipline has been shaped over the past two decades by attempts to statistically validate the claims of classroom practitioners and the postulates of ivory-tower theoreticians infatuated with the touted advantages and merits of CALL.

The change in focus regarding technology-assisted language learning and teaching has yielded two significant results, one positive and one negative. On the positive side, the introduction of CALL into language classrooms has vastly increased our professional knowledge about “what works” in specific settings and conditions via the mushrooming plethora of research that has been conducted in the field. On the other hand, the insights yielded by currently practiced CALL research have become incomprehensible to many, if not most, classroom practitioners. Another disadvantageous corollary is that technology swiftly becomes obsolescent. Both researchers and practitioners are constantly racing to catching up with the current state of research (Aldosari & Mekheimer, 2013).

Recently, a new generation of CALL has come into active existence; namely, integrating mobile assisted language learning (thereafter MALL) technology (via personal multimedia players, cell phones, and handheld devices) has recently invaded the foreign language curriculum because MALL technologies are convenient, easy-to-use and accessible on devices that are malleably suitable for use in higher education institutions (Abdous, Camarena, & Facer, 2009; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008; Kukulska-Hulme, 2009; Shih, 2007; Nah, White & Sussex, 2008).

Redd (2011) aptly observed that learners are presently equipped with mobile technologies "in the palm of their hands" with which they can "embark on the use of tools that can expand their content knowledge" (p. 1). Ching, Shuler, Lewis, and Levine (2009) concur in this regard and state the following:

“Mobile technologies can help advance the goal of achieving digital equity because of their ubiquity, low cost, and familiarity. The anytime, anywhere availability of mobile devices also has potential to promote a seamless 360-degree learning experience that breaks down the barriers between formal and informal educational environments” (p. 28).

Mobile phones and other related digital devices such as tablets, iPads, iPhones and personal digital assistants (PDAs) belong to the category of smart phones and have become so pervasively popular that, according to the U.N. Telecom Agency Report, more than 6 billion
people are currently mobile phone subscribers. This report indicates that 2.3 billion people, or approximately one-third of the world's 7 billion inhabitants, were internet users at the end of 2011, and this number is likely to increase in coming years, although there is a strong disparity between rich and developing countries. Given the ubiquity of mobile devices and internet connectivity, smart phones, and their innate pedagogical potential, are becoming pervasive, indispensable, and most likely inevitable digital tools that are currently commonly adopted (Cui & Wang, 2008; Hsu, Hwang, Chang & Chang, 2013; Lari, 2012; Taki & Khazaei, 2011; Zhang, Song & Burston, 2011).

Additionally, given this boom in technology, language researchers and educators have claimed that some aspects of language acquisition, such as vocabulary, can be mediated through digital tools such as connected mobile devices. Given the global emphasis on the development of 21st century skills, researchers and teachers need to explore new, digital means of teaching vocabulary. The purpose of this study was to explore an alternative method of vocabulary instruction that utilized smart phones (mobile devices, iPhones, tablets and SIM iPads) in comparison with the traditional method of vocabulary instruction. The research question underlying this study was the following:

What are the effects of smart phones on EFL college learners’ vocabulary learning and motivation?

This question was followed by the following two sub-questions:

1. What are the effects of mobile devices on inducing and maintaining vocabulary learning?
2. How does vocabulary learning via mobile devices enhance motivation towards MALL-based vocabulary learning?

Hypotheses of the study

The hypotheses of the present study were as follows:

1. Students who are taught according to a mobile-based experimental method will score higher on post-tests than on pre-tests of vocabulary learning.
2. Students who are taught via an experimental method employing mobile applications will score higher than the control group on vocabulary learning upon post-testing.
3. Students who are taught according to a mobile-application-based experimental method will show enhanced motivation for MALL-based vocabulary learning compared to control participants at post-test.

Literature Review

Research on vocabulary acquisition in Computer-mediated Communication (CMC) settings is well established and promising in terms of the technology’s abilities to increase the effectiveness of vocabulary learning compared to traditional learning settings or approaches (Al-Seghayer, 2001; Groot, 2000; Horst, Cobb, & Nicolae, 2005; Hulstijn, 2000; Jones, 2006; Jones & Plass, 2003; Koren, 1999; Loucky, 2003; Nakata, 2008; Okuyama, 2007; Tsoua, Wang, & Li,
A few studies have explored the pedagogical applications of smart phone vocabulary learning (e.g., Alemi & Lari, 2012; Cavus & Ibrahim, 2009; Hsu, et al., 2013; Khazaie & Ketabi, 2011; Levy & Kennedy, 2005; Kennedy & Levy, 2008; Lu, 2008; Redd, 2011; Song, 2008; Stockwell, 2007; Stockwell, 2010; Taki & Khazaei, 2011; Thornton & Houser, 2001; Thornton & Houser, 2005; Zhang, et al., 2011). A general overview of the findings of these studies indicates that vocabulary learning via mobile devices and other smart phones is more effective than learning via traditional settings and methods because the distributed or spaced presentation and repetition of lexical items that accompanies mobile-based learning is more effective than the massed repetition that accompanies traditional book-based, self-regulated vocabulary learning (Nation, 2001; Thornton and Houser, 2005; Zhang, et al., 2011).

Additionally, mobile devices equipped with smart technology software and up-to-date multimedia features can open up new vistas of language learning (Reis, Bonacin, & Martins, 2009; Godwin-Jones, 2008; Ryu, & Parsons, 2009; Hede, & Hede, 2002). Thus, smart phones can function as miniature classrooms wherein learners can partake in the “anytime, anywhere” learning movement (Schachter, 2009). Given this fact, mobile technology can be useful in seamlessly inducing a transfer of learning from inside to outside the classroom (Redd, 2011).

The theories and implications related to the use of smart phone applications in language learning are, however, still in their infancy, suggesting that students and teachers are ahead of the new media that are characterized by challenging trial-and-error processes, and teachers and students are involving these smart phone devices and applications in the intricate process of language learning (Chen & Chung, 2008; Conacher, 2009). Furthermore, despite the increasing body of research in both the areas of ESL and EFL, relevant theory and empirical findings have not been taken seriously when designing language learning materials (Bull and Kukulska-Hulme, 2009; Taki & Khazaei, 2011).

**Underlying Theories of MALL**

MALL is a new trend; however, the theories that underpin MALL can easily be derived from established learning theories. Specifically, there are five main theories of learning that can be utilized to explain MALL; namely, behaviorism, cognitivism, zone of proximal development, social learning theory, and the law of effect.

Some critics have noted that early explanations of the effects of computer-mediated technology on learning were deeply rooted in stimulus-response theory and suggested that future research should consider characteristics of the learner, such as the cognitive aspects of learning, in these technology-based milieus, attitudes, and motivations (Alavi and Leidner, 2001; Chen, Hsieh, & Kinshuk, 2008; Yearta, 2012). For instance, Alavi and Leidner (2001) observed that “the majority of previous studies have mainly relied on the stimulus-response theory, which probed only the relationship between technology [stimulus] and learning [response] (p.99).

**Cognitivist theories**

According to cognitivist theories of learning, linguistic information is processed verbally and visually (Jones, 2004; Mayer, 1979, 2005; Paivio, 1986). Thus, the multi-store model of cognitive processing theories proposed by Atkinson & Shiffrin (1968) hypothesizes that there are
Effects of MALL Applications on Vocabulary Acquisition  

Fageeh

three types of memory: Sensory, Short-Term (STM), and Long-Term Memory (LTM). This model has been empirically examined by testing the relationship between vocabulary acquisition and verbal short-term memory (Gupta & MacWhinney, 1977; Greffe, Linden, Majerus, & Poncelet, 2005).

The use of multimedia stimuli is appealing because it can provide audio-visual and verbal stimuli in the form of verbal schemata via different modes of stimulus reception. The use of multimodal cognitive tools, in turn, appeals to the variety of learners and learning styles present in any educational setting. Although, according to cognitive theories, people process verbal and visual stimuli in dual channels, each of which processes only a portion of the available information at one time.

Another theory offered by this approach is the cognitive load theory, which implies that learning material should be designed to minimize the cognitive load of the learners during the learning process (Mayer, 2005). Given that working memory capacity is restricted, learners may be showered by a rapid inflow of information that will result in cognitive overload if the complexity of the instructional materials is not properly managed. This cognitive overload can inhibit the schema acquisition process and, consequently, result in poorer performance (Sweller, 1988). The cognitive approach to mobile learning thus assumes pre-orchestrated pedagogical content, which permits highly modular content that can be easily assimilated by students in natural or semi-natural learning settings (Klas & Zaharieva, 2004).

A third theory is the Zone of the Proximal Development proposed by Vygotsky (1978). This theory proposes that learning occurs in three phases. In the first phase, independent learners feel comfortable and can achieve or solve problems on their won by relying on their current knowledge and skill level. The next stage occurs when the learner is able to work on a problem that is just beyond the level at which he can complete it independently, and the problem eventually creates confusion or tedium. This is the stage in which the zone of proximal development occurs (Murray & Arroyo, 2002; Vygotsky, 1978). The third phase is that of frustration; in this phase, the learner is or should be provided a scaffold with which to build up his database and/or skills so that he can solve the problem or perform the assigned task independently. This theory suggests that learners work within a state of instruction and development (Chaiklin, 2003).

The use of mobile devices (smart phones in the present study) enables learners to move beyond their current skill level using the mobile device as a scaffold (Benson, 1995; Ganske, 2000). By being presented with lists of vocabulary via the Whatsapp application on mobile phones, students are introduced to words that are currently beyond their knowledge base but within their grasp. Then, through the interaction with these words provided by strategically placed scaffolds that are represented by the learners' excessive and repetitive access to an online dictionary, increases in vocabulary are attained. Thus, learning vocabulary words using a mobile device to access online dictionaries provides ample scaffolding or support at the present level of the learner's knowledge base. Next, through these scaffolded experiences, knowledge levels advance beyond their previous levels. Slowly, the scaffolds are phased out, which leaves the learner with the ability to apply the knowledge gained in conditions in which support was provided in scenarios without any support (Chaiklin, 2003; Murray & Arroyo, 2002). Ultimately, it is the learner’s responsibility to acquire lexical knowledge and apply that knowledge to word usage independently, which allows the
cycle to begin. The Zone of Proximal Development seeks to engage learners at the optimal instructional level in a safe and supported manner.

Social learning theories
The fourth theoretical model that explores the way mobile device-based learning occurs based on social learning theory. Using mobile phones for learning can, in theory, mesh well with the implications of Bandura’s Social Learning Theory, which assumes that peoples’ actions are strongly influenced by their consequences (Bandura, 2006). Accordingly, learners conceptualize and anticipate the possible consequences of their behavior. During this process, learning can be induced by four essential factors; i.e., attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Child, 1993; Erickson, 1974; Gu, 2003; Kirsch, 2010; Moore, 1999; Yearta, 2012).

Learning vocabulary via mobile phones can also fit well with this theory. First, the amount of attention paid to the task and the steps needed to complete it are essential for success in the learning tasks, and the Whatsapp and Online Dictionary applications must be accessed to acquire the tasks. Revamping the learners' motivations towards the assigned tasks, making the tasks a part of their weekly scheduled assignments and the expected rewards of receiving extra credit can also increase the attention the learners’ pay to the models and important components deemed necessary to achieve the reward (Bandura, 2006). Second, the text, graphics, audio and video that can be downloaded to the mobile devices can potentially increase memory of the content experienced. Memory is used to organize and mentally code the items to be attended to and experienced. Third, based on feedback from the teacher via Whatsapp, learners' behaviors are modified, and the correct responses for the task can be reproduced. This feedback can also be considered imitative learning because observing and focusing on the feedback provided helps learners’ make decisions that will attempt to maximize the rewards earned (Bandura, 2006). Finally, there are motivational incentives of using applications such as Whatsapp and the Online Dictionary (Yearta, 2012). These incentives can come in the form of intrinsic factors, such as feelings of satisfaction that come from learning something through curiosity, exploration, and manipulation, or extrinsic factors, such as incentives, rewards, punishments, co-operation, and completion (Child, 1993; Yearta, 2012).

Theory of the law of effect
Finally, the fifth theoretical framework that can explain how mobile device-based learning occurs through trial and error is based on Thorndike’s theory of the law of effect. The theory is a branch of behaviorism and according it, the learner opts for the path of least resistance to the goal that results in the greatest satisfaction (Thorndike, 1905). Accordingly, behaviors are modified based upon experiences and their consequences (Thorndike, 1913). This position is best exemplified by trial-and-error learning (Simpson & Stansberry, 2008). Mobile devices and their applications can provide repeated opportunities for learners to engage in an activity. In this regard, Erickson (1974) notes that “the learner is rewarded or punished depending upon what he does; the ‘effect’ (satisfaction or annoyance) contingent upon how the learner responds to the environment (p. 15).

This interaction between the user and the mobile device allows for the learner to experiment with different actions and experience rewards and punishments based upon those decisions. These outcomes can increase the motivation and attention of the learner who is playing a game (Erickson, 1974). Once the learner has discovered the behavioral principle
behind the learning, which can occur through a combination of positive and negative reinforcements, the learner can continue to learn in new contexts (Blachowicz & Fischer, 2008; Erickson, 1974; Skinner, 2006). Receiving word lists and being tasked with looking those words up the Online Dictionary on a mobile device can create new educational possibilities for learning. These five general theories can construct a complete picture of the underpinnings of learning theories as applied to vocabulary learning on a mobile device.

Methodology

This is an experimental study that involves a pre-test, posttest, control group design.

Participants

The 58 participants were chosen randomly. Participants were divided into the experimental group (27 students) and the control group (31 students).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Group participation in the study
Figure 2: Research design

Where:
Q1 and Q2 represent the pre-test and post-test assessments of the dependent variable, XT represents the treatment condition and XC represents the control or standard treatment condition.

As shown above in Figure 2, an experimental group and a control group participated in the study. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the groups. The pre-test was administered to each group at the same time.

Training sessions occurred thrice weekly for the duration of the first term of the 2012/2013 academic year. Next, post-tests were administered to both groups. In the control group, only 31 participants completed the pre- and post-tests. Comparisons of performances on the pre- and post-tests for the 27 experimental group participants and the 31 control participants were performed with SPSS (version 16).

