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English As a Medium of Instruction and the Endangerment of Arabic literacy: The Case of the United Arab Emirates

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Abstract
Due to the rapid spread of globalization and the attendant ‘global English,’ the need for English is often accepted without much thought being given to native languages. Indeed, this is the current situation in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), with English encroaching into all areas of society, and especially forcefully into the education sector, where English as a medium of instruction (EMI) is on the rise. At the same time, Arabic literacy, the ability to read and write in the language, is declining among UAE youth. Using a mixed-methods design, a study was conducted to gain insights into the use of Arabic by Emirati university students. The study examines how Emirati youth use their native language (i.e., Arabic) in their daily lives, their perception of their own reading and writing skills in Arabic vis-à-vis in English language, and the extent to which they can demonstrate their literacy skills in Arabic. Clear evidence emerged showing that while Arabic as a dialect continues to be spoken and used on a daily basis, Arabic literacy is unquestionably losing ground. This paper concludes with a call for a language policy in the UAE that will give Arabic its due in schools and wider society.

Keywords: Arabic literacy, bilingualism, global English, medium of instruction, language policy, United Arab Emirates

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Introduction

Currently, our world tends to operate under the auspices of globalization, with its attendant language of global English. We seem to do, blame, or laud everything based on these two phenomena. Some people prioritize the importance of globalization as an integrative process, and view its spread of ‘sameness’ as something positive from which all will benefit—a perspective with which the present paper takes issue. Undoubtedly, many do reap the rewards of this model of interconnectedness, but for every nation, community, or individual that does, there will be many others that remain engulfed in poverty and will likely never derive benefit from globalization in their lifetime. Similarly, regarding global English, it can be argued that those who espouse the wonders of a language that all can understand and use to communicate with one another are often the same people who might wish to ensure that English remains the universal language and that its reach is extended further by whatever means necessary. Thereby, English “constitutes a key part of the vanguard of globalization” (May, 2001, p. 201).

One group of people likely to be particularly affected by globalization and global English is university students. After all, students typically want to feel as though they are engaged with the most recent developments and that they are taking part in activities considered modern, up to date, and trendy. Who more than teenagers and young adults during their college years will be most susceptible to the impetus and novelty of a contemporary concept such as globalization—and its supposed spur, global English?

Hence, this paper looks closely at Arabic, a language with a long and impressive history, but the usage of which, in terms of literacy, is fading (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011). Specifically, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and other Arab Gulf countries, Arabic is not preserving its once prestigious place; instead, globalization and global English have emerged forcefully in the region and have put down resilient roots. Due to the rapid integration of the Gulf economies and societies into the “global markets and the massive influx of expatriates to staff all sectors of the economy” English has become central as the language of communication (Badry & Willoughby, 2016, p. 194). Furthermore, the role of English as a medium of instruction in many private schools and most colleges and universities in the UAE has undoubtedly had a detrimental effect on Arabic literacy (Cullinon, 2016; Carroll, Al Kahwaji, & Litz 2017). It is this role which has given English the current status of a gatekeeper to positions of prestige within the Emirati society. Although Arabic as a dialect continues to be spoken and used on a daily basis, Arabic literacy is losing ground among Emirati youth in the UAE. Therefore, there is a reason to be concerned about the endangerment of Arabic literacy, not least as, while many still do not believe in it, language loss does occur—“language death is real” (Crystal, 2002, p. ix).

English, Arabic and the UAE

In its less than 50-year-old history as a nation, the UAE has made significant progress. It is an economic beacon within the wider Gulf, a bastion of stability in an often-volatile region, and a country that welcomes people from all nations, races, cultures, and religions. Furthermore, it depends on its many expatriates to help carry out the countless jobs necessary to maintain the nation’s growth. Of a total estimated population of nine million, UAE nationals only make up about 20%; whereas, the foreign workforce in the UAE is thought to be about “90% of the working population” (Al-Khouri, 2012, p. 4). As it advanced, the UAE realized that it needed a language
other than Arabic—or, perhaps, in addition to Arabic—to enable communication among the many communities working and living within its borders. Hence, in order that the country might rapidly industrialize and modernize, “a certain discourse was framed around the importance of English” (Fussell, 2011, p. 27).

At some point, though, the need for a language of communication became the need for English, and, while Arabic is the official language of the UAE, there are people who “would argue that English has a de facto lingua franca status” (Randall & Samimi, 2010, p. 45). This is evident in many ways, including the fact that most of the country’s institutions of higher education teach in English and that English has become the gatekeeper to higher education in the UAE (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Cullinon, 2016). It is this implementation of English in higher education that continues to highlight the importance of English to the future and pushes Arabic aside. This powerful status of English in the UAE, as stated by Cullinon (2016, p. 65), “could have a dramatic effect on the native Arabic, as it takes a secondary role in academia and economy and could ultimately lead to Arabic being undervalued.”

For Emirati nationals, attending EMI educational institutions is often difficult (Moore-Jones, 2015) because English is not taught very thoroughly in the government schools that are available to UAE nationals, and are free of charge. In contrast, Arabs and other foreigners commonly send their children to private schools, and most of these utilize English as standard with British- or US-based curricula. There are a few French schools as well, but the focus over the past 15 years has been on EMI, with native speakers of English brought in to teach, and global English thereby proffered a place of prestige in UAE society overall. This has resulted in a negative effect on young Arabs’ views of modern standard Arabic (MSA), as Arabic is not at the forefront of education in the UAE. Furthermore, due to the need for English at the university level, Emirati parents are taking their children out of the public government schools and paying to put them in private schools, in order to ensure that they can attain the TOEFL or the ILETS score required by the university (see Solloway, 2016).

Indeed, all of this focus on English comes at the expense of Arabic literacy. The latter language is not ingrained early enough for young Arabs to become fully attached to it, or to attain the ability to gain fluency in reading or writing it. The problem is unambiguously articulated in the many recent newspaper articles that persist in lamenting the very poor state of Arabic in the UAE. This is not surprising since subjects such as engineering, business, architecture, and the sciences are all taught in English, while Arabic is consigned to the home or used in discussions about the family, religion, and other conceivably prosaic matters (see Al-Issa, 2012; Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Dahan, 2013; Troudi, 2007).

The focus on English has also impacted Arabic teachers. Currently, being an Arabic teacher is not considered a prestigious job—seemingly, only English carries social prestige (Bassiouney, 2014). In fact, Arabic teachers often complain that they are paid less and feel they have little support relative to their colleagues who teach in English (Badry & Willoughby, 2016). For example, while there are many outlets for professional development of English teachers in the UAE, the same cannot be said for Arabic teachers. It is perhaps due to this lowly position of Arabic
that English is able to command the lead as the language young Emiratis enjoy learning—that, and maybe the access that English offers to the fascinating world of Western pop culture.

The current study is an attempt to provide some empirical information about the status of Arabic literacy among UAE nationals. It seeks insights into how Emirati youth use their native language in their daily lives, as well as their view of their own literacy skills in Arabic.

The Study

This study was designed in order to obtain insight into how Emirati youth use their native language in their daily lives, as well as their view of their own literacy in Arabic. More specifically, the study sought answers to the following three questions:

(1) To what extent do Emirati youth use their spoken Arabic in their daily lives? That is, which language, Arabic or English, do young Emirati nationals speak and with whom?

(2) How do Emirati youth studying at an EMI university in the UAE feel about their reading and writing skills in Arabic and English?

(3) To what extent can Emirati youth in this study demonstrate their writing skills in Arabic?

Research site and participants

The research site was an EMI university in the UAE, whose curriculum is American-based. The participants were 91 first-year students (43 males and 48 females, \( M_{age} = 18.45 \), age range: 17–20 years). Each student was enrolled in one of two introductory writing courses during the spring semester of 2016. All of the students identified as native speakers of Arabic and were UAE nationals. Only nine of the students (10%) indicated that they attended public high schools wherein the medium of instruction is Arabic, while 82 (90%) noted that they attended private high schools, wherein the medium of instruction is English.

Data collection and analysis

The study used a modified version of a mixed-methods design, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods. This method was used in order to help get a broader understanding of the collected data. The first phase of the study used a questionnaire, which was completed by 91 Emirati students. This was followed by semi-structured interviews with 14 students. Those who were interviewed volunteered and were chosen based on their willingness to meet with the researcher to discuss their Arabic literacy further.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire contained 11 items, divided into three main sections: spoken language, reading, and writing. The beginning of the questionnaire collected background information on the respondents including: gender, age, nationality, native language, type of high school attended (i.e., public or private), and the language of instruction in high school (i.e., Arabic or English). The rest of the questionnaire was divided up in order to answer the three research questions that guided the study. Questions 1 through 7 were Likert-type statements, while 8 through 10 asked students to
explain their responses. Finally, question 11 asked participants to respond to a prompt in writing, both in English and Arabic (see Appendix A).

Prior to finalizing the questionnaire, an earlier version was piloted with similar subjects. This was done in order to determine how much time was needed to allot for the final questionnaire distribution. Participants in the pilot were asked to inform the researcher of any questions or statements they found difficult to comprehend. Based on the feedback of the pilot group, and an outside reader, some minor adjustments were made to the final version of the questionnaire. The final version was then distributed to all students enrolled in two introductory writing courses during the spring 2016 semester.

The interviews

The students, who participated in the interviews, were a voluntary sample. The group included eight female students and six males. Before the interviews began, I went over a consent form, which I had sent to the participants earlier. The interviewees all signed the consent form during the meeting.

The interviews began with general questions mainly about their use of Arabic and English in their daily lives and in what capacity. This was followed by questions about what type of high school they attended, and how strongly they felt their Arabic literacy was in view of studying at an EMI institution. The interview questions evolved from the three research questions of the study.

Findings

Language use: speaking Arabic and English

The first two items on the questionnaire sought to understand which language, Arabic or English, these young Emirati nationals spoke and with whom. As outlined in Table 1 below, the participants indicated a mixed response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speak to</th>
<th>All the time</th>
<th>Sometime</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends in university</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends outside university</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seventy-nine percent (n= 72) of the students claimed that they spoke Arabic all the time with their parents. They also use mostly Arabic when communicating with their relatives with 74% (n=67) of those surveyed. Despite that finding, 52% (n=47) of the participants claimed they “sometimes” spoke English to their parents, while 57% (n=51) also used English “sometimes” when speaking to relatives. When we look at which language they use with their own siblings, the numbers drop substantially. Only 52 students (57%) indicated that they speak Arabic all the time with their siblings, while 60 students (67%) of the participants indicate that they “sometimes”
speak English with their siblings. With regard to interactions with siblings, a small percentage of students (3%) revealed that they “never” speak Arabic with their brothers and sisters.

As expected, from students studying at an EMI institution, a majority of the participants used English quite a lot at the university. Thirty-three percent (n=30) of students claimed to “always” use English with friends at university, while only 19% (n=17) students indicated they used Arabic all the time. Using Arabic or English “sometimes” was consistent for both languages, with Arabic being chosen “sometimes” by 69% (n=63) and English at 66% (n=59). Only one student indicated that he/she never used English with friends in the university. When speaking to friends outside the university 31% (n=28) of participants claimed to use Arabic “always” with friends, while 24% (n=22) indicated they used English “always”. Those who used Arabic and English “sometimes” were almost evenly divided between 69% and 63%. With regard to this particular question 9% (n=8) claimed to “never” speak English with friends outside the university.

Reading and writing preferences

Item 3 on the questionnaire sought to understand which language these participants preferred to read and to write in (see Table 2).

Table 2: Participants’ language preferences for reading and writing (N = 91)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to read in</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to write in</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings from this question reveal that a majority of the participants 57% (n=52) prefer to read in English. While an even larger majority at 71% (n=65) prefers to write in English. Only 9% (n=8) of participants preferred to read or write in Arabic. There were some who could do both, for example 34% (n=31) indicated they favor both languages for reading, while 20% (n=18) revealed a preference for writing in both languages.

Literacy skills in Arabic

Items 4 through 7 on the questionnaire sought input from the participants on how easy or difficult they found Arabic literacy to be in their lives. The four questions asked about their personal abilities with regard to reading, writing, and comprehending Arabic, see Table 3.

Table 3: Participants’ self-assessment of Arabic literacy skills (N = 91)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Somewhat difficult</th>
<th>Very difficult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q4 When I write in Arabic I find it</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 When I read in Arabic I find it</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 Writing a formal letter in Arabic …</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 Reading an entire book in Arabic …</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those completing the survey indicated by a wide majority that it is “somewhat” or “very” difficult to write in Arabic at 68% (n=61). When it comes to reading in Arabic the participants had less difficulty manifested in 64% (n=58) noting that it was “easy.” However 36% (n=33) indicated
that reading in Arabic is “somewhat” or “very” difficult. When it came to writing a formal letter in Arabic, 77% (n=70) noted that they would find that task “somewhat” or “very” difficult, with only 23% (n=21) indicating that it would be “easy.” Finally, when asked about their comprehension of an entire book in Arabic, 58% (n=53) of participants indicated they would find that task “somewhat” or “very” difficult, while 42% (n=38) thought it would be “easy.”

Participants’ beliefs about the importance of Arabic literacy

Questions 8 through 10 sought participants’ personal beliefs about writing and literacy in Arabic. Question 8 asked if participants felt confident or not writing in Arabic, and then left a space for them to indicate why that was the case, or not. Question 9 then asked if participants saw the ability to write in Arabic as being important to their futures, while question 10 asked if they believed that all Arabs should be able to read and write in Arabic.

See Table 4.

Table 4: Participants’ beliefs about the importance of Arabic literacy (N = 91)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q8 I feel confident writing in Arabic</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9 I believe that being able to write in Arabic is important for my future</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10 I believe it is important for all Arabs to read and write in Arabic</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than half of the participants (57%) indicated that they did not feel confident writing in their native language of Arabic. Some of the comments they wrote in included: “I haven’t been taught enough classical Arabic words in order to express myself properly,” and “writing in Arabic is difficult because of grammar rules, it makes it hard to know words.” One of those interviewed, Hassan, indicated that “studying mostly English in high school, makes it hard for us to have a strong ability with Arabic.” Despite the large number of participants who indicated difficulty writing in Arabic, 73% (n=66) believed that having the ability to write in Arabic would be very important for their futures, with only 27% (n=25) disagreeing with this statement. Some of those agreeing with the need for writing skills in Arabic wrote, “Arabic is my native language and it is important that I be able to master it, and not just focus on my English skills.” Another student wrote, “It is very important to keep my mother language alive, especially when our generation cares more about English than Arabic.” Those who disagreed about the importance of writing in Arabic indicated, “I think English is more important,” and “companies are moving towards English, Arabic won’t be needed as much.” One of the interviewees, Fatima, argued, “English is now the global language, no one will ask us to use Arabic in our future jobs.” In addition, 97% (n=88) of those surveyed claimed that they believe it is important for all Arabs to be able to read and write in Arabic, only 3% (n=3) disagreed. Some of the comments in favor of all Arabs being literate in Arabic included, “the Arabic language is the Arabs’ heritage; it is what makes them who they are. Being able to read and write Arabic will support our knowledge about history and religion;” “Arabic is our language and everybody should give it attention and value;” and “Arabic would no longer exist if we stop reading and writing in it.” One who disagreed with this point wrote in “communication is through content, not the language it is done in.”
Students’ ability to demonstrate literacy in Arabic

The final question on the questionnaire (question 11) clearly asked students to write two very brief paragraphs, one in Arabic and one in English, discussing their current major in the university and why they chose it. The findings distinguished between three groups of students:

(1) Unable to write in Arabic: This group consists of 15 students (16%) who were unable to write a single word in Arabic; they only responded to the prompt in English. Their English writing skills, as manifested in their paragraphs, are excellent. Some of the responses given by members of this group included:

- “I can’t write in Arabic to save my life.”
- “To be honest, I haven’t practiced Arabic in a very long time, and I apologize that I am not able to provide the Arabic portion.”
- “I am sorry, but I find it very difficult to write in Arabic.”
- “I can only write in English.”
- “I don’t feel comfortable writing in Arabic.”

(2) Poor Arabic writing skills: This group consists of 39 students (43%), who attempted to respond to the prompt in both Arabic and English, but their Arabic writing was very poor compared to their English writing. The Arabic writing of this group suffered from several problems. Most notable are: spelling mistakes, grammatical errors, wrong word choices, coherence, cohesion, use of code switching (Arabic/English), literal translation from English to Arabic, and the insertion of colloquial Arabic.

(3) Good Arabic writing skills: This group consists of 37 students (41%) who were able to respond to the prompt in Arabic and English with no serious errors in either language.

Discussion

This study sought to gain insights on young Emiratis use of spoken Arabic, as well as their views on their reading and writing skills. It also looks at the extent to which they can demonstrate their writing skills in Arabic.

Initially, when they responded to questions about who they spoke Arabic with, they seemed fairly strong and capable in their Emirati dialect when conversing with parents and relatives. However, even within their own families, many of these students found English encroaching into their conversations with siblings quite often, but even with parents and relatives in some cases. In fact, three percent of participants indicated that they never speak Arabic with their siblings. Although this study is not focusing on spoken Arabic, these findings are still a little disconcerting. One would imagine native speakers of Arabic would converse with their parents and families in their native language, but among this particular group of students, this has not been the case.

The findings regarding question 3 indicate that a large majority of the participants preferred to read in English (57%), but even more of them preferred to write in English (71%). Frankly, these results are quite stunning. The fact that Arabs, who are native speakers of Arabic, would claim that they prefer to read and write in a second language is troubling. It is a concern both for
them as Arabs, and it is a concern in terms of Arabic as a language of literacy. These findings reveal a preference for global English over Arabic as the language of literacy in the UAE. During the interviews, I was able to obtain more details about why students responded as they did to these questions. Many of them pointed out that English is the language of education, technology, and the internet. As Mohamed argued: “We need English these days, if we want to study or read things about our majors, we read them in English. I’m an engineering student; everything I want to read about is in English.” They find all the things they need through the medium of English, while Arabic is very often put aside, used in the home and for religious purposes.” Khadija pointed to this when she said: “I have the Arabic I need to converse with my family and to carry out my prayers. Other than that I don’t need to read or write in Arabic very much, most of what we need is in English.”

Responses to questions 4 through 8 revealed the ease or difficulty participants felt with regard to their own Arabic literacy. They were asked about their abilities in terms of reading, writing, and comprehending literary Arabic. For most of the students, reading was easier for them to manage than writing. Sixty-four percent of those surveyed indicated that they found reading in Arabic “easy,” while 42% noted that they could read an entire book in Arabic easily. Although these results are quite positive, it is still concerning that 36% of those surveyed claimed that reading in Arabic was “somewhat” or “very” difficult. For native speakers of Arabic, we would not expect to find such high numbers who have trouble reading in their own language. One student I interviewed, Maha, noted: “Even though I can read in Arabic, I don’t really choose to. Most of the things I want to read for university are in English, so I don’t take time to read Arabic for fun. I guess that is how most students are; we only read what we have to.”

What becomes especially worrying is how many of these students indicated that they would find writing in their native language of Arabic “somewhat” or “very” difficult, 68% (n=61). This is a very high percentage for a small group of young people, and it gets worse when asked how they would feel if given the task of writing a formal letter in Arabic. At this point 77% (n=70) of all those surveyed indicated this would be “somewhat” or “very” difficult. Question 8 sought to understand how confident participants felt about their writing in Arabic. Here again the results revealed a major gap in students’ abilities to write in their native language, with 57% (n=52) indicating that they did not feel comfortable writing in Arabic. Many of them wrote in that they had spent so many years studying in English that they had never developed strong skills in Arabic writing. Others pointed out that they found Arabic to be a very “difficult” language and one that had so many grammar rules that it became impossible to learn. When I interviewed participants, they made similar comments. For example, Khalid mentioned: “I spent many years working on English; they kept telling us how important it was. But unfortunately, we did not concentrate on our Arabic, it is like we thought because we speak it, we know it. But now I see that is not the reality.” Fatima indicated something related: “Everything was English, from the time we were small they were teaching us English. They said we had to be strong in English for the future. I did not work on my Arabic very much, now I see that my Arabic is weak and I am not happy about that.”

Despite the participants’ apparent struggles with Arabic literacy, the majority of them, 73% (n=66) do believe that it is important for their futures to be able to write in Arabic. Most of their
comments for why they believe this is important include such factors as: it is our mother tongue, we need Arabic to read the Quran, we will lose our culture and language, and we must preserve our identity. These are all important factors and the students’ comprehension and appreciation of these issues makes it disquieting that despite their understanding of the importance of Arabic literacy, the majority of them do not have that literacy. Those interviewed, who believed in the need for Arabic literacy for their own futures included comments such as: “I am an Arab, and I should be proud of my language. I should be able to use it all the time, reading and writing. Those who are forgetting their Arabic are losing their heritage and even their identity as Arabs. I need Arabic for my future.” And “We must hold our language, it is our mother tongue, if we don’t use it, maybe it will go extinct. I want to work in the UAE; I should be able to read and write my language.” - Khadija

Finally, 97% of all participants indicated that they believed that it is important for all Arabs to be able to read and write in Arabic. This is in spite of their own lack of strong Arabic literacy skills. In this section, they continued to bring up the importance of Arabic to Arabs, to their heritage, history, culture, and traditions. As Noora stated in her interview: “our Arab heritage is in our language; we must keep it and save our culture.” Tarek voiced a similar point: “Arabic is our language, it is our future, we cannot let it just go away. We have to be able to read and write our own language. Why should we lose our language for English?”

These students realize that Arabic literacy is an important part of maintaining a tie to their Arabic language, not just the dialect that they speak. They are aware that literacy is an important aspect of understanding their mother tongue; however, despite their strong belief in maintaining Arabic literacy, most of them do not have the confidence at this time in their own literacy skills. Only 3% disagreed that all Arabs need to be able to read and write in Arabic. Their comments all centred on the place of global English and how English is now the language of the future. It is rather sad that even this number of students have surrendered to the belief that the world needs English, but without any attempt at protecting their own language from possible extinction. To be sure, they are all confident in their speaking abilities in Arabic, unfortunately, the same cannot be said for their Arabic literacy. It makes us wonder what the future holds. If this age group is already in the midst of a loss of Arabic literacy, what does this bode for the next generation? If these young people become parents, who are not fluent in Arabic, what chances will their children have to be competent and literate in Arabic?

Perhaps the most concerning issue in this final section of the questionnaire, were the fifteen students (16% of the total participants) who were unable to complete the section in Arabic. Unfortunately, none of them volunteered to be interviewed, so I was unable to obtain any further in depth knowledge about why they ended up unable to write a simple paragraph in Arabic. However, the comments they wrote in question 11 pointed to a lack of practice or any pressure upon them as children to focus on their Arabic literacy skills. This backs up my earlier claim that the introduction of English so early in the lives of these young people is taking a toll on their ability to gain fluency in Arabic.

Those who were poor writers in Arabic, 43%, definitely have many issues to overcome if they are to become “good” writers in Arabic. This particular group of participants revealed a
rudimentary ability to write in Arabic, and produced extensive errors in their paragraphs. Their errors ran the gamut from simple spelling mistakes to major grammatical errors; in addition, they were unable to choose correct words in order to make their case, while also lacking coherence and cohesion. Furthermore, there was evidence of code switching (Arabic/English), translating literally from English to Arabic, and using colloquial Arabic instead of MSA.

Finally, only less than half of all participants (41%) were able to write coherently and correctly in Arabic. This result is quite concerning for a group of native speakers of Arabic living in an Arab country. The fact that so few of them are capable of writing correctly in their native tongue is certainly something that should be studied further. It would seem that there must be more that can be done in order to ensure that Emiratis do not lose their literacy in Arabic.

Conclusion

In the course of a study carried out at an EMI university in the UAE, written input was sought from 91 UAE nationals and native speakers of Arabic who were all in their first semester. The students first completed a questionnaire and were then asked to write a brief paragraph, both in Arabic and in English, about why they chose their majors. The results were both astounding and, frankly, very sad in some cases. Out of the study’s ninety-one, native Arabic-speaking college students, fifteen were unable to write even one sentence in Arabic. Their comments included: “I don’t read or write Arabic,” “I can’t,” and “I never learned.” Unfortunately, none of these 15 students volunteered to be interviewed. Several of the participants, who could not write in Arabic, did claim that they had the reading skills in Arabic to maintain their religious duties. Some scholars believe that Arabic can be saved through Islam. Fishman (2002) for example argues that “[The] staying power of sanctified languages within bilingual repertoires (Arabic and Islam) do not come and go the way quotidian vernaculars do. They may wax and wane, but due to the sanctity attributed to them, they do not disappear” (p. 23). Yet, as suggested by some of these responses, many young Muslims evidently do not believe that they need to have familiarity with the written word of Arabic, even to read the Quran.

It is an unfortunate fact that “monolingualism (preferably in English) is seen as a practical advantage for modern social organization while multilingualism, in contrast, is viewed as a characteristic of ‘premodern’ or ‘traditional’ societies” (Coulmas, 1992, cited in May, 2001). Concurrently, though, scholars such as Canagarajah (2013) are undertaking to "rediscover the South Asian tradition of translingual communication and cosmopolitanism that was historically practiced but increasingly suppressed by monolingual ideologies entering the region” (p. 18), and it is this type of rediscovery and return that the UAE needs to employ with respect to its official language. It is entirely possible to maintain Arabic literacy and usage while simultaneously relying on global English to facilitate communication.

As the language policy of the UAE moves toward more schools and universities using EMI, and global English asserts itself as the language of progress and prestige, it will become increasingly difficult to help young Arabs focus on and choose to study Arabic. In the Gulf region’s educational systems, there is much less attention given to academic Arabic proficiency than the efforts poured into English. As Lin and Martin (2005) found, university staff already face the dilemma of helping students maintain their [Arabic] literacy, while being caught up with the
“parents’ overwhelming desire for global English” (p. 6). However, young UAE nationals are being done a disservice if the country’s educational focus remains on English at the expense of Arabic literacy.

Long term, the onus will be on policy makers and educators to be willing to work toward the creation of a nation of bilinguals, multilinguals, or “plurilinguals,” to use Canagarajah’s (2013) term. However, this can only happen when the country’s overpowering obsession with global English is dispelled. Certainly, English is important as a central means of communication in a world characterized by globalization, but such functionality does not account for Arabs in the UAE forsaking literacy in their native language. I conclude by calling for a language policy in the UAE to help its young people become proficient not only in English but also in Arabic (and hopefully in other languages as well). The possibility for bilingualism certainly exists in the UAE, but policy makers need to act on this and facilitate a plan that will give Arabic its due in schools and wider society.

Finally, as with all studies, there are usually limitations and this study was no different. Using interviews for a study is sometimes seen as a limitation. This occurs because there can be issues with the objectivity of interviews. However, using both quantitative and qualitative methods provided the types of data required in order to answer the research questions. Another limitation may be the sample size, which might be considered small, and which did not allow to compare between those who attended private schools versus those who attended public schools. Furthermore, the location at one institution with students studying in an EMI institution may have had some impact on the outcomes and the ability to generalize the findings to other students in different types of institutions of higher learning in the UAE. However, despite some of these possible limitations, the approach utilized for this study has merit and can be modified for use for further investigations.

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References
Appendix A
Questionnaire on Arabic Literacy

Gender | M | F
---|---|---
Age | __________ |
Major | __________ |
Your native language: _______________________
Years in the UAE: _______________________
Years of education in Arabic: __________
Years of education in English: __________

<table>
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<th>Q1 I speak ARABIC to</th>
<th>All the time</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
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<td>Relatives</td>
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<td>Friends in university</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends outside university</td>
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<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
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<td>Relatives</td>
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<td>Friends in university</td>
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<td>Friends outside university</td>
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<tr>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Both</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to read in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to write in</td>
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Q4: I find it difficult to write in Arabic. | Y | N |

Why or why not, please explain:
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Q5: I find it difficult to read in Arabic. | Y | N |

Why or why not, please explain:
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Q6: I can write a formal letter applying for a job, in Arabic, with no major errors. | Y | N |
Why or why not, please explain:

Q7: I can read an entire book in Arabic and understand everything.  Y  N

Why or why not, please explain:

Q8: I feel confident writing in Arabic.  Y  N

Why or why not, please explain:

Q9: I believe that being able to write in Arabic is important for my future.  Y  N

Why or why not, please explain:

Q10: I believe it is important for all Arabs to be able to read and write in Arabic.  Y  N

Why or why not, please explain:

Q11: In the following section, please write 2 very brief paragraphs, one in Arabic and one in English, about your current major in the university and why you chose it.

If you are willing to be interviewed, please include your first name, mobile number, & email address below:
Name: ________________________________
Mobile: _______________________________
Email: _______________________________
Non-Verbal Predicate in English: Evidence from Iraqi Nominal Sentences

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Abstract
The fact that Iraqi nominal sentences are expressed without a verbal element has led the author to examine the status of the copula (*be*) in English. The aim is to reach at an explanation as to why Iraqi does not use a copula while English does. Explanation of this sort is significant because it has some direct implications on English language teaching and translation in Iraq. Using inductive method of reasoning, it has been established that tracing grammatical properties such as tense and agreement may lead to find-out the reason behind this cross-linguistic variation; and subsequently reach at a generalization that maybe applicable to other languages. The latter is an issue that remains open for further research. While placing the discussion within the parameters of the Government and Binding (GB) theory, the author concluded the reason as non-verbal predication in Iraqi, unlike English, can support a combination of these grammatical properties and thus rendering the need for a copula redundant.