Procedures

The experimental group was sent a list of words selected from the textbook using Whatsapp 3 times a week after each class. Learners in this group were asked to define the words using the Android Online Dictionary (http://dictionary.reference.com/) application, use the words in sentences they created and send those sentences back to their peers and the teachers for correction.

Control group participants were asked to do the regular homework while they studied in the traditional way. Control participants were given the same word lists and were asked to turn in their homework on paper each class.

Each class for each group continued for three hours and met three times per week. The groups were taught by the same instructor to avoid instructor-related effects. Pre-test and post-tests were used to determine the efficacies of vocabulary acquisition for each group and determine the effects of each instructional approach on the motivation of the participants in each group.

Instrumentation

The study involved pre- and post-testing with the Vocabulary Test (See Appendix A). Below are descriptions of the test’s reliability and validity.

Test validity

A test is valid when “it measures what it is supposed to measure” (Oller, 1979, p. 70). To ensure that the test employed was valid, the researcher examined the internal, face, construct,
trustees, and content validities of the test. The test items were evaluated by experts in the field to validate the suitability of the test items for measuring the students’ lexical knowledge, the students’ abilities to use the lexicon, the clarity of the instructions, the feasibility of the test items, the suitability of the allotted time, and the test organization. Changes to the test items were made based on feedback from the experts.

Test reliability

The test-retest method was used to examine external reliability. For this purpose, a pilot study of 37 students was conducted. The Vocabulary Test was piloted to ensure that the test was appropriate for this level. To further investigate the test's internal consistency, Cronbach’s alpha was calculated for the data from the pilot study. The alpha value was .937, which is considered high. Thus, the test was found to be statistically reliable.

Statistical methods

The SPSS statistical package was used to analyze the data from the pre- and post-tests. Analyses included calculations of frequencies, percentages, means and the Pearson product moment coefficient, which indicates the strength of the relationship between two sets of numbers. Paired and independent samples t-tests were also used to determine whether differences in means between the two groups were significant at the .05 level.

Findings of the Study

The statistical analyses listed above were used to compare the following: the pre-test means for both groups, the pre- and post-test means for both groups, and the post-test means for both groups.

Tables 2 and 3 present the descriptive statistics of the pre-test data for the control and experimental groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pretest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>59.85</td>
<td>4.761</td>
<td>.916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>58.81</td>
<td>4.963</td>
<td>.891</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Findings from the t-tests

The tables below show t-test analyses of the groups’ participants that demonstrate the equality of the groups on the variables of the study before the experiment was initiated. To determine whether this difference between the pre- and the post-tests was statistically significant, a t-test was applied as shown in Table 4 below:

#### Table 4: Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test achievement scores of students in the experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretest</td>
<td>59.85</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.761</td>
<td>-17.755</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posttest</td>
<td>83.22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.246</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the data presented in Table 4, the average pre-test score of the experimental group was 59.85, and the average post-test score 83.22. A dependent t-test revealed that the pre- and post-test scores from the experimental group were significantly different ($t(26) = -17.755, p<0.05 (.000))$.

Tables 5 and 6 provide descriptive statistics of the post-test for the control and experimental groups.

**Table 5: Group statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>83.22</td>
<td>4.246</td>
<td>.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>61.06</td>
<td>5.221</td>
<td>.938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6: Independent samples test.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The data in Table 5 reveal that average post-test of the experimental group was 83.22, and the average post-test score of the control group was 61.06. An independent samples test revealed that the difference in these scores was statistically significant ($t(56) = 17.561, p < 0.05$ ($p = .000$)).

Figure 4: Post-test scores of the experimental and control groups.
Hence, the main hypothesis of the study, which states that students taught by the mobile application-based experimental method will score higher on the post-test than on the pre-test, was verified. This result indicates that the vocabulary skills of the experimental group improved over the course of the experiment.

A motivation questionnaire designed to recognizing the motivational patterns of the students in the experimental design was used to probe the motivations of the students in the experimental group (see Appendix B). The results of this questionnaire showed a moderate reliability value of 0.941. Before investigating the scores from this questionnaire, inter-rater reliability was demonstrated with by Pearson correlation coefficient.

Table 6: The Pearson correlation coefficients for inter-rater reliability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel enthralled using smart phones to learn English vocabulary.</td>
<td>.922**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel more motivated to do my vocabulary assignments when there is internet connectivity for my mobile phone or after I get the assignments via Whatsapp.</td>
<td>.800**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is great fun learning the new vocabulary list via Whatsapp and the Online Dictionary application on my smart phone.</td>
<td>.715**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the Online Dictionary application on my smart phone makes it easy for me to look up and learn new words, their derivations, their etymology and their usage in illustrative examples.</td>
<td>.912**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will continue to use the Online Dictionary application and its dictionary, word dynamo, thesaurus, and translator capabilities to learn and actively use newly learned vocabulary.</td>
<td>.658**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have developed an e-lifestyle using Whatsapp and the Online Dictionary and frequently, on a daily basis, look up and learn new words.</td>
<td>.894**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to use digital dictionaries and vocabulary lists over paper-based dictionaries and traditional word power activators.</td>
<td>.818**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am increasingly engaged in learning vocabulary via mobile devices compared to paper-and-pencil methods.</td>
<td>.840**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over time, smart phones have become less of a distraction and more of a tool for learning new vocabulary.</td>
<td>.792**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I can get more vocabulary assignments done when I am working on my smart phone than when working with paper-and-pencil sheets.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can get more vocabulary assignments done when I am working on my smart phone than when working with paper-and-pencil sheets.</td>
<td>.712**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The inter-rater reliabilities of the ten statements of this questionnaire were estimated with Pearson correlation coefficients. The 10 items were rated on 5-point Likert scales. The five available responses were the following: (1) Strongly Agree (5 points), (2) Agree (4 points), (3) Neutral (3 points), (4) Disagree (2 points), and Strongly Disagree (1 point). Most of these items were asked from the positive point of view (e.g., I feel enthralled using smart phones to learn English vocabulary), and these questions were scored as 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1 point.

The same questionnaire was given to the students in both groups after the post-test was completed. Fifty-eight copies of the questionnaire were distributed, and the students’ responses were cross-validated. No invalid responses were detected; thus, the total number of valid questionnaires collected and analyzed across both groups was 58.

Findings from the Motivation Questionnaire

The researcher first examined intra-group motivational changes. Table 7 illustrates the students’ motivations toward learning.

Table 7: Post-test comparisons of group participants on the motivation scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel enthralled using smart phones to learn English vocabulary.</td>
<td>Ex.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>.934</td>
<td>6.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ctrl</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.923</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel more motivated to do my vocabulary assignments …</td>
<td>Ex.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>.898</td>
<td>6.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ctrl</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>.995</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is great fun to learn new vocabulary lists sent via Whatsapp and the Online Dictionary application on my smart phone.</td>
<td>Ex.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.577</td>
<td>5.876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ctrl</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.848</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the Online Dictionary application on my smart phone makes it easy for me to look up and learn new words …</td>
<td>Ex.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>10.940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ctrl</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>.945</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will continue to use the Online Dictionary applications</td>
<td>Ex.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>.730</td>
<td>8.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ctrl</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have developed an e-lifestyle using Whatsapp and the Online</td>
<td>Ex.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>.669</td>
<td>8.586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ctrl</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dictionary and frequently, on a daily basis, look up and learn new words.

I prefer to use the digital dictionaries and vocabulary lists over paper-based dictionaries.

I am increasingly engaged in learning vocabulary via mobile devices compared to paper-and-pencil methods.

Over time, smart phones have become less of a distraction and more of a tool for learning new vocabulary.

I can get more vocabulary assignments done when I am working on my smart phone.

As illustrated in Table 8, the mean scores from the motivation questionnaire were 41.2963 and 24.1613 for the experimental and control groups, respectively, after participation in the MALL intervention for one semester. The difference in the means between groups was statistically significant ($p = .000$).

**Figure 5: Motivation for vocabulary learning**
Analysis & Discussion

The experimental participants’ experiences using a mobile device may offer a glimpse of the possibilities of educational mobile applications as tools for formal learning. The instructional protocol included using Whatsapp to send the students’ words they could look up using the Online Dictionary application for Android, and this protocol effectively taught vocabulary and maintained participants’ motivation for learning new vocabulary.

The formal vocabulary learning via mobile devices, mastery learning through self-regulated word look-ups using another Android application (the Online Dictionary), peer review of word usage in participant-generated sentences, transfer of learning, and engagement in the learning process via MALL were all aspects that contributed factors to the results revealed by our thorough data analysis.

In addition, vocabulary learning involves memorizing the sounds, the written forms, and the meanings of words and the ability to retrieve these three aspects of the words from memory. The quality of this retrieval, from the cognitive perspective, largely depends on the effective use of short- and long-term memory. The ability to freely move between the Whatsapp lists, the Online Dictionary Android application, word applications for mobile devices, and text messaging applications for dissemination of student-created sentences on the same mobile device may have improved attention spans and involvement in the learning process; this speculation finds support from prior research (Alemi & Lari, 2012; Hsu, et al., 2013; Khazaie & Ketabi, 2011; Redd, 2011; Taki & Khazaei, 2011; Zhang, et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the ultimate goal of learners is to retain newly acquired vocabulary, keep the vocabulary in long term memory, and store the vocabulary in layers of schemata that are easily and effectively retrieved when needed. However, newly acquired vocabulary is usually stored in the short-term memory and few words can be transferred to long-term memory without “multiple encounters with a lexical item, cognitive depth, affective depth, personalization, imaging, use of mnemonics and conscious attention that is necessary to remember a lexical item” (Pavičić Takač, 2008, p. 10). Accordingly, Wang and Thomas (1992) revealed that rote learning or memorizing vocabulary using traditional vocabulary lists students study at home is less effective than imagery-based instruction. Therefore, for long-term memory retention and retrieval of vocabulary, constant and effective reinforcement through frequent peer-motivation, robust self-motivation and active associations are necessary to facilitate the process of language learning (Gu, 2003; Kirsch, 2010; Moore, 1999).

The findings of the present study are commensurate with those of prior research (e.g., Alemi & Lari, 2012; Cavus & Ibrahim, 2009; Hsu, et al., 2013; Khazaie & Ketabi, 2011; Levy & Kennedy, 2005; Kennedy & Levy, 2008; Lu, 2008; Redd, 2011; Song, 2008; Stockwell, 2007; Stockwell, 2010; Taki & Khazaei, 2011; Thornton & Houser, 2001; Thornton & Houser, 2005; Zhang, et al., 2011), demonstrating that short-term spaced vocabulary learning via mobile phones can be more effective than massed vocabulary learning through paper-based mediums. This increased efficacy may be due to the students’ easy access to the mobile devices, and the easy-to-use Android applications that can facilitate improved vocabulary learning through repeated exposure to and frequent practice with the vocabulary items in a spaced manner on a daily basis; this speculation is also compatible with prior research findings (Abdous, Camarena, & Facer, 2009; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Hsu, et al., 2013; Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008; Kukulska-Hulme, 2009; Shih, 2007; Nah, White & Sussex, 2008; Nation, 2001; Thornton and Houser, 2005; Zhang, et al., 2011).
Overall, the findings of the present study indicate that technology has the ability to increase learning rates compared with traditional methods. Overall, the students felt that mobile devices with Android applications such as Whatsapp, text messaging and the Online Dictionary, were faster, easier, and more motivating. Furthermore, the mobile device applications utilized in the MALL meet the classifications deemed necessary for quality vocabulary instruction by Nagy (1988). Nagy (1988) found that vocabulary instruction should include integration, repetition, and meaningful use. According to Nagy (1988), integration entails tying new learning to familiar concepts; semantic mapping is essential. Repetition, which entails providing students with many encounters with the new vocabulary so that new knowledge can move into their reading vocabulary, was accomplished by sending the word lists thrice a week and the frequent swapping among peers of the student-generated sentences. Thus, the students had ample opportunities to observed their progress, which resulted in ample and efficient contexts for vocabulary learning in the case of the experimental group and echoed what Nagy (1988) recommended in this regard.

Conclusions

Several conclusions that may impact students’ vocabulary acquisition, retention, and motivation can be made from the findings of this study. First, the results suggest that mobile device applications harnessed for vocabulary instruction and learning are useful and effective tools. Thus, the researcher conclude that incorporating explicit vocabulary instruction into daily classroom activities is an effective way to increase students’ vocabulary learning, retention, retrieval and motivation for learning inside and outside of classrooms. Additionally, the results indicate that collaboration among students, represented in the current study by peer review, is also important for enhancing vocabulary learning. In sum, the present results suggest that integrating smart phone technology and vocabulary instruction increases the motivation and engagement of most students and motivation and engagement are further increased when students possess connected mobile devices.

Furthermore, repetitious work in meaningful contexts is also vital to vocabulary learning (Allen, 1999; Baker, Simmons, and Kameenui, 1995; Nagy, 1988). In addition, Baker, et al. (1995) state the importance of meaningful, frequent use of the words students are attempting to learn. Students should also have the opportunity to frequently engage in word learning (Allen, 1999; Baker, et al., 1995; Nagy, 1988). Word lists generated via Whatsapp and the text messaging of sentences illustrating word usage provide this targeted, frequent, and engaging instruction of vocabulary in the classroom. The findings also suggest that vocabulary building instructors should assign time for daily explicit vocabulary instruction via CMC technologies. The daily vocabulary lessons in this study had three main parts: (1) explicit instruction from the teacher, (2) collaboration among students, and (3) presentation of student work. Every other day, the vocabulary lessons of the mobile device MALL-based intervention began with explicit instruction. This notion is congruent with research recommendations indicating the significance of explicit, or direct, instruction when teaching vocabulary (Beck & McKeown, 2007; Dalton & Grisham, 2011; Rupley & Nichols, 2005; Taylor, et al., 2009).