*Keywords:* Iraqi Arabic, nominal sentences, non-verbal predicates, verb to-be in English

1.1. Introduction:

The term ‘non-verbal predicate’ refers to that kind of predicate in which information about the subject is expressed by a non-verbal element regardless of whether there is a copula or not. Therefore, in a sentence like Sarah is sick, it is the adjective sick, not the copula is, that gives information about the subject Sarah. This kind of predicate is, therefore, found in a clause construction which involves a subject and a predicate, while the subject may be a noun or pronoun, the predicate may be a nominal, an adjectival or a prepositional. As a matter of fact, in English, this kind of predicate always associates with a form of the copula be; and hence raising the possibility of being a verbal predicate.

In examining the status of such predicate, i.e., whether verbal or non-verbal, Hengeveld (1992) uses an eloquent technique which basically relies on two criteria; the first one concerns the operation of selection restrictions. That is, in the verbal predicate it is the verb that selects the type of argument involved while in the non-verbal predicate it is the non-verbal element that selects the type of argument involved. Therefore, in a sentence like Ahmed is sick it is the adjectival predication sick that decides the type of argument involved, i.e., animate, for which it is not possible to replace this animate argument with an inanimate one as in *the chair is sick. Similarly, in a sentence like Firas is a teacher it is the nominal predication a teacher that decides the type of argument needed, i.e., human for which it is not possible to replace this argument with a non-human one as this would result in an ungrammatical sentence as in *the elephant is a teacher. Thus, it appears that it is the non-verbal element, not the copula, that imposes such restriction on the selection of the arguments.

The second criterion concerns the valency of the non-verbal predicates. That is, in the verbal predicates it is the verb that decides the number of the argument required, i.e., intransitive, transitive and di-transitive, while in the non-verbal predicates it is the non-verbal element that decides the number of arguments required as in this car is fast as opposite to this car is similar to mine. Both sentences involve the same form of the copula be which is combined with two different adjectives fast and similar respectively, however, the former requires one argument, i.e., the subject, while the latter requires two. Hence, the ungrammaticality of a sentence like *this car is similar is explained by the fact that the adjective similar lacks an essential second argument. Similarly, in a sentence like Firas is a denizen of New Delhi it is the nominal predication denizen that obligatorily takes a complement headed by a preposition, i.e., of New Delhi. Moreover, prepositions in English may also decide the number of the argument required as in Mr. Kumar is from India as opposite to she is nearby. In the former sentence the preposition from is transitive and therefore takes an obligatory complement, i.e., India while in the latter the preposition nearby is intransitive and therefore does not need a complement (Tallerman, 2011, p. 116). Thus, it seems that it is the non-verbal element, not the copula, that decides the number and the type of the argument(s) required. Therefore, if any of these two criteria applies, then the predicate in point can be described as a non-verbal predicate.

On the other side, in a language like Iraqi Arabic, it seems that such predicates are expressed without using a copula, at least in the present tense. Therefore, in a sentence like ʔānī mudarris-a ‘I (am) a female teacher’ the subject ʔānī ‘I’ is put together with the nominal predication mudarris-a ‘female teacher’ without any linking copula. However, Iraqi Arabic necessarily involves the use of a copulative element, like that found in English, in such predicates in the past and future tenses. Nevertheless, it will be shown throughout this paper that such a copula, in both languages, is merely used to support the tense morpheme of the sentence. In fact, the idea of this paper has been mainly constructed because nominal sentences in Iraqi Arabic show compelling evidence in support of this
observation and has therefore led the author to reexamine the status of the so-called “be-verb” in English in light of data drawn from Iraqi Arabic nominal sentences.

### 1.2. Non-verbal Predicate in Iraqi Arabic:

As mentioned above, Iraqi Arabic provides strong evidence in favor of our observation. That is, the subject and the predication in nominal sentences are juxtaposed without linking them by any copulative element as shown by the following examples drawn from Iraqi:

1) a) ʔānī mudarris-Ø  
   I.1S teacher.MS  
   ‘I (am) a male teacher’  

   b) ʔānī farhān-Ø  
   I.1S happy.MS  
   ‘I (am) happy’  

   c) ʔāḥnā mudarrisān  
   we.1pl teacher.Mpl  
   ‘we (are) male teachers’

   d) ʔāḥnā farhānīn  
   we.1pl happy.Mpl  
   ‘we (are) happy’

In the above examples, a semantic relationship is established between the subject and the predication: ʔānī and mudarris-Ø, ʔānī and farhān-Ø, ʔāḥnā and mudarrisān and ʔāḥnā and farhānīn without any moderator. This relationship is arguably established through agreement properties.

Thus, when the predication is an adjective or a noun, it agrees with the subject in number and gender even though in principle first person pronoun does not show gender distinction. This is further shown below:

2) a) ʔānī mudarrisa  
   I.1S teacher.FS  
   ‘I (am) a female teacher’  

   b) ʔānī farhāna  
   I.1S happy.FS  
   ‘I (am) happy’  

   c) ʔāḥnā mudarrisāt  
   we.1pl teacher.Fpl  
   ‘we (are) female teachers’

   d) ʔāḥnā farhānāt  
   we.1pl happy.Fpl  
   ‘we (are) happy’

While examining tense in the above sentences, it seems that it is not overtly expressed. However, it may be overtly realized when we use Iraqi negative particle mū as illustrated below:

3) a) ʔānī mū mudarris-Ø  
   I.1S not teacher.MS  
   ‘I (am) not a male teacher’

   b) ʔānī mū mudarrisa  
   I.1S not teacher.FS  
   ‘I (am) not a female teacher’

   c) ʔāḥnā mū mudarrisān  
   we.1pl not teacher.Mpl  
   ‘we (are) not male teachers’

   d) ʔāḥnā mū mudarrisāt  
   we.1pl not teacher.Fpl  
   ‘we (are) not female teachers’

The negative particle mū is a free morpheme used to negate nominal sentences that are in the present tense. It is not used to negate verbs rather it is used to negate the whole proposition of a sentence (Erwin, 2007, p. 332). Therefore, it mostly appears in a construction where there is no verb. Thus, it seems that tense, in the above sentences, is implied but not overtly expressed.
These examples strongly demonstrate that tense and agreement are realized in the structure rendering the appearance of an auxiliary redundant.

Although tense is not overtly seen when the sentence is in present tense, it must be overtly expressed in past and future tenses by using a form equivalent in meaning to English copula *be* and that is čān ‘was’ as illustrated in the following examples:

4)  
   a) ʔānī čin-it mudarris-Ø  
       I.1S past.be.S teacher.MS  
       ‘I was a male teacher’  
   b) ʔānī činit mudarris-a  
       I.1S past.be.S teacher.FS  
       ‘I was a female teacher’  
   c) ʔāhnā čin-na mudarrisīn  
       we.1pl past.be.pl teacher.pl  
       ‘we were male teachers’  
   d) ʔāhnā čin-na mudarrisāt  
       we.1pl past.be.pl teacher.pl  
       ‘we were female teachers’

Examples in (4) show two important points: (1) the auxiliary verb čān ‘was’ which exemplifies past tense morpheme, agrees in person and number but not in gender with the preceding subject, and (2) the predication mudarris agrees in number and gender with the preceding subject. Relating the above examples to our previous discussion, this state of affairs demonstrates that, with or without overt tense realization, agreement is overtly realized. In other words, the visibility of the tense in (4) does not interrupt or contribute to the semantic relationship that has been established between the subject and the predication. It merely indicates the timing of the sentence, i.e., past tense. This leads us to confirm our previous observation that it is agreement, not tense, that establishes this semantic link. Examples above also lead us to confirm that the appearance of the auxiliaries is driven by the necessity to realize tense morpheme overtly. This realization must be different in form and shape from what we saw in the present tense to avoid ambiguity. Similar result comes out of the following examples where future tense marker is used:

5)  
   a) ʔānī rāh-ʔā-kān dḡāhiz-Ø baṣid sāša  
       I.1S will.1SM.be ready.MS after one-hour  
       ‘I will be ready after one hour’  
   b) ʔānī rāh-ʔā-kān dḡāhiz-a baṣid sāša  
       I.1S will.1SM.be ready-FM after one-hour  
       ‘I will be ready after one hour’  
   c) ʔāhnā rāh-in-kān dḡāh-zīn baṣid sāša  
       we.1pl will.1Mpl.be ready.Mpl after one-hour  
       ‘we will be ready after one-hour’  
   d) ʔāhnā rāh-in-kān dḡāh-zāt baṣid sāša  
       we.1pl will.1Mpl.be ready.Fpl after one-hour  
       ‘we will be ready after one-hour’

In 5 (a & b) the first person singular prefix ʔā- and the future prefix rāh- are attached to the imperfect form of the verb čān making it rāh-ʔā-kān; the same holds true for 5 (c & d) with -in- instead of ʔā-. Thus, it appears that the function of the so-called “verbs” in (4) and (5) is to support tense morpheme; and that agreement morpheme, which appears on them, is a byproduct feature.
However, this state of affairs highlights a very important question and that is: why do we have agreement manifestations on two elements in the structure. The answer comes straightforward. It seems that agreement is used, as stated earlier, to indicate semantic relationships. That is, elements, in a structure, must be connected to one another. This connection is established through agreement manifestations, i.e., person, number and/or gender (PNG). If we work along this line of reasoning, we can reach at a general understanding of the nature of agreement in natural languages; which appears to be one of the means of establishing semantic relationships between different elements in the sentence.

1.3. Non-verbal Predicate in English:

In English, it seems that non-verbal predicate is expressed by using (1) a form of the copula be which appears to have syntactic, but not semantic, function and (2) a predication which maybe a noun, an adjective or prepositional phrase. In the following, we shall validate our observation developed thus far which may be restated as: the main function of the copula in non-verbal predicate is to establish a link between the subject and the predication by supporting grammatical properties which reflect this link (as shown in table-1). This might explain why they are called ‘linking verbs’(1) as illustrated below:

6) I am a teacher.
7) He is happy.
8) They are in India.

The examples (6-8) show that a semantic relationship is established between the subject and the predication: I and teacher, he and happy and they and in India. However, it seems that the copula in the above sentences does not contribute the semantic and syntactic attributes such as (argument and thematic roles) in the sentences. In GB theory, this state of affairs is exemplified by a typical structure of Exceptional Case Marking (ECM) where these copulas are dropped from the structure without changing the meaning of the sentence as illustrated in the following pairs of sentences:

9)
  a. I consider [that Ali is tall.]
  b. I consider [Ali tall.]
  c. I deem [that Ahmed is a teacher]
  d. I deem [Ahmed a teacher]

Given that these verbs are syntactically and semantically insignificant and thus can be dropped. At this stage, a question such as, why do we have to use a semantically and syntactically dormant element in these sentences, becomes very relevant. There must be some compelling reasons that force us to use them. We can answer this question by a careful analysis of the sentences in (9). The analysis will make it clear that the copula ‘is’ in (9 a & c) is the expression of the tense which assigns nominative Case to the embedded subject. And that the examples in (9 b & d) will explain that the verb of the matrix clause assigns accusative Case to the embedded subject by a process of ECM. Thus, in situations where there is no need to express the tense morpheme, to be copulas are not used as the case in (9 b & d). Therefore, it appears that the main function of the verbs in the above examples is to support the tense morpheme.
However, *to be* copulas in the above examples also exhibit agreement in person and number in accordance with the subject of the sentence. It seems that it is the agreement morpheme that controls the form of the copula *to be* such as *am, is* and *are*. These variants of *be* are in present tense and they change due to the PNG of the subject. Thus, we can assume that these copulas are used only for the tense and agreement features; and they are syntactically insignificant in the sentence. Further evidence comes from the fact that this task, i.e., supporting tense and agreement, cannot be done by any other element in the sentence in such cases. For example:

10) 
   a. *He tall~s* (~ *He is tall*)
   b. *He an idiot~ed* (~ *He was an idiot*)

It seems that these copulas are characterized by the ability to support the negative and interrogative morphemes which distinguish them from thematic verbs as illustrated by the following examples in table-2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>TYPE OF SENTENCES</th>
<th>NON-THEMATIC VERBS</th>
<th>THEMATIC VERBS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>NEGATIVE</td>
<td><em>He is not (isn’t)</em> a teacher</td>
<td><em>He runs not (runsn’t)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>INTERROGATIVE</td>
<td><em>Are they teachers?</em></td>
<td><em>Runs he?</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore, *to be* copulas, in English, are used to accomplish certain tasks, i.e., to support bound morphemes present in the structure. These tasks cannot be completed by any other element in the sentence.

Indeed, the author’s claim is supported by the passive construction in English where *to be* copulas are only used to support the tense and agreement properties, and that is because of the inability of the thematic verb to support such features/properties in such constructions. That is, English morphological rules stipulate that a verb cannot bear more than one overt inflectional suffix. Therefore, the main verb in the passive construction can perform only one task and that is to hold the passive suffix, i.e., -*en*. The load of other markers such as tense and agreement in the structure can be given to an auxiliary verb as illustrated in the following example and its tree diagram:

13) The window is broken

![Passive tree diagram](image-url)
A critical evaluation of the above example and its tree diagram would reveal two important points, (1) the auxiliary, i.e., is expresses the tense and agreement morphemes and (2) the thematic verb expresses the passive morpheme. In GB theory terminologies; the thematic verb moves upward to pick up the bound passive morpheme, which lies in a position normally occupied by an agentive light verb\(^{(3)}\), and it cannot move further up because, as stated above, its morphological need is saturated, i.e., it cannot bear more than one inflectional morpheme. Therefore, another element, i.e., to be in this case, is inserted in order to support the tense and agreement. We know in English tense and agreement need external support because they are bound morphemes. Thus, it appears that it is the need to express the tense and agreement overtly in the above example that would require us to insert to be copulas. Therefore, we might not find these auxiliaries in a construction where the tense and agreement are not expressed. Fortunately, such construction is available in English as shown by the following example:

14) We heard [the window broken by the burglar] = the window was broken by the burglar

Example (14) strongly demonstrates that it is tense and agreement that necessitate the appearance of the auxiliary be because the difference between the embedded clause in the brackets in the example on the left of the equal sign and the finite version of the same example on the right is the expression of the tense and agreement in the latter. Therefore, the passive construction in English gives convincing evidence supporting our assumption that to be verbs are only used to support the tense and agreement morphemes in declarative sentences\(^{(4)}\).

Similarly, in the progressive construction which involves a progressive morpheme such as -ing, the be-copula in each case is only used to support the tense and agreement morphemes as shown in the following example and its tree diagram:

15) The boy is running.

Figure (2) shows that the main verb moves upwards to pick up the bound progressive morpheme i.e., -ing and it cannot move further up because it has got its maximum number of inflectional markers. But the tense and agreement morphemes must be supported by another element. Therefore, an auxiliary, i.e., be is inserted in small v which subsequently moves upwards to I position to pick up the tense and agreement morphemes. However, it should be clear at this stage that the author considers the auxiliary be in the above examples to be equal to the light verbs in
languages like Hindi, Panjabi, Gujarati, etc. Both are semantically delexicalized or grammaticalized and they function as the host for inflectional markers such as tense and agreement properties of the sentence. Moreover, both ultimately form just one unit, and contribute to the aspectual meaning of the main verbs that are associated with. This has been shown in the following example of the compound verb construction in Hindi-Urdu where the light verb diya ‘give’ functions as an auxiliary verb and a carrier of the syntactic information (Das, 2006, p. 55):

16) dineš-ne mera kam kər diya
   dinesh-3MS-Erg my work-MS do-v¹ give-v²-perf-MS
   ‘Dinesh did my work’

   Example (16) will support the author’s earlier observation from the data of Hindi-Urdu that in (16) the $V_2^2$ ‘diya’ – ‘give’ is a light verb here because there are only two arguments in the sentence and also because there is no contribution of the meaning of ‘give’ in the predication of the sentence.

   Now, let us move on to reiterate the status of the copula be which becomes very clear in the example (17). This example offers four bound morphemes, i.e., tense, agreement, progressive and passive as numbered below respectively. These bound morphemes must be supported by suitable elements. In such condition two be auxiliaries may be used as shown by the following example:

17) The car was¹&² being³ fixed⁴

   In (17) there are two aspectual morphemes in addition to the tense and agreement morphemes. If we Start from the terminal node of the tree in figure 3, the main verb bears the passive morpheme, i.e., (-ed) and then an insertion of be is done to take care of the progressive morpheme which the main verb has left it out due to the process of passivisation. The other things that must be explained in the example are that the tense and agreement morphemes are picked up by another be insertion operation in the given tree.

   ![Figure 3. Passive progressive tree diagram](image-url)
Figure 3 proves that *be* is only used to carry the bound morphemes present in the structure. Again, that is because each *be*-verb/main-verb can only bear one inflectional morpheme. Except at the position of ‘I’ where the inserted element can bear two morphemes, i.e., tense and agreement (Pollock 1989).

Thus, it appears that *be* in every usage, i.e., whether main or auxiliary is delexicalized element inserted into the structure only to support bound morphemes. Moreover, such uses of delexicalized elements are not new in English. In the following examples ‘*do*’ as an auxiliary has been used to support the main verb for its predication which is possible only if ‘*do*’ does not contribute any meaning in the sentence.

18)  
a. Did you buy that car?  
b. you didn’t buy that car.  
c. you DID buy that car!  
d. you bought that car, didn’t you?

In (18a) the auxiliary ‘*do*’ has moved to the front position of the sentence to make the interrogative form of the declarative sentence you bought that car. In (18b) the auxiliary ‘*do*’ is used to support the negative morpheme while in (18c) the auxiliary is used to emphasize the main verb of the declarative sentence. Finally, in (18d) the auxiliary is used to form tag question. These tasks cannot be achieved by the main verb and therefore the Do-insertion operation takes place.

Thus, based on facts arrived at so far, the author concludes that *be* and *do* in English are language specific rules as they are semantically dormant elements inserted into the structure to fulfill a structural need which cannot be achieved by otherwise verbal or other elements that are present in the sentence. Taking this conclusion a step further, the author expects that other languages do not show these kinds of non-thematic “verbs” if they have got other elements that can support bound morphemes such as tense and agreement. Iraqi Arabic is a case in point.

1.4. Conclusion:

It has been shown that the so-called ‘*be*-verbs’ in English are nothing but a realization of tense and agreement properties present in the structure. Iraqi supported this observation by proving that non-verbal predication can support these grammatical properties; and thus, rendering the appearance of a verb-be-like element redundant.

The author arrived at this conclusion after comparing the morpho-syntactic properties of Iraqi nominal sentences and their English equivalents. While placing the discussion within the realm of GB theory that has provided the necessary theoretical background and the tools needed to reaffirm this conclusion.

Endnotes:
(1). Because this paper focuses on *to be*, the author abstracts away from other verbs such as *remain, become, etc.* which sometimes function as linking verbs. However, when they function as linking verbs in English, they can be substituted by a form of *to be* (Hengeveld, 1992: chapter 4).
(2). According to Pollock (1989) tense and agreement are two separate morphemes. However, in English they always appear together on the same verbal element. Therefore, they might be considered as an exception to this rule.
(3). According to Burzio (1986), in the passive construction the agentive light verb is replaced by the passive morpheme which as it does not assign thematic role to its specifier, it does not assign accusative Case to the theme, and hence the theme has to move for Case assignment.
(4). Because in negative and interrogative sentences be copulas are used to support the negative and interrogative morphemes in addition to the tense and agreement as illustrated by examples (11 & 12) respectively.

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List of References
Exophoric and Endophoric Awareness

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Abstract
This research aims to shed light on the impact of exophoric and endophoric instruction on the comprehension (decoding) skills, writing (encoding skills), and linguistic awareness of English as Foreign Language learners. In this line, a mixed qualitative quantitative approach was conducted over a period of fifteen weeks on sixty English major students enrolled in their first year at the Lebanese University, fifth branch. The sixty participants were divided into two groups (30 experimental) that benefited from instruction on exophoric and endophoric relations and (30 control) that did not have the opportunity to study referents in the designated period of the research. The participants sat for a reading and writing pretest at the beginning of the study; and they sat again for the same reading and writing assessment at the end of the study. The results of the pre and post tests for both groups were analyzed via SPSS program and findings were as follows: hypothesis one stating that students who are aware of endophoric and exophoric relations are likely to achieve better results in decoding a text than are their peers who receive no referential instruction, was accepted with significant findings. Hypothesis two stating that students who are aware of endophoric and exophoric relations are likely to perform better in writing than their peers who receive no referential instruction, was accepted with significant findings. Hypothesis three stating that, students who learn endophoric exophoric relations become aware of referents and their linguistic function, was also asserted with significant findings. The study answered the research questions can endophoric and exophoric awareness influence the reading comprehension and writing structure of English as foreign language learners? Does instruction on referents boost learners’ awareness on the linguistic function of endophoric and exphoric relations? Recommendations for teachers, learners, curriculum designers, and future research have been incorporated.

Keywords: decoding, encoding, exophora, endophora, referents, linguistic awareness

Introduction

English foreign language (EFL) learners encounter many obstacles when they are required to process English texts and to produce ones. Though difficulty in comprehending a text in a foreign language cannot be measured and quantified, linguists and psycholinguists have attempted to correlate this difficulty to various factors. To begin with, Klare (1963) categorizes readability characteristics into four broad subdivisions: word length, word familiarity, grammatical classifications, and sentence length. According to Mcgeown (2013) readability of a text refers to the ability to comprehend a text and produce the same ideas in one’s own words. Halliday and Hasan (1976) refer a text’s difficulty to one or more of the following: graphic organization, rhetorical devices, vocabulary, syntax, grammar, rhetorical involvement in the text, and reader’s attitude and self-confidence.

According to Klare (1963) the linguistic meaning of an utterance can be subdivided into two levels: the lexical, or word level, and the structural, or the sentence level. Lack of clarity in one of the levels causes difficulty in perceiving an utterance. The same idea has been adopted by Barkute (2005) who considered that a text is constituted of semantically and syntactically connected elements and it is this connection that either facilitates comprehending a text or obstructs it. Fraser (1990) believes that the reason why learners do not succeed in comprehending a reading passage, is their lack of proficiency in linking the sentences of a text to one another, on one hand, and to the whole text on the other. From this perspective the importance of referents emerges since presence of referents in a text connects its part together by linking them to their references. Therefore, referents, which play a role in connecting the elements of a text, are crucial when decoding a piece of reading comprehension to clarify the vague antecedents that the pronouns or the other types of references indicate. Reference as defined by Halliday and Hasan (1976) is when

the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another.

The one presupposes the other in the sense that it can’t be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. When this happens... and the two elements, the presupposing and the presupposed, are thereby at least potentially integrated into a text (p.4).

Referential information is therefore, fetched information and reference signals the existence of a specific thing in a text which is turned to in order to perceive another part of the text.

Thompson (2004) reaffirmed Halliday and Hasan by remarking that,

reference is the set of grammatical resources that allow the speaker to indicate whether something is being repeated from somewhere earlier in the text (that is to say we have already been told about it) or whether it has not yet appeared in the text (that is to say it is new to us) (p.180).

Reference in texts comes under two divisions: exophora or outer reference and endophora or inner reference. Exophora refers to linguistic expressions that are used to refer to situational elements that are non-verbal and excluded from the text but not from the context; their absence may affect the deeper comprehension of the reader because there are some elements that are not found in the written text. Endophora, on the other hand, or inner reference, is linguistic expressions that are verbal and included in the text. The presence of these elements is essential as they give clarity to
the text and join its parts together; this assists in comprehending the text or even in writing a meaningful message. The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of teaching the exophoric and endophoric relations not only on the comprehension skills but also on the writing skills of English major students enrolled in their first year at the Lebanese University.

Statement of the Problem

Processing a text in a foreign language seems harder for students than processing the same text in their native language; nevertheless, this hardship seems sharper when EFL learners are asked to produce their own text, or to write in a foreign language (Campbell, 1999). It came to the researcher’s attention that students enrolled for a BA degree in English language struggle in decoding and encoding an English text, and after investigation the researcher came to a realization that those learners are unaware of referents and cohesive devices in texts. In this realm, the study aims to investigate the effect of teaching endophoric and exophoric relations on the comprehension and writing skills of EFL learners. Linguists and psycholinguists have proposed many different explanations for learners’ difficulty to encode and decode an English text starting with understanding the syntactic structure of the words, moving to perceiving the semantic features of the sentences, and ending in decoding the pragmatic function of the text as a whole (Nazari, 2003). A great obstacle in such decoding is the readers’ inability to identify referents, perceive their meaning and function. This gives rise to a major problem for EFL learners where they become unaware of the semantic relations between words, clauses, sentences, ideas, and even paragraphs within one text. The lack of awareness of referents poses hindrances on reading comprehension where “the reader is not enhanced with all components of a picture to ensure its understanding” (Hill, 1988, p.65). In contrast, when learners become aware of referential relations, particularly endophora and exophora, their reading comprehension ability is boosted. Furthermore, many EFL learners struggle at expressing their ideas fluently and smoothly in a language which is not their native tongue. A possible reason might be the lack of writers’ ability to connect ideas and relate different parts of the writing together. In a word, lack of awareness of endophoric and exophoric relations might be the problem hindering adequate comprehension and writing skills of the subjects of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether studying the lexical referents namely exophoric and endophoric relations can have an impact on the reading and writing skills of the subjects. Therefore, the study seeks to investigate whether mastering the two types of referents, endophoric and exophoric expressions can help in improving comprehension and writing skills for students. It is a study that will illustrate hindrances learners of English as a foreign Language encounter in reading comprehension and in writing an English text due to their inability to establish a link “between linguistic forms and what they stand for in the universe of discourse” (Martin 2000, p. 43). This will be done by raising learners’ awareness to meaning of linking words within the context of discourse and to the syntactical structure of sentences that make a unified text, namely endophoric or textual reference which can be subdivided into anaphora (reference to a preceding entity) and cataphora (reference to a following entity) (Yule, 1979), and exophoric referents: situational reference that does not name anything but points that reference must be constructed in the context of the situation (Yule, 1979). Besides, the research attempts to find a link between the writing skills of learners when they learn referential devices and their ability to
connect their ideas and to express them efficiently and at ease. This can result in having better understanding of the texts that they encounter during their daily studies or during their tests.

**Research Questions**

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. Can endophoric and exophoric awareness influence the reading comprehension of EFL learners?
2. Can endophoric and exophoric awareness influence the writing structure (production level of learning a foreign language) of EFL learners?
3. Does instruction on referents boost learners’ awareness on the linguistic function of endophoric and exphoric relations?

**Hypotheses**

Based on the research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated.

1. Students who are aware of endophoric and exophoric relations are likely to achieve better results in decoding a text than are their peers who receive no referential instruction.
2. Students who receive referential instruction will perform better in writing than their peers who receive no similar instruction.
3. Students who learn endophoric exophoric relations become aware of referents and their function.
4. 

**Definition of Key Terms**

The following terminology is used in the study:

1. Anaphora: the use of a word referring back to a word used earlier in a text or conversation, to avoid repetition, for example the pronouns he, she, it, and they and the verb do in I like it and so do they (Yule, 1979).
2. Antecedent: an expression (word, phrase, clause, etc.) that gives its meaning to a pro-form (pronoun, pro-verb, pro-adverb, etc.). A proform takes its meaning from its antecedent, e.g. Susan arrived late because traffic held her up (Merriam-Webster, 2011).
3. Cataphora: a word or phrase (as a pronoun) that takes its reference from a following word or phrase (Yule, 1979).
4. Decoding: Decoding is the ability to apply knowledge of words to correctly understand ideas (Merriam-Webster, 2011).
5. EFL: English as a foreign language where English is studied by nonnative speakers living in a non-English-speaking environment (Curran, 1976). The EFL classroom is specifically catered to learners of a common native language and culture (Bell, 2011).
6. Endophoria: textual reference which can be subdivided into anaphora (reference to a preceding entity) and cataphora (reference to a following entity) (Yule, 1979).
7. Exophora: situational reference that does not name anything but points that reference must be constructed in the context of the situation (Yule, 1979).
8. Syntactic relations: grammatical relations that refer to functional relationships between constituents in a sentence (Lyons, 1977).
Literature Review
Text and Cohesion

Though linguists have different opinions about what makes a good text, they do agree that any written or spoken message is considered a text. Therefore, in linguistics, text refers to any spoken or written passage that form a unified whole (Ionell, 2011). In other words, sentences that are related to each other and that carry within them a semantic relation are considered a text. As Halliday and Hasan (1976) clarify before that a "text is best regarded as a semantic unit: a unit not of form but of meaning" (p. 2). A text is not defined by its size; for it can be short or long as long as it provides a purposeful message. Cook (2001) puts it as such “discourse is language used for communication” (p. 6). According to Anderson & Anderson (1997), “a text is created by putting words together to communicate meaning. The choice of words will depend on the purpose and context in creating a text” (p.7).

This idea was expressed fully by Halliday and Hasan (1976) who considered that a “text is a term used in linguistics to refer to any passage- spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole.” (p. 1). Since a text forms a unified whole, it is a representation of semantic and syntactic connected elements. Accordingly, comprehending a text or decoding one and producing a text or encoding one demands skills in perceiving the semantic and syntactic relations which hold this text together. According to Nash-Webber (1977), to understand a text one must delve into the connective devices that hold a text together since comprehending single sentences are absurd in creating a well comprehended message in language.

Richards & Schmidt (2002) explain that this relationship of text components may be found in separate sentences or within the elements of the same sentence. Moreover, Malmkjær (2004) states that “linguistic items connected to each other must follow certain grammatical rules and specific sequence in order to be meaningful and to create cohesion” (p. 543). Brown and Yule (1989) summed up the function of cohesion in a text as the inter relation between sentences that make those sentences meaningful and purposeful (p.191). The interrelation between sentences may be attained through the usage of certain linguistic elements which indicate the relation between different propositions in the text to generate cohesion. For Brown and Yule (1983, p. 191) text cohesive relationships are made “where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another.” However, discourse coherence relates more to the ‘sense’ a reader makes of a text in semantic terms and whether it displays overall unity. Shiro (1994) clarifies that determining if a text is coherent or not results “to a large extent from the reader’s ability to infer the relations beyond sentence level that keep the text together” (p.34).