Furthermore, ‘explicit explanation, modeling, and guided practice’ (Rupley, Blair, & Nichols, 2009, p. 127) rest at the core of explicit or direct vocabulary instruction, which was mediated in this study via the use of the Online Dictionary Android application to look up words from the instructor’s word lists.
Although not the focus of the present study, our results illustrate a byproduct of collaborative learning via the peer review of sentences illustrating word usage; namely, the development of an online learning community via connected mobile devices. Learners should develop an online community to learn with one another (Dalton & Grisham, 2011). Learning is a social process, and social interaction has a central role in the development of cognition (Vygotsky, 1978).

Furthermore, as students found various aspects of MALL appealing and conducive to fun and enthrallment, engagement in the vocabulary activities was vital. This finding is commensurate with the observation made by Mountain (2002) that engagement and motivation make vocabulary learning more fun and, therefore, more powerful. The data from this study suggest that most of the participating students felt more engaged when learning with smart phones connected to the internet.

The use of text messaging applications also proved useful, confirming the results of prior studies that have indicated the usefulness of SMS for pedagogical purposes, especially purposes related to language and vocabulary learning (e.g., Alemi & Lari, 2012; Lu, 2008).

**Implications**

Below the researcher describes the implications of this study. First, assuming that integrating mobile technology into vocabulary instruction is a viable teaching/learning method for promoting engagement and motivation on the part of students, vocabulary instructors should ensure that students have access to the necessary technological tools and reliable internet connectivity. Second, language instructors at the college level should have quality professional development available to ensure they are able to maximally utilize of mobile phone technologies as was done in this study. Third, our results suggest that the encouragement of additional collaboration among students, teachers and researchers to share knowledge about how and when to utilize technology in the classroom is beneficial for the use and effective, widespread deployment of these technologies. Collaborative language learning and teaching can be fostered with reliable networking systems such as email, blogs, or social networking sites that are available through language management systems that are installed in universities, such as Blackboard.

This study further investigated the implications of embedding technology within the vocabulary building curriculum. To utilize mobile technology for vocabulary teaching and learning, the stakeholders must have access to reliable internet connectivity and be open enriching, enthralling educational opportunities.

**Limitations of the study**

When relating the findings of this study to the larger research picture, some of this study’s limitations need to be acknowledged, and may offer opportunities for further research or replication of the present study. There are several limitations of the present study. Indeed, the researcher has identified three main limitations: (1) the small size of the sample, (2) the design of the study, and (3) the duration of the study. The small number of participants should be enlarged in prospective replication studies to control for sample size effects. Additionally, this study utilized an experimental approach that inevitably involved uncontrolled environmental variables that may have influenced the findings. For example, the experimental group worked under a fixed schedule of exposure to the new vocabulary words,
whereas the control group did not; this difference may have had as much influence on the outcome as the use of smart phone applications. To clearly establish the influence of mobile phone technology on vocabulary learning, future studies and/or replications should better identify and control for the frequencies and durations of the students’ exposure to the target vocabulary. Finally, while effective methods and tools for the gathering, organizing and analyzing of relevant data may influence the effectiveness of learning via of mobile devices, but these tools need to be developed and standardized, and their effects on learning performance should also be controlled for.

Suggestions for Further Research

The limitations of this study may provide useful insights for future research. To expand on the findings of the current study, future researchers could do the following: (1) utilize a more diverse or larger sample size, (2) participate solely as research instructors, (3) study the effects of digital word lists disseminated via mobile technology applications in the Android environment for a longer duration of time, and (4) refine the outcome measures in terms of validity and reliability.

The contributions to the field of the present research could be greatly improved and expanded through longitudinal replication studies. Overall, continued research in the areas of vocabulary acquisition, retention, and motivation is crucial and should be performed across different levels of study, proficiency and varying vocabulary spans of the learners.

About the Author:
Currently, Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, in Department of English, Faculty of Languages and Translation, Abha, King Khalid University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He obtained his Ph.D in Applied Linguistics, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA, 2003. He obtained his MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages in Michigan State University, Michigan, East Lansing, USA, 1994.

References


---

**Appendix A**

**The Online Vocabulary Test**

1. For each question, choose which of the four possible answers fits the space best and write **THE CORRECT LETTER** into the empty box. Also think about why the other three answers are not possible.

1. Normally, before you are able to get a job, you have to attend a(n) ______. If you do well in that, they offer you the position.
   a. appointment
   b. arrangement
   c. interview
   d. meeting
2. And when you go, make sure you bring your [ ] to show the manager. This is a sort of record of your education and employment history.
   a. RSVP
   b. CD
   c. CV
   d. VCR

3. I am feeling really [ ] today. The weather is terrible and I got some bad news this morning too!
   a. lazy
   b. punctual
   c. miserable
   d. starving

4. My uncle [ ] four years ago but he is still very active and says he wished he had stopped work years before!!
   a. graduated
   b. retired
   c. resigned
   d. fired

5. I think a teacher should be quite [ ] so that the students who want to learn can, without worrying about other students playing around.
   a. serious
   b. strict
   c. harsh
   d. cold

6. If you turn off the central heating if you are away from home for more than a couple of day, you will [ ] a lot of money.
   a. earn
   b. save
   c. win
   d. gain

7. We watched the carnival and then stayed behind for two hours afterwards to help the organisers clear away all the [ ]
   a. garbage
   b. dirt
   c. mud
   d. pollution

8. I [ ] with you. This movie is really boring! Let's change the channel.
   a. accord
   b. meet
   c. agree
   d. join

2. Choose the correct prefix to build new words. The explanations help you.

1. [ ]-board = fair and unconcealed
   ○ up ○ over ○ on ○ above

2. [ ]accessible = difficult or impossible to reach or to get
   ○ dis ○ im ○ in ○ un

3. [ ]affected = not loyal to your situation, organisation, belief etc.
4. _____ atomic = smaller than (or found in) an atom
   - under
   - sub
   - micro

5. _____ balance = lose your balance and fall
   - under
   - un
   - over

6. _____ beat = positive and enthusiastic
   - down
   - out
   - over

7. _____ byte = a unit of computer memory (equal to about 1 million bytes)
   - mega
   - kilo
   - giga
   - extra

8. _____ carious = not safe or certain
   - dis
   - pre
   - un
   - under

9. _____ estimate = think or guess that the amount of something is smaller than it really is
   - down
   - out
   - un
   - under

10. _____ genic = good-looking (on television)
    - hyper
    - hypo
    - mega
    - tele

11. _____ hold = look at or see somebody or something
    - with
    - up
    - over

12. _____ law = to make something no longer legal
    - by
    - out
    - un

13. _____ normal = not normal; not typical or usual or regular or conforming to a norm
    - non
    - in
    - il
    - be
    - ab

14. _____ qualify = make unfit or unsuitable, to outcast
    - dis
    - mal
    - re
    - sub

15. _____ sensitive = extremely physically sensitive to particular medicines, lights etc.
    - hyper
    - mega
    - out
    - over

16. _____ shore = Away from shore; away from land
    - down
    - in
    - non
    - off

17. _____ shore = on the land rather than at sea
    - up
    - over
    - on
    - in

18. _____ structure = a structure that is built on top of something
    - super
    - sub
    - over
    - mega

19. _____ terrain = Being or operating under the surface of the earth
20. _____ wind = in the direction in which the wind is blowing
   up    under    down    cross

3. Choose the person being explained.
   1. _____ = the person who leads an orchestra
      conductor       conductist    conducter    conductee    conductant

   2. _____ = the contestant who wins the contest, a gambler who wins a bet
      winor       winnor    winning    winner    winer

   3. _____ = someone whose occupation is printing
      printant       printee    printer    printist    printor

   4. _____ = someone whose occupation is cleaning
      cleanor       cleanser    cleanex    cleaner    cleanee

   5. _____ = someone who maintains and audits business accounts
      accountant       accountee    accounter    accountist    accounts

   6. _____ = someone who has retired from active working
      retirant       retiree    retirer    retirer    retirist

   7. _____ = someone who fights - often for a cause
      fightant       fightee    fighter    fightist    fightor

   8. _____ = someone to whom a right or property is legally transferred
      assignant       assigne    assignee    assigner    assignor

   9. _____ = someone to whom a licence is granted
      licensee       licenser    licensing    licensist    licensor

   10. _____ = one that is absent or not in residence
       absentant       absentee    absenter    absentist    absentor

   11. _____ = any member of a ship's crew, a serviceman in the navy
       sailor       sailist    sailiant    sailor    sailant
12. _____ = an agent who conducts an auction
- auctionor
- auctionist
- auctioneer
- auctionee
- auctionant

13. _____ = a theatrical performer
- actor
- acting
- actor
- acts
- actter

14. _____ = a person who participates in competitions
- contestant
- contestee
- contester
- contestist

15. _____ = a person who grows, makes or invents things
- creatant
- createer
- creator
- creatist

16. _____ = a person who buys, a purchaser
- buyeer
- buyee
- buyant
- buyer
- buyor

17. _____ = a person to whom legal title to property is entrusted to use for another's benefit
- traster
- trustee
- truster
- trustist
- trustor

18. _____ = a high ranking police officer, an investigator who observes carefully
- inspecter
- inspecting
- inspection
- inspector
- inspectour

19. _____ = a follower, distant admirer
- devotant
- devotee
- devoteer
- devoter
- devotor

20. _____ = a criminal who is a member of a gang
- gangbang
- gangs
- gangsteer
- gangster
- gangstor

Appendix B
The MALL Motivation Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel enthralled using smart phones to learn English vocabulary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel more motivated to do my vocabulary assignments when there is internet connectivity for my mobile phone or after I get the assignments via Whatsapp.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It is great fun to learn new vocabulary lists sent via Whatsapp and the Online Dictionary application on my smart phone.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Using the Online Dictionary application on my smart phone makes it easy for me to look up and learn new words, their derivations, their etymologies and their usages in illustrative examples.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I will continue to use the Online Dictionary application and its dictionary, word dynamo, thesaurus, and translator capabilities to learn and actively use newly learned vocabulary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I have developed an e-lifestyle using Whatsapp and the Online Dictionary and frequently, on a daily basis, look up and learn new words.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I prefer to use the digital dictionaries and vocabulary lists over paper-based dictionaries and traditional word power activators.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I am increasingly engaged in learning vocabulary via mobile devices compared to paper-and-pencil methods.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Over time, smart phones have become less of a distraction and more of a tool for learning new vocabulary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I can get more vocabulary assignments done when I am working on my smart phone then when I am working with paper-and-pencil sheets.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Use of Literary Texts and Questioning to Examine First-Year Central Asian Students’ Critical Thinking Skills

Dinara Karimova
Language Center, KIMEP University
Almaty, Kazakhstan

Abstract
This research project reports the results of the study on freshman Central Asian students’ critical reasoning skills before learners actually become familiar with the concept of critical thinking through formal instruction. In addition, the researcher explored the effect of the fourth-level foundation English course upon the development of critical thought of students in the fifth-level foundation English course taught at a major Kazakhstan university. Overall, 37 first-year Central Asian students enrolled in the Foundation English 5 course in Fall 2011 participated in the project. Besides, seven Foundation English 5 course faculty members participated in a small survey with four open-ended questions inquiring their beliefs about critical thought and questioning as well as observations of the possession and use of critical thinking skills demonstrated by the foundation English learners. The researcher used three different types of questions – questions of fact, questions of preference and questions of judgment - as the basis for constructing a more inclusive instrument for grouping questions produced by the students after reading literary texts. The results indicate that many learners who have been taught various critical thinking skills in the lower-level foundation English course asked fewer factual questions, more preferential and almost the same number of judgment questions compared with those asked by the newcomers. The research and teaching implications suggest possible ways for educators to help first-year Central Asian students to further develop their critical thinking skills for study and career purposes.

Key Words: critical thinking, questioning, students, texts
I. Introduction

Many institutions of higher education worldwide have a requirement of formal instruction in critical thinking to be incorporated in diverse academic disciplines in liberal arts, business, economics, law, social sciences and other program curricular. This policy is based on the grounds that university graduates should become intelligent citizens conscious of their rights and responsibilities in the global community. Besides, the ability of graduates to think critically affects their employability in the global markets. Indeed, potential employers expect young professionals to be prepared to face work-related challenges. In other words, novice professionals should be able to develop effective solutions to problems, consider issues from multiple perspectives, apply specific and general knowledge appropriately and reflect on both personal and collaborative short- and long-term performances. However, many university graduates still possess insufficient reasoning skills. Surprisingly, only 6 percent of American graduates in 2005, for example, demonstrated proficiency in critical thinking (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2005). Taiwanese students are even more immature in critical thinking than their western counterparts (Tung & Chang, 2009).

Although American faculty can estimate critical thought potential of their first-year students based on the SAT tasks and results that test high school graduates’ ability to think critically, Kazakhstani educators do not have this opportunity. The reason is that prospective university students either present their high school Unified National Testing scores or take a university-created test that indicate only the level of factual knowledge of different subjects, but do not disclose learners’ critical thinking skills. For example, to enter the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (thereafter KIMEP), which is considered to be one of the best institutions in Kazakhstan and entire Central Asia and is based on the American educational credit system with English as the main language of instruction, the applicants should pass a special complex test. But again this test checks only their knowledge of math, history of Kazakhstan, native language and English. As a result, both faculty and administrators remain unaware of the admitted students’ critical thinking potential.

However, the development of learners’ critical thought is a crucial component of higher learning at many Kazakhstani universities. Thus, a lot of effort is placed by their faculty on teaching students how to think critically and express their thoughts in English, which is the students’ second or third language, through a variety of in-class activities and self-study assignments. For instance, KIMEP has an institutional policy to provide those students who score below 80 percent on the English Entrance Test with the opportunity to develop their English proficiency, study skills and cognitive thinking through foundation English courses in order to help them prepare better for their further academic courses in their undergraduate or graduate degree programs. Particularly, the aims of foundation English courses are to “offer intensive practice in the use of English in all four skill areas (speaking, listening, reading and writing)” and to “guide students from the outset in the acquisition of effective study methods, sound academic skills, higher-order thinking and problem-solving, and critical thinking” (Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research, 2010, p.61).