Therefore, text and cohesion are interrelated terms in which one indicates the presence of the other and in order to have cohesion in the text many elements should be available on sentence and text level and on the receiver level. The reader, who is the receiver, will receive the message and will determine the degree of connectivity from the clarity of the message behind the language in use. This draws to linguists’ attention the role of reference in determining a meaningful text.

Reference
Brown and Yule (1989) refer to the linguistic elements that make interrelation between sentences as cohesive markers and they specify reference, substitution, ellipsis, lexical
relationships, and explicit markers of conjunctive relations as different types of cohesive markers. The importance of reference for linguists lies in the fact that referential devices can have an impact on understanding a text and on a learner’s ability to write a meaningful one. Moreover, Halliday and Hasan (1976) present reference as one of the four grammatical devices that can give cohesion in a text besides lexical cohesion. Goldman and Wiley (2004) define reference, as “the existence of specific thing which is turned to” (p.17), and the term reference as explained by Lyons (1977)

‘is the relationship between an expression and what the expression refers to in a specific occurrence of its verbal or written communication; it is the concept which reconciles between the word or expression and the referent, and the term referent stands for any object or situation in the outer world that is recognized through an expression or a word” (p.76).

The linguistic items that are found in any language and have the tendency of relating sentences or texts are not semantically interpreted for their own meaning, but they are used to make a reference for an item, and they are studied for their function in the sentence. These items are instructions that indicate the presence of information that should be gotten back from the text or even the context (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).

In grammatical analysis, Crystal (2003) mentions that reference is "a term often used to state a relationship of identity which exists between grammatical units, e.g. a pronoun refers to a noun or noun phrase" (p.407). Thompson (2004) states that "reference is the set of grammatical resources that allow the speaker to indicate whether something is being repeated from somewhere earlier in the text (i.e. we have already been told about it), or whether it has not yet appeared in the text (i.e. it is known to us)” ( p.180). Reference is the relationship between persons, things, and positions and they are indicated mostly by the nominal group or the adverbial group and their other appearances as personals, demonstratives or comparatives at different positions in the text.

The Linguistic Function of References

Brown and Yule (1983) elucidate the real function of reference as “an action on the part of the speaker or the writer in any discourse or any text” (p.27). The reference describes what the discourse marker is doing “not the relationship which exists between one sentence or proposition and another” (p. 27-8). McCarthy (1991) affirms that the concept of discourse segments as “functional units, rather than concentrating on sentences…and to see the writer/speaker as faced with a number of strategic choices as to how to relate segments to one another and how to present them to the receiver” (p, 37). Reference items can refer to segments of discourse or entire circumstances rather than to any particular entity in that situation. Fox (1987) declares that successful reference can be established through the use of pronouns for example if the referent is “in focus, in consciousness, textually evoked or high in topicality” and where it “can be operationally defined in terms of the discourse structure” (p.139-40).

According to Thompson (2004) and to Halliday and Hasan (1976), the two general categories of reference are exophora and endophora. To point outwards the text is known as exophoric reference which presents the language pinpointing to the external context. Whereas to point inward the text is known as endophoric reference which links the message to its textual context; it contains the meaning that is repetitive in the text. These cohesive endophoric references are divided into two parts: anaphora and cataphora. Anaphoric reference is pointing backwards in the text, and this type is used more frequently. The cataphoric reference is less commonly used
when compared with the anaphoric reference because it points forward to the text which means that the referent is not mentioned yet and the speaker or the writer will specify it later.

Exophoric and endophoric reference include a system of instruction to retrieve important information that helps in explaining the set of words in a discourse and gives cohesion to a text (Halliday and Hasan 1976). Martin (1992) believes that the identity of the exophoric reference unit is realized from the environment outside the text. However, the endophora reference identity will be discovered from the text itself; this referential meaning retrieved from references is what makes them cohesive elements. When the same linguistic element is used references will give coherence; however, the reference element, if not pinpointing any item in the text, will be meaningless. Therefore, it is quite essential for every referential item to have a presupposition to convey a meaningful sense (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), situational reference is preceding any type of reference to the text. This is because situational reference can have historical priority or can include logical sense, so it is plausible to have situational reference preceding text reference. "In this perspective, situational reference would appear as a prior form" (p.32). Halliday & Hasan (1991) associate exophora with context of situation because it is non-verbal and is not presented in the text and associate endophora with text because it is verbal and situated within the text.

**Exophora**

As it was clarified above, reference has two major categories, exophora and endophora. Starting with exophora, “it is a term used by some linguists to refer to the process or result of a linguistic unit referring directly (i.e. deictically) to the extralinguistic situation accompanying an utterance, e.g. *there, that, her,*” (Crystal, 2003 p. 178). It is a situational group of reference mainly associated with the context of the speech, conversation, letter…etc. Its referent may be anything...
related to the outside world of the text that can be directly seen, or that is clearly known by the speaker/writer and the receiver.

**Endophora**

The second major category of references is endophora. It is considered a textual reference which connects main parts of the text together. Endophora as explained by Halliday and Hasan (1976) is the umbrella term that encompasses anaphora and cataphora. Endophora is characterized as having antecedent "within the text" (p.33). However, this term is not widely used and it is more common to use anaphora to include both terms of endophora: anaphora and cataphora (Huddleston and Pullum 2002). They explain that "anaphora is the relation between an anaphor and antecedent, where the interpretation of the anaphor is determined via that of the antecedent and the antecedent should be a segment of the text from which the anaphor derives its interpretation” (p.1453).

Crystal (2003) also divides endophoric relations into anaphoric and cataphoric types. Their major role of endophoric relations is to “relate referents to their references within a text and to make different parts of the text connected by their ability to retrieve the referential meaning or the identity of the references mentioned within the text” (p.169).

In linguistic studies, more attention is given to endophoric relations in its sub-divisions than to exophoric ones due to its essential influence on creating text cohesion (Halliday and Hasan 1976).

**Anaphora**

Anaphora is one type of endophoric reference which is pointing backward towards a concept or word presented in a previous sentence (Crystal, 2003). Anaphora is co reference of one expression with its antecedent. The antecedent provides the information necessary for the expression’s interpretation. This is often understood as an expression “referring” back to the antecedent. The etymology of anaphora, as presented in dictionary.com, comes from Greek ana- to bring back, repeat and –phora akin to pherein to carry, bring. Thus, anaphoric references remind the reader of information previously read, and according to Halliday and Hasan (1976), “anaphora is the simplest way of referring back in the text and keeping the identity of the particular thing or class of things being referred to” (p.54).

**Cataphora**

Most linguists use the term anaphor to indicate both anaphora and cataphora because both are considered references to certain linguistic items in the text. Moreover, both have the phoric tendency of relating references and satisfying presuppositions. Thus, both groups have cohesive property. However, cataphora and anaphora are not the same in the direction of reference; for whereas anaphora refers backward, cataphora refers forward. As Crystal (2003) puts it "cataphora is a term used by some grammarians for the process or result of a linguistic unit referring forward to another unit” (p.68). If an anaphora refers back to something previously mentioned, a cataphora refers to something not yet mentioned as in this example:

Because *she* studied really hard, *Sara* aced her test.
Therefore, the first thing to detect here is that the pronoun comes first. That is what distinguishes an anaphor from a cataphor. Actually, cataphors are sometimes called “backward anaphors” because of the direction of reference within the sentence or utterance. So, an anaphor looks back (up) for the noun that it refers to, while a cataphor looks down (ahead).

Effect of Exophoric and Endophoric Referents on Reading Skills

According to Miller (1982), a reader has to construct semantic representation of a given text by applying parsing to the sentences to be able to understand the text. In other words, the reader has to put the meaning of individual sentences together to understand the general meaning of the whole discourse. This process of capturing the whole meaning of a discourse by putting together all the individual semantic representations is called integration. Clark and Haviland (1977) reveal that there is a distinction between given and new information between the speaker and the hearer; the given information is the knowledge which the speaker believes that the listener knows and accepts as true, while the new information is the knowledge which the speaker believes that the receiver does not know. According to them, integration of the information in a discourse occurs in three stages: computing the new and given information, memory searching for antecedent for the given information, and then adding new information to memory. In the example, the beer was warm, the reader will isolate the given information from the new and then start searching in the memory for antecedent of the beer. “If the reader does not find the information in the memory, bridging between what is found in the memory and the given information will take place as in Horace got some picnic supplies out of the car. The beer was warm. It is easier after reading the paired sentences to comprehend The beer was warm if it is preceded by Horace got some beer out of the car than Horace got some picnic supplies out of the car because bridging takes time” (Clark and Haviland 1977, p.21). Besides, separating the old and the new information is not an easy task even though there are many linguistic devises which can help to determine such types of information as the definite determiner "the" which precedes a noun phrase and makes it definite; however, this does not happen all the times. Another way to discover old from new information in simple declarative sentences is to simply answer wh-questions as "who", "what", and "what happened", so the most obvious answers for Olivia kissed Oscar are either Olivia kissed someone, Olivia did something or Something happened. "In brief, to determine the given information for it was Olivia who kissed Oscar, replace the Wh-word in the question who kissed Oscar with X: to determine the new information, find the answer assigns to that X" (p.8). The main difficulty for a reader is more than specifying new from given information; it is integrating these two types. Recent researches on language comprehension indicate text is first stored in the short-term memory and then integrated clause by clause to the long term memory. When the discourse takes short time in the short memory, the reader grasps it easier.

Therefore, Miller (1982) states that information can be moved to the long term memory when an antecedent is found to connect given and new information. Thus, it is for welfare of the reader to make this classification quickly and it is better for the writer to make it easy for the reader to do so. From this point, considering pronouns as linguistic devices which achieve cohesion would help the readers to facilitate connecting information. This can happen by simple matching to find the antecedent of a reoccurring noun phrase while in a more complex syntax; however, any kind of mechanism could be used to determine nominees of the pronouns. The writer may use anaphoric pronouns instead of repeated noun phrases not only for stylistic variation, but mainly for
establishing integration. This is because nominalized noun phrases may introduce participants, things, phenomena…etc but cannot serve anaphorically as pronouns. It would be reasonable for a listener to try linguistically to attach information in a pronominalized clause with previous text content instantly while applying less integration with a repeated noun phrase. Thus, readers and writers may prefer pronouns over repeated noun phrases because they facilitate integration. Pronouns tell the readers when to integrate Meanwhile noun phrases do not function like that. Therefore, the integration should occur directly after a pronoun is encountered. This happens with anaphora while with cataphora this integration between the pronoun and the antecedent should be delayed until more information is gathered to decide if the pronoun refers to this antecedent or to another.

In the light of the above, words or phrases are linked to other words or phrases in connected sentences by the use of cohesive ties. A pronoun which is an anaphoric element is used as a word that refers back to another word or words. These words which are considered as cohesive links in texts facilitate comprehension and reading. These elements help in comprehending the messages of the producer to enhance the communicative function of the used language. In the mind of the receiver of the discourse, A text is coherent and all the pronouns used in it should refer back to certain noun phrases, so the main role of the reader is to determine what the pronoun stands for because this facilitates in comprehending the piece of discourse (Brown & Yule, 1983).

When pronouns are considered from linguistic point of view, they will be examples of expressions used to refer to stated entities. Therefore, the antecedent-anaphor relation is structured between a full nominal expression and its pronominal expression. (Brown & Yule, 1983).

**Effect of Exophoric And Endophoric Referents On Writing Skills**

According to Bartlett (1984) any interpretation of a written text requires the reader to keep track of the new information; moreover the reader has to construct characters, objects, and events in organized mental representations that aid in identifying new and old information. Using clear linguistic devices to connect the text together makes the decoding and encoding process less demanding on the reader's side since it eliminates ambiguity hovering around the text. It is the actual wording of the text which makes the language easy or difficult for the readers to depict the right connections. The writer makes choices according to how to stage the information where to start in presenting the message according to McCarthy (1991). The real problem that young writers encounter is their lack of knowledge of how anaphoric and non-anaphoric devices function in specific contexts and the role of the referential language in text structure (Bartlett, 1984). Many writers are unaware that the English language is the richest in anaphoric devices as pronouns, definite articles, demonstratives and lexical repetitions (Halliday and Hasan 1976). Thus, understanding a certain text is highly influenced by understanding the referents in a certain context. When referents of the same gender are found in the same context, the choice of same gender pronouns (referents) can be confusing. In the example, one day two girls set out for the park. She had a bike, she can refer to any of the girls.

Another factor that should be considered is the complexity of the text separating between the anaphora or cataphora and its last proposed referent (Clancy, 1980).
Writers' choice of words is mainly influenced by the writer's knowledge of discourse rules as anaphoric and non-anaphoric pronouns and definite articles and readers' biases in their interpretations. As Clancy (1980) mentions pronouns replace nouns for subject referents and when the subject is changed maintaining the pronoun is no longer possible. Therefore, adult anaphoric language choice is multifunctional, so writers should provide readers with signals to indicate point of view, thematic organization, and text structure. Moreover, skilled writers should include varied referencing devices based on referential context and thematic orientation to produce more coherent writing. In a word, using inappropriate linguistic referents, anaphora and cataphora, without taking into consideration contextual features as number, age and gender of interacting characters may hinder clarity and trigger ambiguity in the text; such ambiguity is rendered as weakness in writing (Bartlett & Scribner, 1982).

Methodology of the Research

Research Design

The research is an experimental study where “a relationship is studied in the first way, starting from the cause to establish the effects” (Kumar, 2005, p. 100). The impact of instructing exophoric and endophoric referents, and the effects on reading and writing on English major students at the Lebanese University, fifth branch, is investigated.

Subjects

The subjects of the study are sixty undergraduates enrolled in first year of BA program in English Language and Literature at the Lebanese University. The researcher divided the subjects to two groups: experimental benefiting from referents instruction, and control group not exposed to the treatment period. The study took place in the fall semester of academic year 2016-2017. It started on November 14, 2016 and ended on March 28, 2017.

Instruments

The study is conducted by using pretest, posttest, and a questionnaire. Comprehension pretest (Appendix A) and writing pretest (Appendix B) are specially prepared to test the subjects’ ability to understand and use endophora and exophora referents. The sentences and paragraphs are selected to reflect the different types and functions of references. The questions are designed to test participants' ability to comprehend or to utilize pronouns. This is because there are no special tests formulated to test participants' ability to connect endophoric and exophoric referents in recognition level (comprehension) and production (writing). Also in the writing pretest, all the material is used from SAT questions and from Halliday and Hasan (1976) examples about different types of references. A likert scale questionnaire is prepared to measure the subjects' awareness of endophoric and exophoric relation in general, and their presence in the text.
**Procedure**

The procedure of the study is summarized in figure 2.

![Study Design Diagram](image)

**Figure 2 Study Design**

The data designed by this research were submitted to a t-test and the most recent version of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version.