In order to find out English language faculty’s opinions about their students’ critical thinking, the researcher of this paper conducted a quick survey (the method is explained thoroughly in the third part of the study) among seven instructors who teach the Foundation English 5 course (thereafter FE5) at one of the Kazakhstani universities with the Western-style education system (thereafter the University). Overall, all foundation English faculty members observe that critical thought potential differs from student to student, but often their learners
demonstrate insufficient critical thinking ability for succeeding in higher education. One faculty member even stated that the completion of foundation English courses does not significantly affect students’ ability to think critically because it is actually an innate feature of a person’s mind, in other words, a learner either possess or lack it.

Moreover, four out of the seven surveyed instructors generally agree that lower-level foundation English courses enhance students’ critical thinking skills in higher-level foundation English courses. For example, these educators have noticed that most FE5 students who took the Foundation English 4 course (thereafter FE4) possess and use more critical thinking skills than the newcomers whose FE5 was the first course at the University. The latter also differ in their ability to think critically depending on their previous schooling. For instance, several instructors have noticed that those students who finished special schools like international high schools and lyceums and usually possess and use more analytical thinking than those learners who studied in general state Kazakhstani schools.

Since there is no formal evidence yet gathered in Kazakhstan on natural critical ability of the first-year students, this research aims to examine freshman learners’ innate critical thought potential. In addition, the researcher will explore the effect of the fourth-level foundation English course upon the development of critical thought of students in the fifth-level foundation English course taught at the University.

The study asks the following research questions:
1. What kind of questions do first-year students in the upper-level foundation English ask after reading a literary text?
2. What is the difference in critical thinking skills between those students in the upper-level foundation English who took a lower-level foundation English course and the newcomers?
3. Why is there a difference, if any, in the upper-level foundation English students’ ability to ask reasonable and thoughtful questions that indicate the learners’ possession and use of critical thought (graduates of a lower-level foundation English course and the newcomers)?

II. Literature review
This section will review educational researchers and practitioners’ statements and perceptions of critical thinking and the possibility of its development by students through reading and questioning literary texts.

In terms of critical thinking, various educators provide similar definitions of this mental competence. For instance, Dewey (1908) thought that critical thinking includes maintaining some degree of doubt during simultaneous systematic and protracted inquiry. According to Tierney, O’Flahavan, and McGinley (1989), “critical thinking entails making a commitment to thinking about ideas-ideally, from different perspectives-as well as thinking about the quality and nature of that thinking” (p.136). All seven surveyed FE5 instructors consider critical thinking as the ability to raise and examine an issue from different perspectives by providing supporting and opposing arguments and exploring its reasons and consequences. Moreover, this issue examination should be based on reliable evidence gathered from various sources as well as personal opinion, which has to be rather skeptical and questionable to avoid bias.

The choice of literary texts as an effective means of developing both critical thought and English skills is justified with several reasons. First of all, daily literature reading is an important self-study task for foundation English students at the University as well as any learner of English...
as a second or foreign language. Secondly, Lazere (1987) claimed that literature as an academic discipline “can come closest to encompassing the full range of mental traits currently considered to comprise critical thinking” (p. 2). These mental capacities include unification and relation of ideas and issues in the text with those in a reader’s experience, engagement in mature moral reasoning, formation of conclusions, demonstration of skepticism resulting into critical examination of an issue in the text, perception of ambiguity and relativity of one’s viewpoint and awareness of multiple aspects of form and meaning (Lazere, 1987). Wallace (1993) also asserted that “literature texts may well, in part at least, encode students’ own experiences and give rise to strong or varied responses”, thus, leading to reasoning within multiple domains (p. 106). The author adds that through interactive reading English language learners can explore even uncomplicated literary texts with complexity because “material which is linguistically simple may invite complex interpretations, that is the demands made on the reader may be aesthetic and intellectual rather than linguistic” (p. 69). Later, Jaffar (2004) echoed Lazere’s statement by noting that critical thinking involves active interaction with the text, good readers bring their own understanding to the text and add to its dimensions.

Recently, Tung and Chang (2009) wrote that “literature reading is a complex process that requires readers to recall, retrieve and reflect on their prior experiences or memories to construct meanings of the text” (p. 291). In addition to the capacities mentioned by Lazere (1987), these authors mentioned the other traits that readers might develop through literary texts: “to differentiate facts from opinions; to understand the literal or implied meanings and the narrator’s tone; to apply what they have learned from this process to other domains or the real world” (p. 291). Finally, one of the surveyed FE5 faculty responded to critical reading as a “deep analysis of texts through posing incisive questions to look for hidden meanings, literary techniques and author’s agenda; it helps to read between the lines.”

In addition to defining critical thinking and validating the choice of texts to be used in this study, the researcher reviewed existing works on the effect of questioning literary texts in relation to critical thought development. Most researchers consent that posing intelligent questions lead to a better examination of a literature piece and, thus, to the reader’s contemplation development. For instance, Tankersley (2003) claimed that proficient readers, in fact, pose questions at any reading stage because such an inquiry enhances their understanding and links existing knowledge with new information through analysis and synthesis. Thus, questioning helps readers to “examine the text, the author’s purpose and style, and their own interpretations of the text they are reading (p.133). The author asserts that only through asking challenging and thoughtful questions students truly develop as literate readers and thinkers. Paul and Elder (2006) argued that “it is impossible to become a good thinker and be a poor questioner” because “thinking is not driven by answers but by questions” (p. 84). Moreover, they emphasized that the quality of questions determines a person’s thinking and learning processes. Therefore, those people who want to enhance their cognitive ability should ask meaningful questions related to purposes, reasons, assumptions, logic, and effects of an article, issue or activity. As for the educational process, Paul and Elder (2006) assumed that “most students ask virtually none of the thought-stimulating questions” (p.86). The learners, thus, tend to ask only dead questions such as “Is it going to be on the test?” or “Who is the protagonist in this story?” that do not encourage students to think critically. Furthermore, Nosich (2009) exemplifies that when asked to solve a homework problem, students often just try to resolve the problem by any method they can think of instead of asking themselves, “How can I best solve the problem?” The
researcher then claims that critical thinking learners need to first question the problem and its possible solutions. Thus, he highlights asking the following questions:

“What are some alternative ways of solving the problem assigned?”
“What is a good way to begin?”
“Do I have all necessary information I need to start solving the problem?”
“What is the purpose behind the problem?”
“Can the problem be solved? Does it even make sense?” (p. 6).

As for the surveyed FE5 instructors, they have also confirmed that the ability to ask questions help a learner to develop his or her critical thinking skills. To illustrate, one teacher wrote that “through asking questions we not only get the information we need, but also create a context in which we think and define the direction of how we can apply the work of mind.” However, most of them are positive that only thought-provoking questions do really enhance students’ critical thinking potential.

III. Research methodology

The researcher has used the descriptive research type with a comparative descriptive design to answer its research questions. With the chosen research design, the researcher aims to compare critical thinking skills of two groups of freshman students – those who were introduced the concept of critical thought in the FE4 course and the newcomers who have not been taught any critical thinking skills in the university courses yet.

A. Participants

Overall, 37 local and international Central Asian first-year University students enrolled in the FE5 course in Fall 2011 participated in this research project. Among them were 15 newcomers or students who did not take FE4 and 22 students who finished this course in earlier studies. All participants were either second or third users of English. Most students’ native languages were either Kazakh or Russian followed by the Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tadjik, and Turkmen languages. Four other faculty members volunteered to conduct the same research procedure in their FE5 classes for generating a more representative sample for the study.

Besides, seven FE5 faculty members participated in a small survey with four open-ended questions inquiring their beliefs about critical thought and questioning as well as observations of the possession and use of critical thinking skills demonstrated by the foundation English learners.

B. Instrument

The data measuring instrument was based on Paul and Elder’s (2006) question classification table with the three types of questions focused on examining learners’ thinking and learning processes (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question type</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Estimated reaction</th>
<th>Possible answer</th>
<th>Effect on thinking and learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions of fact</td>
<td>What is the boiling point of lead?</td>
<td>Require evidence and reasoning within a system</td>
<td>A correct answer</td>
<td>Lead to knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions of preference</td>
<td>What is your favorite type of food?</td>
<td>Call for stating a subjective preference</td>
<td>A subjective opinion</td>
<td>Cannot be assessed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student questions were first grouped into questions of fact, questions of preference and questions of judgement based on Paul and Elder’s question classification table. However, during the data processing stage, the researcher has realized that not all of the various student questions about literary texts can be placed into these three categories because many questions simultaneously encompassed features of two different types. Therefore, for a more effective arrangement of questions and, as a result, a more objective analysis of the results, the researcher had to modify Paul and Elder’s question classification table to include other miscellaneous questions (Table 2).

Table 2. Five types of questions and their impact on students’ thinking and learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question type</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Estimated reaction</th>
<th>Possible answer</th>
<th>Effect on thinking and learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions of fact</td>
<td>How did Mr. Brock become the murderer of electronic devices?</td>
<td>Require evidence and reasoning within a system</td>
<td>A correct answer</td>
<td>Lead to knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions of preference/fact</td>
<td>Why did people in the story lose hope and were afraid of technology?</td>
<td>Call for stating a subjective viewpoint partly supported by evidence within a system</td>
<td>A subjective opinion partly based on factual information</td>
<td>Can be partially assessed and lead to knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions of preference</td>
<td>Do you believe in love at first sight like it happened with the characters in the story?</td>
<td>Call for stating a subjective preference</td>
<td>A subjective opinion</td>
<td>Cannot be assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions of preference/judgement</td>
<td>Why aren’t most teenagers in real life (like people in the story) interested in art?</td>
<td>Call for stating a subjective viewpoint based on reasoning within multiple systems</td>
<td>A subjective opinion that lead to better and worse answers</td>
<td>Can be partially assessed because require reasoned judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions of judgement</td>
<td>What is the writer’s philosophical position in this story?</td>
<td>Require evidence and reasoning within multiple systems</td>
<td>Better and worse answers</td>
<td>Require reasoned judgement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Procedures

Classroom research

All participating FE5 students were assigned to read a literary authentic short story at home and then in class to think about and write down several interesting and thoughtful
questions related to the story that the learners wanted to discuss with their instructor and peers. As a result, each participant read five classic or contemporary stories and compiled the total of 17 questions. In order to examine students’ natural critical ability expressed through their own questions, the participating teachers neither explained what critical thinking included, nor showed any samples of critical thinking questions.

**Student participant survey**

The student participants were also asked to participate in a survey by filling in the questionnaire with some personal demographic (e.g., age, gender, country of origin) and educational background information (e.g., completion of FE4 course). Additionally, they responded to a few open-ended questions about the definition of critical thinking, role of questioning in developing a person’s critical thought, types of questions that cultivate reasoning speculations and types of critical thinking skills learned in the FE4 course.

**Faculty participant survey**

All seven FE5 participating instructors were asked to reply to four open-ended questions aimed at investigating their own definitions of critical thinking and the function of questions in developing a student’s critical thinking skills. Also, they shared their observations of critical thought demonstration by their FE5 students. In particular, they commented on (1) what critical thinking is; (2) whether questioning ability helps students to develop their critical thinking skills; (3) whether newcoming students in their classes demonstrate critical thinking skills; and (4) whether those students who took the lower-level of foundation English courses, particularly FE4, possess and use more critical thinking skills than the newcomers.

**III. Research results**

The research results include both the participants’ numerous questions to literary texts and their responses to the following survey inquiries: (1) students’ understanding of critical thinking; (2) role of questioning in the development of learners’ critical thinking skills; (3) types of questions that enhance critical thought; and (4) learners’ critical thinking skills learned in the FE4 course, if applicable.

**A. Student questions**

Overall, 37 FE5 students produced 629 questions with 374 and 255 posed by those learners who took the lower-level FE4 course and the newcomers, respectively. According to the results, first-year students in both groups asked many factual and preferential questions (over 70 percent) that do not encourage the development of critical thinking; however, they also constructed questions that lead to critical thought development (25-30 percent). The general tendency is that those participants who had finished the FE4 course asked fewer factual and more thought-stimulating questions than the newcomers with about 9 and 7 percent differences, respectively (Figure 1).
B. Student responses to the questionnaire items

Besides responding to general demographic and educational background items, the participants replied to the four research-related open-ended questions. First, the participants were asked to explain what they understand by critical thinking. The majority of students in both groups – those who were introduced and practiced critical thinking skills in FE4 and the newcomers - defined critical thinking as the analysis of an issue from different sides, in other words, the consideration of its benefits and drawbacks (52.2% and 45 percent, respectively). Other students who took FE4 (7.8 percent) mentioned that critical thinking includes identification of an issue and its possible solutions as well as development and justification of personal opinions. Ten percent of the newcomers pointed out that critical thinking should be based on examining other people’s thoughts about a topic or issue, however, none of the students from the first group noted this component. The complete list of all responses is overviewed in Table 3.

Table 3. Students’ definitions of critical thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students' understanding of critical thinking</th>
<th>Took F4</th>
<th></th>
<th>Percent-age,%</th>
<th>Took F4</th>
<th></th>
<th>Percent-age,%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>knowing what an issue is</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finding reasons and main points of an issue</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyzing an issue from different sides</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finding solutions to issues/situations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drawing conclusions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developing and proving own opinion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criticizing information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understanding the meaning between the lines</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asking and discussing critical questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>researching what other people think about a topic/issue</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinking thoroughly about important things</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinking effectively in critical situations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Second, all 37 participants believed that questioning does develop learners’ critical reasoning skills. The majority (19.4 percent) of learners who practiced critical thinking skills in the FE4 course believed that thinking about and discussing new information through questioning stimulates the development of critical thought, whereas most newcomers (28 percent) indicated that questioning helps learners think about and answer posed questions and, as a result of this mental process, students develop their critical thinking skills. Table 4 lists various students’ reasons of why asking questions improves learners’ critical thinking skills.