**Results and Discussions**

A T test was conducted between the experimental and control groups’ comprehension pretests and posttests:

![Comprehension Test Means](image)

**Figure 3 Comprehension Test Means**

Figure 3 shows that the mean of the comprehension pre test is similar between the control and the experimental group; the experimental group received instruction on exophoric and endophoric
relations in the treatment period while the control group did not. In order to investigate the effect of referents’ instruction on student’s comprehension achievement the same test was conducted to both groups after the treatment period. The means of both groups were compared and a paired t-test, using SPSS, was applied. The mean scores are statistically compared to see if the difference between means is statistically significant. The p-value was calculated then compared to the alpha level “α-level”, which is 0.05 in educational research studies. When p< α, the difference is statistically significant. Hence, there is difference between the results of the pre test and the post test (0.00<0.05) for the experimental group, while there is no significant difference in the results of the pre and the post tests for the control group that did not receive instruction on referents. Thus, it can be inferred that instruction on referents has a positive effect on students’ comprehension level, which affirms hypothesis one stating that students who are aware of endophoric and exophoric relations are likely to achieve better results in decoding a text than are their peers who receive no referential instruction.

A T test was conducted between the experimental and control groups’ writing pre-tests and post tests

![Writing Test Means](image)

**Figure 4 Writing Means (pre & post)**

Figure 4 shows that the mean of the writing pretest is similar between the control and the experimental group; the experimental group received instruction on exophoric and endophoric relations in the treatment period while the control group did not. In order to investigate the effect of referents’ instruction on student’s writing achievement the same test was conducted to both groups after the treatment period. The mean scores are statistically compared to see if the difference between means is statistically significant. The p-value was calculated then compared to the alpha level “α-level”, which is 0.05 in educational research studies. When p< α, the difference is statistically significant. Hence, there is difference between the results of the pre test and the post test.
test (0.01 < 0.05) in the writing post test of the experimental group. Consequently, it can be inferred that students who receive referential instruction will perform better in writing than their peers who receive no similar instruction.

In order to test hypothesis 3 stating that Students who learn endophoric exophoric relations become aware of referents and their function, a Lickert scale questionnaire was passed to the experimental group to compute the extent of the participants’ agreement.

Figure 5 reveals that 55% of the surveyed participants strongly agree, 33% agree, 5% are neutral, 4% disagree, and 3% strongly agree on the items presented in the questionnaire. It is noteworthy to mention that responses of strongly agree represent full awareness on the importance of referents’ linguistic function; therefore, 55% which comprises more than half the sample became fully aware of the linguistic function of exophoric and endophoric referents after the instruction period, and since 33% agree which means that 88% of the sample had sharpened awareness on the linguistic function of exophoric and endophoric relations after they were exposed to the treatment period. In a word, hypothesis 3, stating that students who learn endophoric exophoric relations become aware of referents and their function, is also accepted.

Conclusion
In an aim to investigate the impact of exophoric and endophoric instruction on the comprehension (decoding) skills, writing (encoding skills), and linguistic awareness of sixty English major students enrolled in their first year at the Lebanese University, fifth branch, the study was conducted over a period of fifteen weeks. The experimental group benefited from instruction on exophoric and endophoric relations while the control group did not have the opportunity to study referents in the designated period of the research.
In the light of the above, the study confirmed that there is a positive correlation between instruction of exophoric and endophoric relations and learners’ performance on comprehension exams. The exophoric and endophoric relations aid in comprehending a given piece of information in discourse since the reader learns to apply parsing and mapping to sentences and paragraphs (Clark & Haviland 1977). Learning about endophoric and exophoric relations aid in drawing distinction between what the speaker believes that the listener knows and accepts as true and the new information which the speaker believes that the receiver does not know. Accordingly, referents are linguistic devices which achieve cohesion and help readers connect information. Furthermore, anaphoric words are considered as cohesive links in texts that facilitate comprehension and reading. These elements help in comprehending the messages of the producer to enhance the communicative function of the used language (Brown & Yule, 1983).

Moreover, the study reveals that learners who were exposed to instruction on endophoric and exophoric relations performed better in the writing part of the post test. This may be justified by the fact that any interpretation of a written text requires from the reader to keep track of the new information by constructing characters, objects; the writers may make this process less demanding on the reader’s side if their language uses clear linguistic devices to connect the text together. The real problem that young writers encounter is their lack of knowledge of how anaphoric and non-anaphoric devices function in specific contexts and the role of the referential language in text structure (Bartlett, 1984). For Clancy (1980), anaphoric language choice is multifunctional, so writers should provide readers with signals to indicate point of view, thematic organization, and text structure. Moreover, if skilled writers include varied referencing devices, their writings become more coherent. If anaphoric devices are not employed in a proper manner, ambiguity prevails the text. Therefore, instruction on endophoric and exophoric referents does have a positive influence on the writing structure of EFL learners.

Eventually, the study reveals that the experimental group that benefited from instruction in exophoric and endophoric relations became aware of the linguistic functions of those referents. 88% of the surveyed sample tended to agree that endophoric and exophoric relations make reading and writing tasks easier; in addition, vague referents make a text incomprehensible which sheds light on the linguistic function of referents in decoding a text; besides, referents give cohesion to a text, and learning about referents contributes in organizing ideas in writing and help in improving sentence structure.

In the light of the above, instruction on exophoric and endophoric referents seems to improve the comprehension and writing skills of EFL learners and to raise their awareness on the linguistic function of those referents.

**Recommendations**

Teachers need to pursue certain steps to maximize learners’ benefit from pragmatic referents which enhance learners’ communicative skills when decoding or encoding a text. In this realm, educators can bring into light the linguistic function of referents and their relation with the pre- and post-linguistic structures. Moreover, they can convey how words tend to change meaning when they occur in different contexts, and the impact of pre-existing knowledge of referents on changing the meaning of a text through sharing students’ writings and highlighting mistakes in referents. On the other hand, EFL and ESL learners should participate in tasks that portray how
vague referents can produce ambiguous writing and incomprehensible passages as ambiguous newspaper titles and word puns caused by vague referents. Moreover, to optimize learners’ benefit from referents’ instruction, curriculum designers must take into consideration designing materials that help students develop pragmatic skills, particularly in relation to referents that aid them in decoding a text and better understand it, and in producing or encoding a well-organized consistent and coherent passages with appropriate referents.

Eventually, evidence gained from this study on the positive impact of exophoric and endophoric referents on reading and writing skills of EFL learners is intended to contribute to the vast legacy of knowledge with implications for further researches. More studies are still required to approach a larger sample of Arab students concerning the way they use ambiguous referents and the way they misinterpret existing referents.

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References


Presupposition: A Semantic or Pragmatic Phenomenon?

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Abstract
There has been debate among linguists with regards to the semantic view and the pragmatic view of presupposition. Some scholars believe that presupposition is purely semantic and others believe that it is purely pragmatic. The present paper contributes to the ongoing debate and exposes the different ways presupposition was approached by linguists. The paper also tries to attend to (i) what semantics is and what pragmatics is in a unified theory of meaning and (ii) the possibility to outline a semantic account of presupposition without having recourse to pragmatics and vice versa. The paper advocates Gazdar’s analysis, a pragmatic analysis, as the safest grounds on which a working grammar of presupposition could be outlined. It shows how semantic accounts are inadequate to deal with the projection problem. Finally, the paper states explicitly that the increasingly puzzling theoretical status of presupposition seems to confirm the philosophical contention that not any fact can be translated into words.

Key words: entailment, pragmatics, presupposition, projection problem, semantic theory

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I. Introduction

The nature of presupposition has been the subject of serious debate since early seventies. Attention was paid to presupposition mainly because of two reasons. The notion of presupposition involves the specification of the concepts of truth, falsity and logical form. Discussions of presupposition also broach a theory of meaning underlying the concept of logical form and extending well beyond it. Linguists, however, have used the notion “presupposition” in multitudinous ways. This could be explained by the fact that the use of the term “presupposition” is conditioned by the framework in which it is explicated. Put differently, specifying whether presupposition is a semantic or a pragmatic notion is a necessary assumption on which a grammar of presupposition could be outlined. This unfortunate, inconsistent use of the notion raises different, though related, questions: what is pragmatic and what is semantic in a unified theory of meaning – if there is one? Is it possible to outline a semantic account of presupposition without recourse to pragmatics and vice versa? Is it possible to do either semantics or pragmatics without drawing on philosophy?

Given these facts, this paper is in no sense intended as a full exegesis of the notion “presupposition”. It will expose the ways pragmaticists and semanticists approached presupposition and will argue that presupposition is a pragmatic rather than semantic phenomenon. To this end, this paper will raise “the projection problem for presupposition” and show that semantic accounts are inadequate to solve it. For one thing, the success of any theory of presupposition is measured against how much of the projection problem it can solve.

II. Semantic Presupposition

One of the conditions a semantic theory can fulfill is to characterize and explain the systematic relations between words and between sentences. Semantic presupposition is held to be a relation between sentences. It is often defined by reference to entailment along the following lines. Entailment is a relation between two sentences wherein the truth of the second necessarily follows from the first. One cannot assert the truth of one and deny that of the other. To put it another way, $S_1$ semantically entails $S_2$ if and only if in every situation which makes $S_1$ true, makes $S_2$ true as well. However, if $S_2$ is false $S_1$ must be false. On the other hand, $S_1$ semantically presupposes $S_2$ if and only if in all situations in which $S_1$ is true, $S_2$ is true, and in all situations where $S_1$ is false, $S_2$ is true (Lyons, 1977). Negation is a useful test to draw the distinction between entailment and presupposition (Kempson, 1975, Levinson, 1983). Consider (1),

(1) Bill managed to come on time
(2) Bill came on time
(3) Bill tried to come on time

Should we negate (1), as in (4), we will not be able to infer (2). Even so, the inference in (3) is preserved, and, thus, is shared by both (1) and its negation (4).

(4) Bill did not manage to come on time

In this sense (3) is a semantic presupposition of both (1) and (4). Examples (1-4) reveal that whenever (1) is true, (2) must be true; but when (4) is true (2) need not be true. That is, (1) entails (2) but (4) does not. This implies that negation changes sentences’ entailments but leaves presuppositions as they are.
Central to semantic presupposition is what Kempson (1977) calls “presuppositional logic” or three-valued logic. It has been suggested (e.g. Fodor (1979)) that the logic on which semantic representations of sentences is based is not two-valued (true and false). Rather, it allows for a third possibility: neither true nor false (truth valueless). By way of illustration, a sentence like (5)

(5) The Bishop of Morocco is wise

is true if there is a Bishop of Morocco. Should not such a person exist, the question whether the sentence is true or false simply does not arise. We, therefore, do not assign any truth value to (5). This is the type of argument Strawson (1950) advanced against Russell’s claim that sentences like (5) are false. Strawson maintains that the implication that the individual in question exists is a background assumption against which the assertion makes sense.

Thus far, two features characterizing semantic presupposition have been specified. On the one hand, it is identified in the light of the logical form of the sentence. Taken together with the fact that semantics deals with systematic relations between linguistic units (words and sentences), these two characteristics imply that presupposition is a stable, invariant notion. Unfortunately, this is not the case. That is, the behavior of presupposition, as an inference, is marked by variability. Further logical definitions cannot capture presupposition in all the sentences of a natural language.

The explanation of the first claim is subsumed under the rubric of the projection problem for presupposition (will be attended to much later). A semantic theory of presupposition will wrongly predict that (6) and (7) share the same presupposition. In fact, only (6) presupposes (8).

(6) If John has a car, he won’t regret working far away from home.
(7) If John works far away from home, he won’t regret doing so.
(8) John works far away from home.

A second objection to semantic presupposition can be seen along the following lines. It is widely accepted that what we wish to recognize as presuppositions does not lie in their logical properties. For one thing, a logically true sentence like (9) would be judged as being somehow extraordinary.

(9) Either devils exist or they do not exist.

Moreover, a logical account of presupposition is unable to cater for presuppositions of speech acts other than assertion. The logical definition in (10) does not extend to a sentence like (11) which carries the presupposition that the addressee used to smoke for some time.

(10) A >> B if and only if A |= & ~ A |= B
(11) When did you stop smoking?

Without belabouring the point, it is clear that no semantic theory of presupposition could be viable since semantics concerns itself with the characterization of stable meanings associated with linguistic expressions. Presupposition, as will be illustrated, is not a stable phenomenon and “does not belong to any orderly semantics”, (Levinson 1983, p. 142). This could be seen by investigating “the projection problem”, a characteristic which distinguishes presupposition from entailment.
III. The Projection Problem for Presupposition

The projection problem for presupposition is the problem of explaining “how the presuppositions and assertions of a complex sentence are related to the presuppositions and assertions of the clauses it contains” (Langendoen & Savin 1971, p. 55). That is, the problem is posed by the fact that when a clause carrying a presupposition is embedded in a larger sentential structure, then sometimes the whole subordinate sentence maintains the “basic” presupposition. Sometimes the presupposition is weakened in such a way that it survives as a suggestion. And sometimes it disappears all together. By way of example, consider the simple clause in (12) and see how its presupposition “John used to play the lottery” varies in strength when the clause is embedded in another matrix sentence.

(12) John has stopped smoking
(a) Mary knows that John has stopped smoking
(b) This entails that John used to smoke
(c) If John has stopped smoking, Mary will be pleased
(d) Maybe John has stopped smoking
(e) If John used to smoke, he has stopped smoking
(f) If John has stopped smoking, he used to smoke.

It is clear that the projection of presupposition in the examples above is not systematic. The presupposition of (12) is preserved in (a) and (b), weakened to some extent in (c) and (d), and there is no trace of it in (e) and (f). Why is this so?

One way to get around this problem is to posit that the function of presupposition-triggers varies according to the structure of, and the words contained in, the sentence where they occur. Presupposition-triggers are lexical items which help us spot the source of presupposition. They are words which, because of their inherent semantic nature, implicate certain propositions that we call presuppositions. The source of presupposition in (1), for instance, is the verb “manage”. (1) does not contain anything which would prevent us from making the inference in (3). This is not the case for (12), where the trigger “has stopped” does not function in (c-f). The presupposition is suspended because (12) is embedded in a conditional construction in (c), (e) and (f), and it is weakened to a noticeable degree in (d) because (12) is “qualified” by the word “maybe”.

Another case in point is the way the trigger “again” in (13) ceases to function. (13) entails, inter alia, (14) and presupposes (15) because of the iterative adverbial “again”.

(13) The two banks were robbed again last night
(14) A bank was robbed again last night
(15) The two banks were robbed before.

Should (13) occur as the antecedent of a conditional as in (16), the entailment (14) disappears, but the presupposition (15) is “inherited” by the matrix sentence.

(16) If the two banks were robbed again, their managers will lose their jobs.

The presupposition (15), however, vanishes under disjunctive expressions as (17) illustrates.
(17) Either the two banks were robbed again or the tillers were expelled by the Managers.