Table 4. Students’ reasoning of why questioning leads to critical thought development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons why questioning develops critical thinking</th>
<th>Took F4</th>
<th>Didn't take F4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>age, %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receiving new information</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinking about/discussing new information</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finding the main idea/details of an issue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finding reasons of an issue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyzing an issue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understanding a topic/issue better</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raising debatable/relevant questions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinking about and answering posed questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing and learning about different ideas</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>building and justifying own opinion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>checking one's intelligence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being skeptical about something</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developing logic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third, the participants were asked to suggest those types of questions that encourage the development of critical thinking skills. The majority of participants in both groups (18.7 and 16 percent, respectively) are positive that the “Why?” questions support the development of critical thinking skills. The second most frequently occurring questions in both groups include those that are concerned with personal opinions about some issue and personal reasons of making a particular decision or choice. The student choices of these question types are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Students’ responses to the types of questions that develop critical thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of questions that enhance critical thinking</th>
<th>Took F4</th>
<th>Didn't take F4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>age, %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what is the issue/its details?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what are the reasons of something?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what are the advantages and disadvantages of something?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, the respondents from the first group recalled those critical thinking skills they had learned in the FE4 course. Their notes are provided in Table 6 below. Most participants (36.6 percent) learned to analyze information in articles followed by the obtained skills to identify and discuss issues as well as to compare and contrast arguments in essays. One interesting finding is that although all participants believe that questioning develops critical thinking skills of learners, only two students indicated that in the FE4 course they learned how to ask relevant, thoughtful questions to literary texts.

Table 6. Students’ responses to critical thinking skills learned in Foundation English 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical thinking skills learned in the FE4 course</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to define critical thinking</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to identify/discuss issues</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to contrast/compare arguments in an essay</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to find solutions to problems</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to analyze articles (finding main points, author's purpose)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to ask relevant, thoughtful questions to literary texts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to think logically</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t remember</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Discussion

A. Discussion of the results

The first research question aimed to explore and describe a range of possible questions that first-year students in the upper-level foundation English ask after reading a literary text. The results of the project show that freshman students ask various questions ranging from pure factual, content-oriented to critical, judgment-requiring questions (see Figure 1, p. 12). Such a variety of question types can be partially explained by previous students’ educational background, for instance, the fact of taking the FE4 course where learners practice using critical thinking skills in different assignments might have caused the creation of more judgment questions by the participants in the first group. The reason why about 30 percent of all questions constituted preferential ones might be the participants’ willingness to know their fellow students’ opinions about and perceptions of stories’ content, characters, processes, choices and other text aspects.

The second research question inclined to examine the difference in critical thinking skills between those students in the upper-level foundation English who took a lower-level foundation English course and the newcomers. The results indicate that those students who took the FE4 course are more likely to ask fewer factual questions compared with the newcomers. This can be explained by the fact that the former were explicitly taught and practiced different critical thinking skills in the lower-level foundation English course. However, since the majority of FE5 students in both groups still asked over 70 percent of factual and subjective, preferential questions, the researcher has concluded that most learners were unfamiliar with the fact that these types of questions do not develop their critical thinking skills and should not be the focus of learners’ attention when thinking about or discussing a story. To the researcher’s surprise, about a forth of the entire student sample posed judgment questions that require reasoned analysis and, therefore, enhance one of the important upper-level critical thinking skills. This result indicates that about 25 percent of the participating freshman students use their critical thinking skills regardless of the fact whether they were introduced them in lower-level foundation English courses.

The third research question inquired why there is a difference, if any, in the participants’ ability to different questions. The biggest difference exists in the number of factual and preferential/factual questions constructed by the students in two various groups. This variation appears to be linked to factor that the majority of the students who took the FE4 course had learned to analyze issues and information in general from different perspectives (see Tables 3 and 6). Therefore, they might have used this analytical skill to construct less factual, content-related questions to literary texts than the newcomers.

Surprisingly, the results also revealed that there is a minimal difference in the number of judgment questions posed by the participants in both groups. One of the reasons why about 25 percent of the newcomers demonstrated some critical thinking skills expressed in their judgement questions is grounded on their understanding of critical thinking, which mainly includes an analysis of an issue from positive and negative sides (see Table 3). Besides, since another 10 percent of the newcomers highlight the necessity to examine other people’s views on some issue, this notion might have directed the learners’ attention to posing more objective, analytical questions that require critical considerations of a number of people, not only their own personal speculations. Furthermore, there are two possible explanations why the participants who had finished the FE4 course produced almost the same number of judgment questions like the newcomers. One of them might be that their learning in the FE4 course was not directed to
thinking about and asking more judgment questions to literary and perhaps other texts. Another reason entails a cognitive explanation that many entering young students mentally are not capable of exercising many critical thinking skills during their first year of study, and only subsequent academic studies will help them build such skills. However, the last explanation needs another research study focused on exploring cognitive aspects of learners’ performance in relation to their critical thinking skills’ development.

The students’ choices of types of questions that presumably (from the learners’ perspective) lead to developing some critical thinking skills need to be discussed, too. Although most students in both groups consider the “Why” questions as the ones calling for critical thinking, not all of them, in fact, become judgment inquires. For instance, a student might ask, “Why did the family decide to move from city X to town Y?” or “Why do you like character A better than character B in the story?” Such questions might be based only on factual answers or subjective opinions that do not develop critical thinking at all.

B. Teaching implications

There are a few teaching implications based on this project that might be considered not only by foundation English faculty at the University, but also by a wider international education community. First, teaching students to distinguish and construct different types of questions to literary and other texts (and then preferably discuss them in class) might better develop learners’ critical thinking skills. Second, since the results have shown no significant difference in the amount of judgment questions produced by the participants in both groups, the focus of learners’ attention in foundation English courses need to be directed to producing and employing more judgment queries. These reasoned questions can possibly build a solid foundation for the advancement of students’ critical thinking skills. The researcher believes that such an intended and explicit differentiation of questions with the spotlight on those requiring reasoned judgment, which are supported by legitimate reasons and evidence, will nurture the development of critical thinking skills in learners. It is important to address student questions in the classroom to further develop their ideas and thoughts and encourage in- and out-of-class participation. Next, since the students identify all “Why” questions as the ones expanding people’s critical thinking skills, language faculty ought to help them differentiate the structure and meaning of the “Why” questions so that learners can focus on producing more judgment than factual or preferential questions.

Finally, both educators and learners are suggested to also explore the deep foundations their critical thinking contemplations through the Socratic questioning approach in in-class small group or whole class discussions for a better understanding of the nature and quality of cognitive resolutions (Paul & Elder, 2006). The “Socratic questioning” method is aimed at “assessing the truth or plausibility of things” through “an integrated, disciplined approach to thinking” (Paul & Elder, 2006, p. 91). The authors claim that it is possible to promote better critical thinking by helping learners understand the foundation of their statements or beliefs, in other words, by asking such questions as “What is the basis of your statement? Can you please explain your reasoning in more detail?” Moreover, connecting ideas and arguments with further thoughts will generate more critical enquiry in the classroom. For example, the teacher might follow up some student’s assertion by asking “If what you say is true, then wouldn’t another argument be also valid?” Furthermore, Socratic questioning urges people to often clarify and develop their accounts. For instance, faculty might ask, “Can you please elaborate on your suggested solution?” Finally, this approach calls for the recognition of prior, presupposed questions that
students should also explore. To demonstrate, learners might be asked, “To answer this complex question, what other questions do we need to answer?”

C. Limitations of the study
The results of the study might have been affected by a few limitations. First, since the researcher focused on questioning as the only instrument to examine students’ critical thinking skills, there might be more differences in the results based on other data measuring instruments. Second, since the participants represented only about 30 percent of all FE5 students in Fall 2, 2011, this number might still not be a very representative sample. In addition, the researcher studied two unequal groups of learners in terms of their prior educational background, in other words, there were more participants in the group who had taken the FE4 course (22 students) than in another one with the newcomers (15 students). This fact might have affected the representation of diverse question types produced by the second group; consequently, the amount of judgment questions might have been different percentagewise. Finally, with a larger sample size it will be possible to conduct a quantitative analysis for more objective results and conclusions.

V. Conclusion
This research project intended to investigate newcomer students’ critical reasoning skills before they are formally introduced the critical thinking skills they need to utilize in their academic studies as well as to compare their critical thinking skills with those learners who have been taught such skills in lower-level foundation English courses. The researcher used five different types of questions (see Table 2, p. 9) as the instrument for grouping participant-produced questions after reading literary texts. The results indicate that many learners in the FE5 course who have been taught different critical thinking skills in the lower-level FE4 course asked fewer factual questions than the newcomers. However, since the participants in both groups constructed almost the same number of judgment questions, language faculty are recommended to review their teaching practices to provide more opportunities for developing learners’ critical thinking skills through reasoned questioning or other useful methods.

Further research projects might include a quantitative study of a larger first-year student sample with the purpose of conducting a statistical analysis of different learners’ critical thinking skills. In other words, through questioning literary texts, it will be possible to statistically compare the number of factual, preferential and judgment questions generated by those students who have already gained knowledge of and applied various critical thinking skills in lower-level foundation English courses with the those questions produced by the newcomers. Another quantitative research might explore the impact of the explicit introduction and practice of different types of questions through a variety of integrated linguistic, academic and cognitive skill activities upon students’ critical thought development. It will be interesting to compare the differences, if any, in the development of critical thinking skills in the control and experimental groups.

About the Author:
Dinara Karimova received an MEd in Higher Education Administration from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, USA. Dinara is currently pursuing an MA in TESOL at KIMEP.
University, Almaty, Kazakhstan. Her main research interests include English language learning and teaching; literature; critical thinking; and reflective practice in education.

References
Bidirectional Influence between Languages: Theoretical Foundations and Pedagogical Implications

Hosni Mostafa El-Dali
Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences
United Arab Emirates University

Abstract
There has been extensive research into how L₁ affects L₂, commonly known as ‘negative influence’, but a lot less about the opposite direction, commonly known as ‘Reverse or Backward’ transfer. The present study attempts to examine and critically review pertinent research into the question of bidirectional influence between languages. First, it traces the conceptual framework of the notion L₁ → L₂ effect. Second, it attempts to demonstrate how an emerging new language (L₂) affects the existing L₁. Although there are several ways of conceptualizing L₂ influence on L₁, the focus, in the present study, is on the concept of “Multi-Competence” introduced by Cook (1991) and how it shifts the evaluation angle of the interlanguage system. Third, it examines the pedagogical aspects of both directions, as manifested in L₂ classroom.

Keywords: L₁ effect on L₂; Reverse transfer; Pedagogical aspects
1. Introductory Remarks

It is commonly believed that the first language (L1) has an effect on the second language (L2). Second Language Acquisition (SLA) literature has shown extensive research on how the learning and use of an L2 is affected by the L1. What has hardly been investigated, however, is the influence that foreign language has on the learner’s first language. The reason for this neglect may have been twofold: (a) for a long time, researchers have been interested in the non-advanced learners of L2. At the beginning stages of L2 learning the influence is mostly unidirectional, from L1 to L2. (b) L2 acquisition research has been dominated by English as an L2. And, advanced learners of English who supplied the data for research were immigrants to English-speaking countries, and knowledge of English was vital for their integration into the new society. Therefore, the development of this knowledge provoked researchers’ interest and the state of their native language, on the other hand, was less important, and did not raise the same amount of interest (See Miller, 2011).

The issue of whether the L2 affects the L1 has provided a rich new question for L2 acquisition research to investigate. Relatedly, it has profound implications not only for our conceptualization of the mind with two languages, but also for our view of all human minds.

2. Statement of the Problem

Almost anywhere we turn, we can find textbooks, articles, and workshops on the art and science of teaching and learning L2. However, we are a long, long way from finding ultimate answers to the many difficult questions we have been asking. According to Brown (1988), we have grown accustomed to the absence of final solutions as we discover an overwhelming multiplicity of variables at play in the process of L2 learning. Specifically, there has been considerable progress in the study of native language influence during the last hundred or so years; however, because of the controversies that have accompanied this progress, the findings of transfer research must be interpreted cautiously.

Skepticism about the role of language transfer has had a long life not only among L2 teachers and researchers, but also among linguists interested in questions of language contact and language change. Some scholars have argued for the importance of transfer; some have gone so far as to consider it the paramount fact of L2 acquisition. Yet other scholars have been very skeptical about its importance (See Kellerman, 1984; Faerch, 1984). Moreover, Schachter (1994) thinks that although it is true that much uncertainty remains about many issues related to cross linguistic influences, and it is undeniably true that researchers are far from able to predict with full accuracy when transfer will occur, it is also true that skeptics are far from able to predict when transfer will never occur. In this regard, Brown (1988: xii) points out that “no single discipline or theory or model or factor will ever provide a magic formula for solving the mystery of second language acquisition”. Moreover, in discussing native language influence on L2 acquisition, we need to keep in mind that there is no single scientific truth. In this connection, McLaughlin (1988: 6), correctly, points out that “disciplines tend to become fragmented into 'schools', whose members are loath to accept, and are even hostile to the views of other schools using different methods and reaching different conclusions. Each group becomes convinced that it has a corner on 'truth'. One philosophical position contends that truth can never be known directly and in its totality”. McLaughlin (1988: 6) adds that “multiple ways of seeing result in multiple truths. Scientific progress is achieved as we come to illuminate progressively our knowledge in a particular domain by taking different perspectives, each of which must be evaluated in its own right”.

Arab World English Journal
ISSN: 2229-9327
3. Rationale for the Study

Keeping the above in mind, I argue that (1) viewing transfer as the single most important reality of second language acquisition is risky, though no more so than viewing transfer as a negligible factor in L2 acquisition; and (2) the learning of a language must be viewed as a very complex process of which the development of a grammatical system is only one part. Properties of L1 and L2 certainly do have some influence on this process and may account for some aspects of the learner's interlanguage. Other factors especially psychological ones are likely to be of much greater importance for our understanding of the process of L2 acquisition, including linguistic and non-linguistic strategies involved. This view seems to be compatible with Ellis (1985: 40) view:

“While the learner's native language is an important determinant of second language acquisition, it is not the only determinant; however, and may not be the most important. But it is theoretically unsound to attempt a precise specification of its contribution or even try to compare its contribution with that of other factors”

(See Midgley et al., 2009; Akamatsu, 2005; Luk & Bialystok, 2008).

4. Theoretical Background

4.1. “Transfer” as a Notion

In the terminology of second language research, the term 'transfer' is as problematic as any. Whitney (1881) used the term 'transfer' to refer to cross-linguistic influences, long before any linguists thought of it or linking it to the notion of habit formation. After that, Thorndike and Woodworth (1901) proposed one of the first, and most durable, theories of transfer. They suggested that transfer from one task to another would occur only if the two tasks contained identical Stimulus Response (S-R) elements (Oldin, 1996).

Much of the dislike of the term "transfer" comes from its traditional association with behaviourism. Behaviourism is now so widely discredited in the field of psycholinguistics that some leading textbooks in that field give no attempt to behaviorist analysis (See Carroll, 1968; Corder, 1983; Krashen, 1983; Kellerman & Smith, 1986).

Regardless of the divide in opinion as to “transfer” as a term or notion, there are a number of reasons for language teachers and linguists to consider the problem of transfer. Odlin (1996) points out that (1) teaching may become more effective through a consideration of differences between languages and between cultures. (2) Consideration of the research showing similarities in errors made by learners of different backgrounds will help teachers to see better what may be difficult or easy for anyone learning the language they are teaching. (3) Research on transfer is also important for a better understanding of the nature of language acquisition in any context and is thus of interest to anyone curious about what is common to all languages; that is; language universals. (4) Many people believe that the study of one language (e.g. Latin) will make easier the study of a closely related language (e.g. French). (5) Finally, for historical linguists, knowledge about native language influence can lead to insights about the relation between language contact and language change.

To summarize, although language transfer has been a central issue in applied linguistics, L1 acquisition, and language teaching for at least a century, its importance in L2 learning has been reassessed several times. It must be kept in mind that serious thinking about cross-linguistic influences dates back to a controversy in historical linguistics in the
19th century. Those who were involved in this controversy were not interested in L2 acquisition or language teaching but rather language classification and language change (Odlin, 1996).

4.2 SLA Research in the 1960s: Focus on Learners’ Errors

Most SLA research in the 1960s was conducted within the framework of Contrastive Analysis. As noted by James (1980: 27), contrastivists see it as their goal to explain certain aspects of L2 learning; their means are descriptive accounts of the learner’s L1 and L2 to be learned, and techniques for the comparison of these descriptions. In other words, the goal belongs to psychology while the means are derived from linguistic science. In fact, there have been at least two significant approaches in the analysis of learner difficulty in acquiring L2. The first approach is Contrastive Analysis (CA). The second approach is Error Analysis (EA).

In the course of the controversy over the viability of the CAH, two versions of this hypothesis have emerged: “The strong vs. the weak” or “predictive vs. explanatory” versions as proposed by Wardhaugh (1970). The idea of the strong version is that it is possible to contrast the system of one language with the system of L2. On the basis of the result of this contrast, investigators can discover the similarities and differences between the two languages in question so that they can make predictions about what will be the points of difficulty for the learners of other languages. According to the strong version, wherever the two languages differed, interference would occur. That is, language transfer is the basis for predicting which patterns of the target language will be learned most readily and which will prove most troublesome. This version relies on the assumption that similarities will be easier to learn and differences harder.

The strong version of the CAH has long since been rejected (Wardhaugh, 1970; Riebel, 1971; Dulay & Burt, 1973) on a number of grounds. The apriori version of CA sometimes predicts difficulties that do not occur, particularly in the syntactic component of a language. It predicts positive transfer: similarities which should be easier to learn, that which does not occur. If wrong predictions are made using the apriori hypothesis, then the hypothesis must be wrong. In his evaluation of the strong version of CAH, Wardhaugh (1970) marks that although some writers tried to make this version the basis for their work, it is quite unrealistic and impractical.

The weak version which has emerged relies on two assumptions. First, error analysis may help investigators know, through errors the learners make, what the difficulties are. Second, investigators may realize the relative difficulty of specific errors through the frequency of their occurrence (Schachter, 1974). The weak version may be easier and more practical than the strong version on the basis that it requires of the linguist that he/she use his/her linguistic knowledge to explain the observed difficulties in L2 learning.

In their discussion of the validity of CAH, Whitman and Jackson (1972) support the idea that CAH is inadequate from the theoretical and practical points of view. Their arguments are based on two justifications: first, CA is not reliable to predict the interference problems of a language learner; and second, interference of native language plays such a small role in language learning performance that no CA could correlate highly with performance data. However, most of the valid CA evidence seems to be phonological; that is, contrastive analysis may be most predictive at the level of phonology and less predictive at the syntactic level. Present research results (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982) suggest that the major impact L1 has on L2 acquisition may have to do with accent, not with grammar or syntax.
The assumption that similarities between the native and the target languages will be easier to learn and differences harder is rejected by a group of scholars. Pica (1984), for example, maintains that the divergent areas between the learner’s L1 and the target language do not represent the greatest learning difficulties may be attributable to those areas which share considerable similarity. For example, speakers of Spanish, which, like English, has copula verb forms, frequently omit forms such as ‘am’ and ‘is’. Such ‘errors’ are found not only among Spanish speakers but also among speakers of other languages, and also among children learning English as their native language.

Some differences between languages do not always lead to significant learning difficulties. As Stockwell, Bowen and Martin (1965) pointed out, the two verbs conocer and saber in Spanish correspond to different senses of the English verb know. While this lexical difference poses many problems for English speakers learning Spanish, Spanish speakers learning English seem to have little difficulty in associating two lexical senses with one form. Moreover, CA, the structural basis for prediction of transfer, normally relies on comparisons of collective, not individual, linguistic behaviour. The problem is that variation is one of the most important characteristics. The existence of such variation poses an important problem for the study of transfer. As Odlin (1996: 130) states:

“As descriptions of collective behavior, contrastive analyses may frequently give rise to inaccurate predictions of individual performances. Even while some kind of transfer is likely in the second language performance of most learners, the manifestations of transfer can vary from one learner to the next”.

Another serious challenge for any contrastive description is the interaction of linguistic subsystems. As Sanford and Garrod (1981) and Bock (1982) point out, psycholinguistic research has demonstrated a strong interdependence among discourse, syntax, phonology and other subsystems in the comprehension and production of language.

The error analysis (EA) approach is based on the assumption that the frequency of errors is proportional to the degree of learning difficulty (Brown, 1980). As has been mentioned before, many of the errors could not be explained in terms of L1 transfer. The point which should be clear is that the EA can be characterized as an attempt to account for learner errors that could not be explained or predicted by the CAH.

EA research has come under fire. For example, Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1977) have pointed out that it is difficult to be certain precisely what type of error a second-language learner is making or why the learner makes it. The reasons for errors made by L2 learners are numerous. In this regard, Taylor (1975) found that the early stages of language learning are characterized by a predominance of interlingual transfer, but once the learner has begun to acquire parts of the new system, generalization within the target language is manifested. In his definition of intralingual errors, Richards (1971) points out that these errors can be listed under three headings: (a) errors attributable to incomplete application of rules; (b) errors attributable to over-generalization or the creation of ill-formed structures based on the speaker’s knowledge of the other structures in the second language; and (c) errors attributable to failure to learn the conditions under which rules apply.

On the other hand, many studies have shown that developmental factors provide another explanation for some of the errors made by L2 learners. Felix (1980) presents the theoretical assumption of the developmental nature of L2 acquisition. As long as L1 learners produce ungrammatical structures before they achieve adult competence, L2 learners appear to
pass through developmental stages which reflect general regularities and universal processes of language acquisition. These developmental stages are not determined by the structural properties of the learner’s L1. The same idea is presented by Pica (1984).

As a reaction to the ‘product’ orientation of the morpheme studies and error analysis, and the feeling that a more ‘process’ oriented approach was needed, researchers began to work according to the interlanguage framework, which was developed in the late 1970s and 1980s. So, rather than focusing on the first or the target language, researchers began to develop data analytic procedures that would yield information about the dynamic qualities of language change that made the interlanguage a unique system; both similar to and different from the first and target languages. The next section will discuss the interlanguage framework, and how the issue of language transfer was analyzed by researchers working according to it.

4.3 SLA Research in the 1970s/1980s: Interlanguage Framework

The term "interlanguage" was coined by Selinker (1969; 1972) to refer to the interim grammars constructed by L2 learners on their way to the target language. The term won favour over similar constructs, such as "approximative system" (Nemser, 1971) and "transitional competence" (Corder, 1967). Since the early 1970’s "interlanguage" has come to characterize a major approach to L2 research and theory. Unfortunately, the term has taken on various meanings, some authors using it as synonymous with L2 learning generally. Generally speaking, the term "interlanguage" means two things: 1) the learner's system at a single point in time, and 2) the range of interlocking systems that characterize the development of learners over time. The interlanguage is thought to be distinct from both the learner's L1 and from the target language. It evolves over time as learners employ various internal strategies to make sense of the input and to control their own output. These strategies were central to Selinker's thinking about interlanguage. Specifically, Selinker (1972) argued that interlanguage was the product of five cognitive processes involved in L2 learning (1) language transfer from L1; (2) transfer of the training process used to teach L2; (3) strategies of L2 learning; (4) strategies of L2 communication; and (5) overgeneralization of the target language linguistic material. The development of the interlanguage was seen by Selinker as different from the process of L1 development because of the likelihood of fossilization in L2.

In contrast to Selinker's cognitive emphasis, Adjemian (1976) focused on the dynamic character of interlanguage systems, their permeability. Interlanguage systems are thought to be by their nature incomplete and in a state of flux. In this view, the individual's L1 system is seen to be relatively stable, but the interlanguage is not. The structures of the interlanguage may be "invaded" by L1 when placed in a situation that cannot be avoided, L2 learner may use rules or items from L1. Similarly, the learner may stretch, distort, or overgeneralize a rule from the target language in an effort to produce, the intended meaning. Both processes Adjemian saw to reflect the basic permeability of the interlanguage.

A third approach to the interlanguage notion has been taken by Tarone (1979) who maintained that the interlanguage could be seen as analysable into a set of styles that are dependent on the context of use. Tarone proposed capability continuum, which includes a set of styles ranging from a stable subordinate style virtually free of L1 influence to a characteristically superordinate style where the speaker pays a great deal of attention to form and where the influence of L1 is, paradoxically, more likely to be felt. For Tarone, interlanguage is not a single system; but a set of styles that can be used in different social contexts. In this way, Tarone added
to Adjemian’s linguistic perspective a sociolinguistic point of view. However both Selinker and Adjemian stressed the influence of L1 on the emerging interlanguage.

To conclude, the shift from a product to a process orientation has drawn attention to the more subtle and non-obvious effects of L1 on interlanguage development. It has become apparent that L1 does affect the course of interlanguage development but this influence is not always predictable. In addition, as McLaughlin (1988: 81) points out, "more recent work on transfer has made apparent the folly of denying L1 influence any role in interlanguage development". He, further, maintains that "the bulk of the evidence suggests that language acquisition proceeds by mastering the easier unmarked properties before the more difficult marked ones". This issue will be discussed next.

4.4 Markedness and Language Transfer

In L2 acquisition research, the term “markedness” was used by Kellerman (1979, 1983) to predict when transfer is likely to occur from L1. More marked structures in the learner’s L1 (those that are perceived to be more irregular, infrequent, and semantically opaque) were predicted to be less transferable than regular and frequent forms. Other authors distinguish marked or unmarked structures according to their degree of complexity. Unmarked forms are thought to be less complex than marked. In addition, Zobl (1983; 1984) argued that to overcome the inadequacy of the CA approach; that is, to explain why some differences between L1 and L2 lead to learning difficulty and other differences do not, it is necessary to look at the interaction of transfer forces with other influences on the learner. Specifically, Zobl proposed that one reason for transfer from L1 is that L2 rule is obscure. There are two main reasons suggested for this obscurity: 1) L2 is typologically inconsistent in that it violates a universal implicational pattern, or 2) the rule is itself typologically variable, so that there are a large number of possibilities. In either of these cases, learners are likely to fall back on their L1 and L2 influence will be found in the interlanguage.

Kellerman (1979) reported that learners initially transfer both marked and unmarked features from their L1, but that in the more advanced interlanguage, they resist transferring marked features. This not to imply that beginners will necessarily transfer marked features from their L1. In this regard, Zobl (1984) noted that L2 learners at all stages of development tend to avoid transferring marked L1 rules. Eckman (1985) has argued that transfer occurs principally where Li feature is unmarked and L2 feature is marked. According to Eckman's Markedness Differential Hypothesis, those areas of the target that will be most difficult for L2 learners are those that are both different from L1 and relatively more marked.

4.5 Sociolinguistic Perspective

A number of researchers studying L2 acquisition without formal instructions have been struck by the relationship between social psychological acculturation and degree of success in learning the target language. In this regard, Schumann (1978: 15) characterized the relationship between acculturation and L2 acquisition in the following way: “Second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target-language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language”. In this view, acculturation and, hence, L2 acquisition is determined by the degree of social and psychological "distance" between the learner and the target-language culture. Social distance pertains to the individual as a member of a social group that is in contact with another social group whose
members speak a different language. Psychological distance is the result of various affective factors that concern the learner as an individual, such as resolution of language shock, culture shock, and culture stress, integrative versus instrumental motivation, and ego permeability. It is assumed that the more social and psychological distance there is between L2 learner and the target-language group, the lower the learner's degree of acculturation will be toward that group. It is then predicted that the degree to which L2 learners succeed in socially and psychologically adapting or acculturating to the target-language group will determine their level of success in learning the target language (See Bylund, 2009; Caspi, 2010). More specifically, social and psychological distance influence L2 acquisition by determining the amount of contact learners have with the target language and the degree to which they are open to the input that is available. In a negative social situation, the learner will receive little input in L2. In a negative psychological situation, the learner will fail to utilize available input. Schumann argued that the early stages of L2 acquisition are characterized by the same processes that are responsible for the formation of pidgin languages. When social and/or psychological distance is great, the learner will not progress beyond the early stages and the language will stay pidginized.

Moreover, Odlin (1969) argues that when individuals feel a strong sense of belonging to a group, they are frequently concerned about preserving the linguistic forms believed to characterize the group. However, negative transfer should be a cause for concern in light of the social significance of foreign accents. Some evidence suggests that the more heavily accented a person's pronunciation is, the more likely it is that listeners will have negative reactions (Brennan and Brennan 1981). Negative transfer, however, does not always prompt negative attitudes. For example, despite his noticeable German accent, Henry Kissinger achieved distinction in public affairs.