Another factor which can circumvent the function of presupposition-triggers is of a pragmatic nature. Triggers operate according to the assumption (s) of the speaker and the context where the utterance takes place. As (12) above illustrates, if one asserts that X stopped doing, then one presupposes that X had been doing it. However, under negation: X as not stopped doing presupposes either X continues doing or X never started doing. Under the second analysis the presupposition disappears once again.

With regard to the projection problem, Lagendeon & Savin (1975, p. 57) claim that “compound sentences inherit all of the presuppositions of their constituent clauses”. That this prediction is erroneous is demonstrated by the counterexamples in (12 – 17). This remark is sufficient to prove that their semantic account of presupposition has no explanatory value.

So far, our discussion has been driving at two conclusions. On the one hand, the now-you-see-it-now-you-don’t behavior of presupposition strongly suggests that this phenomenon cannot be accounted for within a framework concerned with the stable semantic properties of linguistic expressions. Put differently, any theory which treats presupposition on truth-conditional or logical grounds is doomed to inadequacy. On the other hand, the assorted projection problem turns out to be the “genuine” feature which distinguishes presupposition from other systematic relations holding between linguistic units. Therefore, a pragmatic account is essential to a “correct” theory of presupposition.

IV. Pragmatic presupposition

In the definition of pragmatic presupposition put forward by linguists, attention was paid to the speaker, the context of utterance and the “knowledge” the conversants share. Stalnaker (1974), for example, offers the following definition:

A proposition B is a pragmatic presupposition of a speaker in a given context just in case the speaker assumes or believes that B, assumes or believes that his audience assumes or believes that B, and assumes or believes that his audience recognizes that he is making these assumptions or has these beliefs. (p. 200)

Stalnaker (1974) suggests that pragmatic presupposition is what is taken by the speaker to be the common ground of the participants in a conversation. This definition would reasonably account for the lack of truth value of sentences with false “presupposition”. Instead of viewing (18) - with the presupposition (19) – as neither true nor false, the advocates of pragmatic presupposition would say that it is inappropriate. That is, to utter a sentence whose presupposition is, and is known to be, untrue would be simply to produce an infelicitous utterance, rather than, as semanticists would have it, a truth-valueless sentence.

(18) The Bishop of Morocco does not drink
(19) There is a Bishop of Morocco.
Though background knowledge is held to be an essential element in the utterance interpretation, we cannot do without the verbal discourse itself and the context of utterance. Background knowledge is to be taken into consideration together with the semantic representation of a sentence uttered at a particular context. More specifically, in sentence interpretation, the principle of pragmatic presupposition should supplement, rather than replace, the semantic representation (logical form). For one thing, pragmatics task is to explain the relation between ways of understanding utterances and the contexts in which they are uttered (Levinson 1983 p. 1-34). Pragmatic principles, Atlas (1979, p. 273) explains, “take as input the context and the logical form that renders the contextually determined meaning of an utterance”. By way of illustration, if I tell you that (18), there is no a priori reason for you to suppose that I am flouting Grice’s maxims, (Grice 1975). You will think of the negation as either predicate or sentential. Therefore, you are likely to use my sentential negation evidence to infer the supposition that the existence of the Bishop of Morocco is denied. To the extent this analysis is right an adequate account of presupposition should draw on both semantics and pragmatics.

Definitions of presupposition like Stalnaker’s do not solve the increasing puzzles of the notion. A correct conception of presupposition should be able to outline a grammar of presupposition which caters for the projection problem. Many attempts were made to fulfill this condition, but the theories proposed were beset with counterexamples (Katz, 1979). Nonetheless, the presupposition accounts of Karttunen and Peters (1979) and Gazdar (1979 a,b) are adequate to varying degrees. They both recognize that presupposition constitutes an aspect of meaning distinct from the kind of semantic content which is the subject matter of truth conditional semantics. The importance of their theories lies in the fact that they aimed at solving the projection problem. In what follows a brief overview of their approaches will be outlined along the following lines.

Karttunen and Peters (1979) isolate three kinds of presupposition without naming them ‘presuppositions”. Instead, they make use of Grice’s term “implicature”. They assume that what linguists and philosophers call “presupposition” is similar to the inference Grice identifies as “Implicature”’. Karttunen and Peters (1979) call particularized conversational implicature the counterfactual presupposition of subjunctive conditionals because the latter behaves exactly as we expect the former to behave. They classify the presupposition in (20) as separate from all the other presuppositions because (a) it is not present with all subjunctive sentences as (22) and (b) it does not exhibit the properties of projecting presuppositions to complex sentences as in (24)

(20) If it were snowing, the ground would be white
(21) It is not snowing
(22) If this man were welsh, he would speak exactly the way he does
(23) (Maybe) this man is German
(24) Bob realizes that Roger is here

The presupposition in (25), according to Karttunen and Peters (1979) is a conversational implicature since it is cancelable under sentential negation as (26) shows. They call the presupposition a generalized conversational implicature because the verb “criticize” cannot be used performatively to produce speech acts of the same kind that it can be used to report. To put it another way, the behavior of this lexical item is simply “an idiosyncracy”. The generation of this
implicature, that is, “is not dependant on particular characteristics peculiar to certain contexts of utterance” (p. 11)

(25) Bill criticised John for going out with his wife
(26) Bill did not criticise John for going out with his wife because John did not go out with Bill’s wife

Karttunen and Peters identify a third type of presupposition which they label as “conventional implicature”. Drawing on Grice’s theory, they maintain that the inferences in (28) are implicated -rather than asserted- by (21). These inferences are conventional implicatures in that they are evoked by the presence of the word “even”.

(27) Even Jill hates semantics
(28) a. Other people besides Jill hate semantics
    b. Of the people in question, Jill is the least likely to hate semantics.

Conventional implicatures cannot be suspended because of the contradiction in (29).

(29) Even Jill hates semantics, but no one else does.

It should be noted that Karttunen and Peters approach differs from other pragmatic accounts of presupposition, namely Stalnaker (1971), in that they make use of the notion of conversational implicatures without defining it in terms of “felicity” or “appropriate”. These terms themselves are too vague to be accepted as primitives of theory of meaning. Should Karttunen and Peters’ conception of presupposition be as has illustrated, how can they explicitly describe it?

Karttunen and Peters tried to assign their analysis a role to play in Montague’s grammar. The rationale behind this was partly to extend this grammar and partly to give their conception of presupposition its raison d’être. Before showing how this was done, a word about Montague’s grammar is in order. Montague’s semantics, Partee (1975) explains, derives its impetus from the principle of compositionality. That is, the meaning of complex constructions is determined by the meaning of their parts and the syntactic rule by which they are derived. Clauses are formed in a bottom-up, rather than top-down, fashion. While a sentence is generated, its semantic representations are built one after the other in parallel to the construction of its surface syntactic form. Montague (1974), Partee (1975) reports, treated only the truth-conditional aspect of meaning.

What is new in Karttunen and Peters’ proposal is that sentences are “made up” of two kinds of meaning; namely, extension expression, the meaning expressed by the sentence itself, and implicature expression (presupposition) which signifies what the sentence conventionally implicates. They posit that these expressions are listed in the lexicon with each phrase. To each phrase derived by a syntactic rule, the “two-tiered” semantic rule assigns an extension expression and an implicature expression as a function of the extension and implicature expressions of the phrases from which it is derived.
In their attempt to solve the projection problem, Karttunen and Peters propose that each presupposition is associated with a “heritage expression” which would govern its projection. Accordingly, they classified embedding constructions into “holes”, “plugs” and “filters”. The first class includes factive verbs (regret), aspectual verbs (begin) and implicatives. Holes let through all the presuppositions of their component sentence. The second class includes, inter alia, verbs of saying (ask, promise, warn). Plugs block the presuppositions of the whole complex sentence. They stop functioning when the complex sentence is used in the first person present tense or when the complement is an indirect question. The third class contains the expressions if, then, and, and either ... or. These filters block the presuppositions of one clause whenever, taken together with the context, certain complex conditions relating to the entailments of the other clause are met.

Nonetheless, this system of heritage expressions does not provide powerful means for deriving presuppositions in all sorts of English sentences. Let us consider a couple of counterexamples. Karttunen and Peters characterize negation as a hole because presuppositions survive sometimes under negation (especially internal (predicate) negation). (30) and (31) stand as clear counterexamples to their claim.

(30) I don’t know that Bob is a tutor
(31) I am not aware that her parents live in Morocco.

Plugs, as mentioned earlier, have the characteristic of blocking presuppositions. Consider the examples in (32-7).

(32) John claims that even Bill goes out with your wife
(33) The addressee has a wife
(34) Bill is the least likely person to go out with the addressee’s wife.
(35) The doctor did not tell me that my heart won’t function properly again
(36) The speaker had a heart!
(37) The speaker’s heart used to function properly before.

Intuitively, (32) presupposed (33) and, arguably, (34). (35) presupposes (36) and (37). This is not predicted by karttunen and Peters’ theory. Instead, it wrongly predicts that (32) and (35) do not have the presuppositions we have assigned to them, since “claim” and “tell” are both plugs and, thus, prevent the presuppositions of the complement from becoming presuppositions of the matrix sentence. We can conclude, then, that the plugs, holes, and filters theory of presuppositional projection is not valid in so far as it is unable to accommodate these counterexamples.

Karttunen and Peter’s theory of presupposition, Seuren (1985), Levinson (1983) and Gazdar (1979a,b) argue, does not differ in inflexibility from semantic theories of presupposition, though it differs from them in not including presupposition inferences in the truth conditions of sentences. In this connection, Gazdar (1979) maintains that

If [Karttunen and Peters’] theory made the correct predictions about the presuppositions of compound sentences of arbitrary complexity, then an unmotivated ambiguity of negation and an ad hoc taxonomy of Complementisable verbs would be a small price to pay. (p. 111)
Another attempt to build a grammar for presupposition is outlined in Gazdar (1979 a,b). His analysis hinges on two assumptions. On the one hand, a natural language, to Gazdar, consisted of two meaning expressions: sentences which are associated with potential presuppositions (what he calls “pre-suppositions”) and utterances which he associates with actual presuppositions. On the other hand, unlike Karttunen and Peters, Gazdar (1979) takes presuppositions to be cancelable. Worth nothing is that he uses “pre-suppositions” as a technical tool to specify actual presuppositions. He explains that “they are what the presuppositions would be if there was no ‘projection problem’, no ‘ambiguity’ in negative sentences and no context sensitivity” (1979 b, p. 124). Therefore, he does not attach any theoretical importance to ‘pre-suppositions’.

Gazdar’s (1979 b) approach assumes that a discourse context is a set of taken-for-granted propositions. When one speaks in a given context one “increments” this context by adding other propositions one intends to get across to one’s audience. This increment works in the following fashion: entailments are added first, followed by conversational implicatures and then presuppositions. He supplements this ordering by the proviso that a proposition may be added if it does not contradict with the propositions already established.

Gazdar’s position that presuppositions are cancellable is based on the assumption given above. By way of example, consider (38).

(38) John does not regret losing the game, because, in fact, he won.
(39) John lost the game.

Since the speaker knows that John did win the game, there is no chance for the pre-supposition (39) to be inherited by the complex sentence (38). Notice that the affirmative sentence corresponding to (38) - i.e. (40) - entails its factive complement which is not cancellable. This leads to the anomaly in (40).

(40)* John regrets having lost the game, because, in fact, he won.

Again, although (41) pre-supposes (42), it does not presuppose it everywhere, since in most contexts it is knows that there is no Bishop of Morocco.

(41) If there is a Bishop of Morocco, the Bishop of Morocco is not wise.
(42) There is a Bishop of Morocco

(43) It is consistent with all the speaker knows that there is not a Bishop of Morocco.

Given the definite description in the consequent, (41) potentially presupposed (42). However, this is cancelled by the implicature of the conditional construction in (43). For one thing, (43) will be added to the discourse domain, in the sense of Seuren (1985), before the pre-sup-position (42), and, thus, block this addition on grounds of inconsistency. The reader may have noticed that in Gazdar's model the order of sentence constituents is irrelevant in presupposition assignment and
cancellation. Following Karttunen and Peters, Gazdar assumes that any presupposition trigger has its own presupposition recorded in the lexicon or elsewhere.

On Strawson view of presupposition sentences like (44) are paradoxical, because they assert the denial of their own presuppositions. Under Gazdar’s analysis, however, (44) does pre-suppose that there is a Bishop of Morocco. There is no theoretically significant motivation to think of the logical form of (44) as different from that of (45)

(44) The Bishop of Morocco does not exist.
(45) The Bishop of Morocco does not drink.

Thus far, we have considered cases where the entailment or implicature of the sentence ‘suspend’, to borrow Gazdar’s term, one of its presuppositions. There are cases where the discoursal context itself cancels pre-supposition. The discourse (text) in (46), for instance, does not have (47) as presupposition.

(46) You say that someone in this room speaks four languages. Well, it could be. But it certainly isn’t Adrien who speaks four languages. And it certainly isn’t Kim…Therefore no one is this room speaks four languages.
(47) Someone in this room speaks four languages.

Because of the clefts constructions, the third, fourth and subsequent sentences (but not the last) pre-suppose that the speaker knows that (47). The first sentence, however, implicates that for all the speaker knows (47) is not the case. Once this sentence is added to the context, it automatically suspends the pre-supposition inferred from the subsequent cleft sentences.

Simpler instances of this case characterize sentences conjoined with “before” as (48) shows.

(48) The scientist died before he finished the experiment
(49) The scientist died
(50) The scientist finished the experiment
(51) Nobody does anything after death

Given a context containing (51) as real-world knowledge, (51) will suffice to cancel (50), a presupposition of (48).

Given this brief survey of Gazdar’s approach, one can safely take it that this theory has considerably reduced the puzzles posed by the behavior of presupposition. Though there are some counterexamples to this theory (we won’t go into these here), presupposition is predictable to a noticeable degree in his grammar. The explanatory value of Gazdar’s theory in connection with the projection problem manifests itself when we measure it against other pragmatic accounts of presupposition.

Other theories which also view presupposition as a multi-tiered phenomenon are put forward by Wilson and Sperber (1979) and Bickerton (1979). What is common between these two
proposals is that they both draw on the syntactic surface structure of sentences to account for presupposition behavior. Bickerton makes the strong claim that the source of presupposition is purely syntactic; whereas Wilson and Sperber resort to the syntactic surface structure of sentences after they have assigned to them semantic and pragmatic interpretations.

Wilson and Sperber (1979) propose that an adequate account of presupposition should be of a semantic-pragmatic nature. Their analysis hinges on the assumptions that any sentence is a set of ordered entailments. These entailments are ordered according to their “prominence”, in the light of the semantic, lexical and phonological properties of the sentence. The question which seems pertinent here is: how semantics, pragmatics and syntax interact?