4.6 Transfer in the Cognitive Theory

Cognitive theory is based on the work of psycholinguists and psycholinguistics. Individuals working within this framework apply the principles and findings of contemporary cognitive psychology to the domain of L2 learning. According to McLaughlin (1988), the theory is, in this sense, derivative. That is, it represents the application of a broader framework to the domain of L2 research (See Bialystok et al., 2008; Jiang, 2007). Within this framework, L2 learning is viewed as the acquisition of a complex cognitive skill. To learn L2 is to learn a skill, because various aspects of the task must be practiced and integrated into fluent performance. Learning is a cognitive process because it is thought to involve internal representations that regulate and guide performance. In the case of language acquisition, these representations are based on the language system and include procedures for selecting appropriate vocabulary, grammatical rules, and pragmatic conventions governing language use. As performance improves, there is constant restricting as learners simplify, unify, and gain increasing control over their internal representations (Karmiloff-Smith 1986). In this regard, Lightbown (1985) pointed out that L2 acquisition is not simply linear and cumulative, but is characterized by backsliding and loss of forms that seemingly were mastered. She attributed this decline in performance to a process whereby learners have mastered some forms and then encounter new ones that cause a restructuring of the whole system: Restructuring occurs because language is a complex hierarchical system whose components interact in non-linear ways. Seen in these terms, an increase in error rate in one area may reflect an increase in complexity or accuracy in another, followed by overgeneralization of a newly acquired structure, or simply by a sort of overload of complexity which forces a restructuring, or at least a simplification, in
In their discussion of transfer, SLA theorists have argued whether bilingual individuals have two separate stores of information in long-term memory, one for each language, or a single information store accompanied by selection mechanism for using L1 or L2 (McLaughlin 1984). In this regard, O’Malley, Chamot and Walker (1987) pointed out that if individuals have a separate store of information maintained in each language, they would select information for use appropriate to the language context. To transfer information that was acquired in L1 to L2 would be difficult because of the independence of the two memory systems. An individual in the early stages of proficiency in L2 would either have to translate information from L1 to L2 or relearn L1 information in L2, capitalizing on existing knowledge where possible. A contrast to this argument for separate L1 and L2 memory systems, Cummins (1984) has proposed a common underlying proficiency in cognitive and academic proficiency for bilinguals (See Montrul, 2008; Ribbert & Kuiken, 2010). Cummins argues that at least some of what is originally learned through L1 does not have to be relearned in L2, but can be transferred and expressed through the medium of L2. L2 learners may be able to transfer what they already know from L1 into L2 by (a) selecting L2 as the language for expression, (b) retrieving information originally stored through L1 but presently existing as non-language-specific declarative knowledge, and (c) connecting the information to L2 forms needed to express it. Learning strategy research (O’Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper and Russo 1985a, 1985b) indicates that students of English as L2 consciously and actively transfer information from their L1 for use in L2 (See Kim et al., 2010).

5. Part Two: Reverse/Backward Transfer

There are several ways of conceptualizing L2 influence on L1. (1) The concept of Multi-Competence (Cook, V. 1991); (2) The common Underlying Conceptual Base (CUCB); (3) Representational Redescription Model; (4) The Dynamic model of Multilingualism; (5) Analysis/Control Model; (6) The Chomskyan Minimalist Program. The above approaches share the following common features: (a) at some level of the L2 users mind is a whole that balances elements of the L1 and L2 within it; (b) keeping in mind the number of people who use second languages, monolingualism can be considered the exception, not only statistically but also in terms of human potential; (c) relatedly, if monolingualism is taken as the normal condition of humanity, L2 users can be treated as footnotes to the Linguistics of monolingualism (See Cook, 1983; 1989; 2002; 2003).

5.1 Focus on Multi-Competence

Multi-competence: A declaration of independence for the L2 user

It was introduced by Cook (1991) to mean “Knowledge of two or more languages in one mind”. It was introduced because while “Interlanguage” had become the standard term for the speaker’s knowledge of a second language, no word existed that encompassed their knowledge of both the L2 and their L1. Before, we used to have the L1 on the one hand, and on the other, “the interlanguage”, but nothing that included both. The notion of multicompetence has added a new spin by shifting the evaluation angle of the interlanguage system (Selinker 1972) from one being filled with deficiencies, when compared to native speakers’ competence, to one that deserves to be studied in its own right. Multicompetence thus presents a view of second language acquisition (SLA) based on the second language (L2) user as a whole person rather than on the monolingual native speaker. It, therefore, involves the whole mind of the speaker, not simply their first language (L1) or their second. It assumes that someone who
knows two or more languages is a different person from a monolingual and so need to be looked at in their own right rather than as a deficient monolingual (See Cook, 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009). From the multicompetence perspective, the different languages a person speaks are seen as one connected system, rather than each language being a separate system. People who speak a second language are seen as unique multilingual individuals, rather than people who have merely attached another language to their repertoire. Multi competence is thus not a model nor a theory so much as an overall perspective or framework: It changes the angle from which second language acquisition is viewed. To avoid implying deficiency of the part of second language speakers, Cook prefers the term L2 user to L2 learner. An L2 user is anyone who knows a second language and uses it in real life, irrespective of their language level. Particular developments from multi-competence were: (a) The re-evaluation of the use of native speakers as the norm in favour of L2 users in their own right; (b) Seeing transfer as a two-way process in which the L1 in the L2 user’s mind is affected by the L2, as well as the reverse (See Cook, 2003; 2005; 2006).

5.2. Against the Concept of “Native Speaker”

Until the 1990s it was tacitly assumed that the only owners of a language were its native speakers. The objective of L2 learning was therefore to become as like a native speaker as possible; any difference counted as failure. A working definition of a native speaker is “a person who has spoken a certain language since early childhood” (Mc Arthur 1992). The native speaker construct has, however, become increasingly problematic in SLA research. SLA research has then been questioning its faith in the native speaker as the only true possessor of language. On the one hand, it is a highly idealized abstraction. Native speakers of any language vary from each other in many aspects of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary for dialectal, social and regional reasons. So which native speaker should be used a model? On the other hand, this seemed to be one group exercising power over another. Since Boas, linguistics has refrained from value judgments about different groups of speakers. Treating the native speaker as the model for SLA is falling into the same trap of subordinating the group of L2 users to the group of native speakers, to which they could never belong by definition (See Cook, 1997; 1999; 2000; 2002).

The object of acquiring a second language should be to become an L2 user, and people should be measured by their success at being L2 users, not by their failure to speak like native speakers. The L2 user is a person in his or her own right, not an imitation of someone else. Relatedly, one group of human beings should not judge other people as failures for not belonging to their group (Grasjean, 1989; Cook, 1997, 2003). The interest of SLA research should be ‘discovering L2 users characteristics, not their deficiencies compared with native speakers” (Cook, 2003:5). The concept “Multi Competence” leads us to see the L2 user a person in his or her own right, not as an approximation to a monolingual native speaker. L2 users make up the majority of human beings, and they form a very substantial group. Accordingly, people who have native-like skills in both languages are the exception rather than the norm among L2 users. Accordingly, The use of native-speaker measure “will blind us in the future to the overwhelming majority of L2 users who are far from native – like across two languages. However, a comparison of the L2 user with the native speaker may be legitimate provided any difference that is discovered is not treated as matters of deficiency. Persistent use of this comparison led, for example, to a view that code-switching in adults or children was to be deplored rather than commended. (Is it a sign of confusion or a skillful L2 use? (See
Two points to remember: (A) According to Kecskes & Papp (2003), two interacting factors play a decisive role in shaping the L₂ → L₁ influence: (1) Level of proficiency and the development of a common Underlying Conceptual Base; and (2) nature of transfer. (B) The nature of the L₂ → L₁ effect can vary depending on the social context of the language contact situation (See Cook, 2011).

5.3. The Nature of the Relationship between L₁ and L₂.

There are five models which may symbolize language representation in the brain of a person who uses two languages, and the nature of the relationship between those languages. According to the separation model, L₁ and L₂ are stored in two separate entities with no possible connection between them. Support for this view came from the research on the Natural Order of Acquisition in L₁ (Brown, 1980) and L₂ (Dulay & Burt, 1973). Support came, also, from Coordinate Bilingualism studies, which claimed that coordinate bilinguals have two separate systems for storing and processing the two languages. Accordingly, this model sees no point to discussing the effects of the L₂ on the L₁, as they do not exist (See Cook, 1991; 1997; 2006; 2011). According to the integration model, the language forms a single, unitary system. As Caramazza & Brones (1980) argued, rather than two separate mental lexicons, the L₂ user has a single lexicon where words from one language are stored alongside words from the other. This can be also applied to phonology (Williams, 1977). L₂ users can choose which language to use in a given context. In this model, accordingly, the discussion is not about the influence of L₂ on L₁, but about the balance between elements of a single language system (See Cook, 2003; Cenoz, 2003; Coleman, 2006). The linked model represents a significant variation on the separation Model. It involves two separate systems which interact with other and cause bidirectional influence. The extent of influence might be related to a number of variables such as age and proficiency level (Kroll & Tokowicz, 2001). Most of L₂ transfer research supports some kind of a linked model where both positive and negative transfer take place from L₁ and L₂ and vice versa (See Silva, 2000; Tran, 2007; Wannaruk, 2008).

The partial integration model represents a significant variation on the integration Model. It claims the existence of a shared area between the L₁ and L₂ systems. This area is most likely in the form of a Common Underlying Conceptual Base (Kecskes & Papp, 2000) related to various aspects of language such as vocabulary, phonology, and syntax. Dominance of one language system over the other is quite common in this area and most of the time the dominance is in favour of L₁ because it is the language of cognitive development in children. Finally, according to integration continuum model, L₁ and L₂ systems may go through changes in the nature of their relationship. They could start as two separate systems, and then gradually turn into one system, as it is the case in consecutive Bilingualism. Conversely, they could start as one, and then gradually turn into autonomous systems, as it is the case in Simultaneous Bilingualism. Furthermore, the integration Continuum Model allows for different relationship among the various language skill and elements. For example, the lexicon of two language systems might be unified, but the phonology is separate. In general, the model views the nature of the relationship between two language systems in the brain as very complex because it can be influenced by a number of issues such as social status of the target language, stages of L₁ and L₂ development, and a number of personal and contextual factors (See Qu et al., 2005; Rose, 2000; Sasaki & Beamer, 2002; Seidlhofer, 2005; Jia, 2007).

The above models tempt us to refer to the Language Mode Continuum (Grosjean, 2001), according to which it is not about which language to use but about how much of each. As Cook (2003:10) explains:
“It is like a mixer tap that merges hot and cold water, but neither tap can be completely turned off. The L2 user is the one who decides the proportions of the two languages to employ at a given moment in the light of multiple factors on a continuum between effectively activating only one language and activating both simultaneously” (See Kecskes et al., 2003; Jarvis, 2003; Chang, 2009; Athanasopoulos, 2009).

5.4. Positive Effects of L2 on L1
5.4.1 Knowledge of the First Language:

When people learn a second language, the way they speak their first language changes in subtle ways. These changes can be with any aspect of language, from pronunciation and syntax to gestures the learner makes and the things they tend to notice. Garfinkel & Tabor (1991) found that children in elementary foreign language programs outperformed their monolingual peers in the acquisition of basic skills. Thomas et al., (1993) and Hakuta (1986) found a correlation of bilingual proficiency with higher scores on standardized tests and tests of both verbal and nonverbal intelligence. Yelland et al., (1993) found that English children who are taught Italian for an hour a week read English better than those who are not. Balcom (1995) found different acceptability judgments of French passive sentences in Francophone speakers who did or did not know English. Kecskes (1998) has found beneficial effects on the development and use of mother skills with regard to structural well-formedness in Hungarian students of modern languages. Marcos (1998) found that learning a second language in an elementary school usually enhances a child’s learning ability in English. Satterfield (1999) showed that knowledge of English as an L2 caused increased use of overt pronouns in non-emphatic contexts in L1 Spanish by Spanish/English bilinguals. Another study on the influence of the second language on the first language is a study conducted by Darwish (1999) in Australia on Arab migrants which showed that, negative transfer from English into Arabic seems to produce a new variety of Arabic that diverges from the norms of Arabic spoken in the Arab world. This variety of Arabic is an interim stage within the process of language shift from Arabic to English. However, the presence of a pseudo-language is alien to both the culture and the language. The notion of “pseudo-language” is interesting because the variety of Arabic is a result of the blending of Arabic and Australian English, and thus, making it unique. Because it is neither recognizable as Arabic nor Australian English, it has established itself as a culture and variety of English on its own.

A Louisian study (Dumas, 1999) showed that regardless of race, gender or academic level, students taking foreign language classes did better in the English section of the Louisiana Basic Skills Test than those who did not. Kecskes & Papp (2003) found that Hungarian children who know English use measurably more complex sentences in their L1 than those who do not. Bialystok (2001) has found that L2 user Children have more precious metalinguistic skills than their monolingual peers. Genoz (2002) found that there was a bi-directional interaction between English and Spanish in the pragmatic Component of Spanish / Bosque L1 Speakers (See Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2009; Laufer, 2003).

In the United States of America, educationists are aware of the second language influence of the first language. In a progress report made by the San Juan School District in California (2003), it stated that 59% of the student has a second language influence (the first
language being English). This is seen as a hindrance for the students to be fully English proficient, and they are categorized as having English language issues. Murphy & Pine (2003), also revealed that bilingual children represented the knowledge of language more explicitly than the monolinguals of the same age. Laufer (2003) showed that an experienced Russian speaker of Hebrew uses a less rich vocabulary in Russian than comparative new comers. Pavlenko (2003) showed that Russian learners of English begin to rely on expressing emotions as states rather than as process. Cook et al., (2003) showed that Japanese speaker of English are more prone to prefer plural subjects in Japanese sentences than Japanese who do not know English. Serrano & Howard (2003) conducted a study in the United States of America on The influence of English on the Spanish Writing of Native Spanish Speakers in Two-Way Immersion Programs. They discovered some influences of the second language (English) on the students’ first language (Spanish).

Hashemian (2011) has found a qualitative increase in the L1 skills of the English major senior students who are intensively exposed to the L2 instruction for, at least, four years. He concludes that L2 learners may transfer the meaning system they already possess on their own to a new language. Intensive and successful L2 learning can have-beneficial effect on the development of L1 skills. Kaushankaya et al. (2011) examined the influence of second language experience on native-language vocabulary and reading skills in two groups of bilingual speakers. English-Spanish and English-Mandarin bilingual adults were tested vocabulary knowledge and reading fluency in English, their native language. Participants also provided detailed information regarding their history of second-language acquisition, including on the age of L2 acquisition, degree of L2 exposure, L2 proficiency, and preference of L2 use. Comparisons across the two bilingual groups revealed that both groups performed similarly on native-language vocabulary and reading measures. However, in English Spanish bilinguals, higher self-reported reading skills in Spanish were associated with higher English reading-fluency scores, while in English-Mandarin bilinguals, higher self reported reading skills in Mandarin were associated with lower English reading-fluency scores. These findings suggest that second-language experiences influence native-language performance and can facilitate or reduce it depending on the properties of the second-language writing system (See Tsimpli et al., 2004; Al-Eryani, 2007; Mennen, 2004).

5.4.2. Thought Processes

The effects extend outside the area of language. L2 users think more flexibly than monolinguals, are more aware of language in general, and have better attitude towards other cultures. Bialystock (2001) found that children who have learned a second language have a sharper view of language if they speak an L2. Yelland et al., (1993) found that they learn to read more quickly in their L1. Diaz (1985) found that they have better conceptual development, creativity and analogical reasoning (See Williams, 1977; Kroll, Tokowicz, 2001; Genesee, 2002; Athanasopolos, 2001; Pavlenko, 2003).

Current research is exploring whether certain basic concepts are modified in those who know a second language. For example, Athanasopoulos (2001) found Greek Speakers who knew English had a different perception of the two Greek words covered by the English “blue”, namely (ghalazio “light blue”) and (ble, “dark blue”) than monolingual Greek speakers. Bassetti et al. (2002) found that Japanese people who had longer exposure to English chose shape rather than substance more often in a categorisation experiment than those with less exposure. This means that some concepts in the L2 users’ minds may be influenced by those of
the second language; others may take forms that are the same neither as the L₁ or the L₂. This seems to suggest that people who speak different languages think, to some extent, in different ways, a revival of the idea of linguistics relatively that has been gaining ground in recent years (Levinson, 1996; Caramazza & Brones, 1980).

To conclude, central to Cook’s argument is the way in which people’s language knowledge changes when they learn a second language. He makes three main points: (1) L₂ users’ knowledge of the second language is not the same as native speakers’ knowledge of that languages; (2) L₂ users’ knowledge of their first language is not the same as that of monolingual native speakers; (3) L₂ users think in different ways than monolinguals (See Thomas et al., 1993; Murphy & Pine, 2003).

6. Conclusion / Pedagogical Implications

The idea of multi competence as the compound state of a mind with two grammars has many implications. The starting point for language teaching should be the recognition that the second language user is a particular kind of person in their own right with their own knowledge of the first language (L₁) and the second language (L₂), rather than a monolingual with an added L₂. An L₂ user is a person who uses another language for any purpose at whatever level (Cook 2002). Multi competence has two major implications for language teaching. The first is about the question of what the final goal should be for language learners. The multicompetence viewpoint sees the goal of learning as becoming a successful L₂ user. Language teaching, therefore, should reflect this: the goal of language learning should be based on what successful L₂ users can do, not what monolingual native speakers can do. Also, teaching materials should show positive examples of L₂ use and L₂ users. The second implication is for the use of the first language in the classroom. If the first language can never truly be separated from the second language in the mind, it makes no sense to forbid the use of the first language in the language classroom. Cook argues that banning the use of the first language will not stop learners from using it to help with their language learning. It will only make its use invisible to the teacher. Instead, Cook suggests that teachers should think about how they can make use of both languages in suitable ways.

Cook (2001) states that over the last century, the use of the first language has been largely taboo in second language teaching. In the strongest form, L₁ use is banned, and in the weakest sense, it is minimized. However, he advocates a more positive view: maximum L₂ use. Since multi competence means that the L₁ is always present in the user’s minds, it would be artificial and sometimes inefficient to avoid its use. Language is not compartmentalized within the mind, so there is little reason they should be in the classroom. Some reasons for using the L₁ in the classroom are to convey and check the comprehension of lexical or grammatical forms and meanings, to give directions, and to manage the class. These things may be difficult or impossible to do without resorting to the L₁ (See Kecskes, 1998; Kecskes & Papp, 2000; Marcos, 1998)

The issue of the place of mother-tongue in foreign language instruction is one of the controversial topics in the field of foreign language teaching. Many arguments have been raised and the various language teaching methods (conventional and non-conventional) hold different fluctuating opinions. Some recommend while others condemn the use of mother-tongue in the FL classroom. There are two extremes which are represented by the Grammar Translation Method and the Direct Method. The former, as its name suggests, makes liberal use of mother-tongue. It depends on translation and considers the first language a reference
system to which the foreign language learner can resort so as to understand the grammatical as well as the other features of the foreign language. The latter- (the other extreme)- tries to inhibit the use of mother-tongue. It depends on using the foreign language in explanation and communication in the language classroom and excluding the first language and translation altogether (Garfinkel & Tabor, 1991).

The problem does not lie in whether mother-tongue has a place in FL teaching / learning or not, but in how much of it is permitted. In this respect, it can be said that there are many factors determining the quantity to be used. The quantification will differ according to the maturity level of the learners and their linguistic level. It also depends on the competence of the teacher, the material to be taught and the availability of teaching aids. Another point is that it is the individual teacher who sensitizes when to switch codes and when not to. It is also the teacher who can decide the pragmatic quantity to be used because what is workable in a certain class may not be so in another.

Those who condemn mother-tongue use view that optimal FL learning can be achieved through the intralingual tackling of the various levels of linguistic analysis as this helps provide maximum exposure to the foreign language. It is true that providing maximum exposure to the foreign language helps a lot in learning that language. However this, with confining oneself to the foreign language only, may be done at the expense of understanding and intelligibility or in a routine and non-creative way. With careful and functional mother-tongue use intelligibility can be achieved and the time saved (by giving the meaning in the mother-tongue) can be used for practice. Therefore, mother-tongue use does not mean wasting time that can be better used for providing maximum exposure to the foreign language. Disregarding the mother-tongue and considering it "a bogey to be shunned at all costs" is a myth. Those who recommend nothing but English in English lesson neglect many important facts: First, they have forgotten that FL learners translate in their minds and think in their own language and this cannot be controlled:

"The teacher who says: I forbid the use of the pupil's own language in my class, nothing but English in the English lessons is deceiving himself. He has forgotten the one thing he cannot control - what goes on in the pupil's mind, He cannot tell whether, or when, his pupils are thinking in their own language. When he meets a new English word, the pupil inevitably searches in his mind for the equivalent in his own language. When he finds it, he is happy and satisfied, he has a pleasurable feeling of success".

(French 1972, p.94). Supporting this idea, Finocchiaro (1975: 35) says: We delude ourselves if we think the student is not translating each new English item into his native language when he first meets it. Second, they have also forgotten that “the unknown (a second language pattern) cannot be explained via something less known (the second language)” (Hammerly, 1971, p.504). This idea was supported by Seleim (1995). Third, they have forgotten that the mother-tongue is first in terms of acquisition and proficiency and so FL learners cannot escape its influence:

"The mother-tongue is so strongly ingrained that no amount of direct method drill can override its influence. Therefore, according to this line of thought it is better to capitalize on the
students' knowledge of (mother-tongue) than to pretend it is not there". (Grittner 1977, p.165). Fourth, they have forgotten that there are individual differences among students and that the weaker students may have difficulties in grasping a point in the foreign language. They do not advise FL teachers what to do in cases where attempts at English-English explanations have failed (See Grosjean, 1989; 2001; Bialystok, 2001).

It is pedagogically important to emphasize the element of meaningfulness in the teaching learning process. Students become motivated and active if they understand what is involved and if they know what they are doing. Therefore, it is important not to disregard the learners' need for the comprehension of what they learn or exclude the mother-tongue because it is their right that they should make sense in their own terms of what they are learning. It is also important to use the learners' native language so as to avoid misunderstanding and achieve intelligibility (See Proctor et al., 2006; Sparks et al., 2008).

Mother-tongue plays a vital role in diminishing or at best eliminating the psychological factors that have an inhibiting effect on FL teaching and learning. It has been noticed that the non-conventional methods of language teaching make use of the mother-tongue and translation in FL/SL teaching and learning. They emphasize that mother-tongue employing removes the fear of incompetence, mistakes and apprehension regarding languages new and unfamiliar. One point is that, to overcome the problems of dissatisfaction and avoidance, FL teachers should permit some mother-tongue use. Students, having linguistic inadequacies, can get confused and become hesitant about their oral participation. They may abandon a message they have started because a certain idea or a thought is too difficult to continue expressing in the foreign language. To overcome the feeling of dissatisfaction and psychological avoidance, FL learners should come to terms with the frustrations of being unable to communicate in the foreign language and build up, cognitively and effectively, a new reference system which helps them communicate an idea. This reference system is the mother-tongue which is indeed very important for enhancing the FL learners' feeling of success and satisfaction. Another point is that mother-tongue use helps create a climate that alleviates the learners' tension, insecurity and anxiety. It makes the class atmosphere comfortable and productive and helps establish good relationships between the teacher and his students. However, it must be kept in mind that mother-tongue should be used as little as possible, but as much as necessary. Mother tongue should be rule-governed and not be freely or randomly used: "The individual is able to switch from one language to another... in a rule-governed rather than a random way" (Bell, 1978, pp. 140-141).

It is important to emphasise the fact that mother-tongue should not be used in the wrong way. It is desirable in cases where it is necessary, inevitable and where otherwise valuable classroom time would be wasted. We do not want the FL teacher to use the mother-tongue freely and to automatically translate everything on the learners' book. This unlimited use is so harmful that it discourages the learners from thinking in English (the language they are learning) and so it will not be taken seriously as a means of communication. "Translating can be a hindrance to the learning process by discouraging the student from thinking in English" (Haycraft, 1979, p.12). Students in most cases think in their mother-tongue and lean too much on it. This makes them acquire and develop the habit of mental translation. They interpose the mother-tongue between thought and expression developing a three-way process in production and expressing their intentions: Meaning to Mother-tongue to English Expression. They always think, while trying to
express themselves (in the foreign language), in their mother-tongue and all their attempts to communicate in the foreign language are filtered through the mother-tongue: "The mother-tongue is not relinquished, but it continues to accompany - and of course to dominate the whole complex fabric of language behavior.... all referent - whether linguistic or semantic - are through the Mother tongue" Grittner 1977, p.81).

FL teachers should guard against mental translation. This can be achieved by permitting the learners to express themselves (in speech or writing) within their linguistic capacities and capabilities. This means that the student, for instance, should first practice expressing given ideas instead of trying to fit language to his free mental activities and "if he is freed from the obligation to seek what to say, he will be able to concentrate on form and gradually acquire the correct habits on which he may subsequently depend" (Morris, 1959, p.133). It is important to familiarize the learners with the fact that no word in one language can have or rightly be said to have the same meaning of a word in another language. FL teachers should provide more than one native equivalent for the FL word; give the meaning on the sentential level and in various contexts (See Nakamoto et al., 2008; Michael & Gollan, 2004).

According to Byram et al., (1994), cultural learning positively affects students' linguistic success in foreign language learning. Culture can be used as an instrument in the processes of communication when culturally-determined behavioral conventions are taught. Tavares and Cavalcanti (1996: 18), further claims that 'culture shouldn't be seen as a support to language teaching but that it should be placed on an equal footing with foreign language teaching'. Post and Rathet (1996) support the use of student's native culture as cultural content in the English language classroom. In fact, a wide range of studies has shown that using content familiar to students rather than unfamiliar content can influence student comprehension of a second language (Anderson and Barnitz 1984; Long 1990). In other words, unfamiliar information can impede students' learning of the linguistic information used to convey the content: Why overburden our students with both new linguistic content and new cultural information simultaneously? If we can, especially for lower-level students, use familiar cultural content while teaching English, we can reduce what Winfield and Barnes - Felfeli call the 'processing load' that students experience (Post and Rathet, 1996: 12). In this regard, Tavares and Cavalcanti (1996) argue that the development of people's cultural awareness leads us to more critical thinking as citizens with political and social understanding of our own and other communities (Serrano & Howard, 2003; Darwish, 1999; Dekeyser, 2003; 2005).

Another model that could be provided to the L2 learners is a non-native speaker teacher. Cook (2002) points out those students are more likely to identify with and to be able to emulate non-native speaker teachers than native speakers. Also, these teachers would be able to share their own experiences of learning the language, and may be more sensitive to the difficulties faced by the students (See Noor, 2007; Wang et al., 2003; Bialystock et al., 2005; Harrison & Kroll, 2007).

Metaphorically one could compare the languages in contact in the individual’s mind to two liquid colours that blend unevenly; i.e. some areas will take on the new colour resulting from the mixing, but other areas may look like the new colour, but a closer look may reveal a slightly different hue according to the viewer’s angle. Multi-competence should be seen as a never-ending, complex, non-linear dynamic process in a speaker’s mind” (Dewaele and Pavlenko, 2003: 137). It is hoped that Cook’s recommendations, “can
convince students that they are successful multicompetent speakers, not failed native speakers” (Cook, 1999, p.204). (For more, see Gottardo & Muller, 2009; Kroll & Sunderman, 2003; Ivanova & Costa, 2008; ChiKamatsu, 2006).

About the Author:
Dr. Hosni Mostafa El-dali is an Associate Professor of Linguistics at the College of Humanities and Social Science, United Arab Emirates University. He holds a Ph.D. degree in Linguistics from the University of Pittsburgh, United States of America in 1991. He has authored and published over 40 scientific papers in national and international journals, and he authored six books.

References


Bidirectional Influence between Languages: Theoretical


Bidirectional Influence between Languages: Theoretical