Wilson and Sperber (1979) maintain that a semantic account will have to specify all the entailments of the sentence being described. They also noted that understanding an utterance involves establishing its relevance as intended by the speaker. Further they make use of Chomsky’s (1972) observation to suggest that for each of the entailments generated by semantics, there is a particular surface syntactic constituent to which it is linked by means of “variable substitution”. They call this kind of entailment “Grammatically Specified Entailment” or “Focal Range” (Wilson and Sperber 1979, p. 313). Applying this approach to (52), the focal range is provided in (53).

(52) She has stolen all my books
(53) a. She has stolen all someone’s books
   b. She has stolen all of something
   c. She has stolen something
   d. She has done something
   e. She has done something to all my books
   f. She had stolen some of my books
   g. She has stolen all of something of mine
   h. Someone has stolen all my books
   i. Something happened

The ordering given in (53) is pragmatically interpreted in terms of relevance. That is, the point of (52) - as an utterance- lies in the increment of information added to the background to obtain the elementary presupposition. The higher ordered entailments are the most relevant, and, thus, likely to contain the point of the utterance. Each proposition in the foreground is more relevant that the one below it. The point of (52), for instance, is not that she has stolen something, but exactly what it is that she has stolen (assuming, of course, that the focal range is all my books). The point of saying (52) is whatever information that has to be added to (53-a) to obtain (52).

Wilson and Sperber (1979) conclude that the mechanics of variable substitution brings with it a distinction between five groups of entailment which behave differently in pragmatic interpretation.

What Wilson and Spencer’s analysis aimed at is building semantic representations in such a way that pragmatic principles could mechanically operate on them. Unfortunately their “tidy” theory collapses when contextual and discoursal considerations are brought into play. It is widely
accepted that contextual assumption and modes of discourse suspend presuppositions. Accordingly, such a theory is likely to make the wrong predictions about what inferences participants make from sentences in context. Towards the end of their outline, Wilson and Spencer somehow felt that the way they have exploited entailment is likely to bring about the problems (especially the projection problem) semantic accounts of presupposition run into. However, they are not in a position to retreat to an account of presupposition in terms of conversation implicature. For one thing, they maintain that “the status of conversational implicature seems just as unclear as that of presuppositions themselves” (p. 301).

Bickerton (1979) tried to show that presuppositions presuppose because of the nature of syntax. He has used conjunction as a test to isolate three kinds of inference. He calls the first “strong entailment”. Given a pair of sentences A and B, where A strongly entails B, and-conjunction of A and B results in ungrammatical sentences irrespective of the order of conjuncts. By way of example, (54) strongly entails (55), which makes (56) an ill-formed construction.

(54) John managed to come on time
(55) John came on time
(56) *John came on time and he managed to come on time

The second inference Bickerton identifies is called “presupposition”: A presupposes B if the and-conjunction of A and B results in a grammatical sentence when A is the first conjunct, but not when B is the first conjunct as the examples in (57-60) show.

(57) Mary regretted that John could not come
(58) John could not come
(59) John could not come and Mary regretted that he could not come
(60) Mary regretted that John could not come and he could not come

The third inference Bickerton offers is “weak entailment”: A weakly entails B where but-conjunction yields well-formed sentences irrespective of the order of conjuncts, while and-conjunction yields well-formed sentences except for cases marked by “a presuppositional reading”. These characteristics are illustrated by (61), (62) and (63) respectively.

(61) John was trying to finish his essay, but he hadn’t finished it yet
(62) My books were stolen and it was Mary who stole them
(63) *It was Mary who stole my books and someone stole them

Bickerton’s finding reads as (64).

(64) If $S_1$ strongly entails $S_2$, $S_1$ may neither precede nor follow $S_2$; if $S_1$ presupposes $S_2$, $S_1$ may follow but not precede $S_2$; if $S_1$, weakly entails $S_2$, $S_1$ may either precede of follow $S_2$ (p. 246).

To supplement his analysis, Bickerton broaches the extra-linguistic factors that are brought to bear on sentence interpretation. However, he does not describe how these factors fit in his framework.
nor does he specify the contexts where the inferences he has identified can and cannot survive. Therefore, the explanatory value of Bickerton’s theory is very limited. What we need is a grammar able to predict the behavior of presupposition, rather than a series of syntactic fact arising from the nature of presupposition.

Conclusion

We have considered briefly all kinds of presupposition definition linguists put forward in the 70s: semantic, pragmatic, semantic-pragmatic, and syntactic. Using Gazdar’s model as evidence, we have illustrated how Gazdar uses implicature to cancel presupposition, which qualifies his analysis to achieve a reasonably accurate prediction of presupposition behavior in embedding constructions. The multitudinous uses of the notion “presupposition” running through the abundant literature suggest that, all else being equal, presupposition is a collection of distinct species: some semantic others pragmatic. But the pragmatic side of this hybrid seems to be of more importance than the semantic side. However, how to draw a clear-cut distinction between the two sides is the puzzling question pending on further research. This implies that there is much more to “presupposition” than this paper has been able to expose.

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Footnotes

1. The term was first used to Frege (1892) and defined by Strawson (1964) to explain the definite referring noun phrase and its referent (Lyons 1977). See Kempson (1975:47-51) for an exposition of the controversy of Strawson and Russel over the King of France is bold, which represents the beginning of the long-standing controversy over the nature of “presupposition”.
2. It was first called this by Lagendoen and Savin (1971)
3. For a list of presuppositional-triggers see Lewinson (1983:181-5)
4. For more counterexamples to this hypothesis, see Soams (1979)
5. Seuren (1985) proposes that PP is a semantic phenomenon. But semantic to him is “the theory of interpretation of sentences in use”. Only because he maintains that discourse plays a systematic role in interpretation, that he does not use the term “pragmatic” to approach PP.
6. According to Grice (1975), if the utterance of a sentence X in a given context allows the inference Y even though Y is beyond what the speaker actually says, then s/he had implicated Y and Y is an implicature of the utterance of X. Grive proposes that there are two kinds of implicature: Conversational and conventional. He associates the first with his notion of cooperative conversation, in which the participants observe certain conversational maxims (i.e quantity, quality, relevance and manner). Further, he divides
conversational implicatures into particularized and generalized according to the extent to which they depend on a particular context of utterance. He takes the second implicature (conventional) to arise from the conventional meaning of lexical items and the grammatical constructions associated with the sentence.

7. See the list of these entailments in Wilson & Sperber (1979 p. 321)

References:
Gazdar, G. (1979, a). ‘A Solution to the Projection Problem’. In Oh, C.K. & D. Dinneen (Eds)
Attachment Theory in Relation to Literacy/Reading Acquisition for Immigrants, Refugees, and the Disenfranchised

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Abstract
The increase in immigrant, refugee and disenfranchised children in education is growing exponentially, and therefore, causing a demand for understanding the reasons that marginalized children are struggling to succeed within the current educational system. One response to this academic quandary is, as the research suggests, that attachment to the caregiver is a vital platform for all child development and learning Bowlby (1958). Another proposition is that attachment theory premises can be used to identify if and how attachment to a parent impacts attachment to literature and literacy development, which directly affects academic achievement. The association between attachment to the caregiver and a child’s attachment to literature among Anglo-Germanic groups (Van Ijzendoorn, 1996) has been studied, and the results demonstrate a direct correlation between the rapport with the caregiver and literacy acquisition and reading readiness. The link between attachment and literacy/reading acquisition as a cognitive phenomenon has not yet been studied among children that comprise immigrant, refugee, and disenfranchised children, and therefore, is the hypothetical imperative for recommended research. 

Keywords: attachment and literacy/reading-readiness theory, immigrants, refugees, second language literacy development

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Introduction

Immigrant, refugee and disenfranchised children comprise a substantial percentage of the current global multi-cultural educational population in the United States. As of 2015, there were 17.9 million children who were under age 18 lived with one immigrant parent. These children account for 26 percent of the 69.9 million minority children in the United States as reported by the Migration Policy Institute (MPI). 84,994 refugees were admitted to the United States in the fiscal year 2016 per the State Department Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS). This is an increase of 22 percent compared to the 69,933 refugees that were admitted to the United States in 2015. Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia, Myanmar (Burma), and Iraq, were the primary refugee seeking countries, accounting for 71 percent (60,204) of all refugees admitted in 2016. The number of children seeking asylum rose sharply to 26,600 in 2015, the highest level on record (an 112 percent increase from 2014 and a 236 percent increase from 2013). Additionally, 15 million children in the United States, or 21 percent, live in a state of poverty according to the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) representing the disenfranchised subgroup. Collectively, these groups comprise approximately 46% of all children living in the United States according to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

These traumatized children have become the complex, diverse populace responsibility and focus for educators. Instructors must not only educate students but also, attempt to instill in them the desire to learn, including the understanding of literature, in hopes that these students will have the opportunity for improved educational achievement. For immigrant, refugee and disenfranchised children to become literate, productive, prosperous members of society they should have occasions to encounter secure, emotional bonds to literature, as the foundation of all academic learning. This aperture highlights the disparity and supposed intellectual separation that exists between students from the dominant cultural or hegemonic group, and those from the lower socioeconomic groups particularly those that are newly arrived or hail from "othered," uncanny Ollivier-Garza (2016) subordinate socioeconomic and sociocultural backgrounds.

What is proposed is that with early childhood intervention, and secure emotional attachment to literature, one may increase reading receptiveness and reading aptitude for immigrant, refugee, and disenfranchised children.

Reading Receptiveness and Literacy Acquisition

The concept of "reading readiness" is relatively new to education and has continued its development over the last four decades. Meanwhile, trepidation over instructing young children to read can be traced back to the early Greeks history when fables were taught to young children to promote goodness and soul development (Mason, 1984). Ancient Greeks were not concerned about pre-reading skills because they did not consider learning to read to be a task demanding enough to be worthy of being defined as a readiness stage (Venezky, 1975). Plato believed that reading should not begin until the age of 10. In fact, Plato, (1982) quotes Socrates’ description of learning to read as follows.

Just as in learning to read, I said, we were satisfied when we knew the letters of the alphabet, which were very few, in all their recurring sizes and combinations;
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not slighting them as unimportant whether they occupy a space large or small, but everywhere eager to make them out; and not thinking ourselves perfect in the art of reading until we recognized them wherever they are found. (III, 402a).

This view of reading existed until the 1900s when Huey (1908) initiated the idea that there was more to learning to read than simply alphabet identification. Although Huey’s ideas represented a shift in thinking about the skills involved in the reading process, little attention was given to the age at which reading instruction should begin. Many educators, including Huey, thought that age 8 was optimal for beginning reading instruction because developmentally the child potentially has enough conceptual knowledge to be able to understand the concepts in text form. Piaget (1969) also suggests that age eight was optimal for learning to read because that was the concrete operational stage and the opportune time to expound on language and thought. Currently, in Western Society, we initiate the reading process at or around age five, which some suggest is too early for many learners especially diverse groups of students. One might argue that reading receptiveness and reading readiness lies on a continuum of preparedness. Certainly, children that are linguistically, socially, or emotionally unprepared are equally underprepared to develop reading readiness skills. Immigrant, refugee and disenfranchised children fall into this camp. So, for these demographic groups to be receptive to reading, some specialized preparedness should take place prior to setting the expectation for acquiring reading readiness skills.

Reading receptiveness is a literacy skill, which involves active participation but does not necessarily require language production as an expressive skill. Having receptive skills is developing the ability to understand information, words, and sentences, and make meaning of what is read. Conversely, expressive language means being able to put thoughts into words and sentences, in a way that makes sense. Once receptive skills have been acquired, then reading readiness skills will indicate whether a child is ready to learn to read.

Reading readiness skills include oral language development and vocabulary, appreciation of books, phonemic awareness (ability to distinguish and manipulate individual sounds of language), and the understanding of basic concepts of print. Printed text represents spoken words; spaces between words are meaningful; pages written in English are read left to right from the top of the page downward, and books have a title, author, and illustrator. There should be a basic understanding of the alphabetic principle (letters represent the sounds of language), and there should be some ability to distinguish shapes (visual discrimination) and at least some letters of the alphabet. However, the idea that to achieve readiness certain information should be learned for meaning and cognitive development to occur is an assumption (Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1988).

For many children reading readiness is an assumed, automatically acquired developmental stage in their learning. However, for children that have never been in school, have been exposed to trauma, or have not developed reading readiness skills, being receptive to new learning concepts requires innovative ways of thinking and new instructional practices. These practices to improve reading readiness should be designed using what is known about attachment theory, cross-cultural aspects of attachment, how trauma affects learning and literacy acquisition. When children lack
reading readiness advanced, groundbreaking reading intervention design should be created and be based on the aforementioned theories for attachment to literature and learning to occur.

**History of Attachment Theory**

To understand how attachment theory is related to literacy/reading acquisition and readiness, one must understand attachment history and why secure attachment is important for the development of childhood cognition. Attachment theory is a psychological model that articulates a behavioral phenomenon and illustrates how humans attach to their caregivers to establish a healthy and foundational childhood base allowing the child to take risks and explore the environment in a safe and secure manner. The following are the major philosophers that have researched and established attachment theory concepts (Lorenz, 1935; Harlow, 1958; Bowlby, 1958; and Ainsworth, 1964). Lorenz and Harlow studied attachment with animals while Bowlby and Ainsworth made the transition to the study of human engagement.

Lorenz (1958), an Australian zoologist, performed attachment and imprinting research with goslings and ducklings. He studied the phenomenon and instructive behaviors of animal imprinting. Lorenz suggests that attachment is innate. To explore this phenomenon, he took half of an addling of eggs from a goose nest. He placed half of the eggs with the mother, and he kept the other half with and near himself. When the baby geese hatched Lorenz made mother duck quacking sounds, and the young birds followed him as though he was their mother. Lorenz found that the young birds were most impressionable within the first 12-17 hours. Lorenz also found that if no attachment occurs within the first 32 hours attachment is not likely to ever occur. He believed that once imprinting had taken place that it could not be reversed and if it did not transpire it could not be reversed.

Another attachment theorist was Harlow (1958) who studied attachment theory through an evolutionary lens. Harlow was an American psychologist renowned for his research on maternal-separation, needs and dependency, and social isolation experiments on Rhesus monkeys. His work exemplified the importance of caregiving and companionship with regard to cognitive and social/emotional development. These infant primates were highly dependent on the parent for sustenance, comfort, protection, and socialization. Harlow's experiments were controversial; they included subjecting newborn monkeys to isolation chambers for up to two years. Some of these primates exited the study being intensely disturbed depending on the amount of time that they were subjected to certain research criteria.

Harlow’s studies on attachment with Rhesus monkeys during the 1950's and 1960's took several forms. One of the unsettling studies included the observation of infant monkeys reared in isolation. Harlow (1958) took the baby monkeys and isolated them from birth. They had no contact with each other, their mothers or anybody else. He kept some of these primates this way for three, six, or nine months. Some of the monkeys he kept for the first year of their lives. He then put them back with the other primates to see what affect their failure to form attachment had on their behavior. The result was disturbing because the monkeys engaged in bizarre behavior such as clutching their bodies and rocking compulsively. He observed that when the isolated primates were placed back in the company of other monkeys, the infant monkey babies were scared of the other monkeys but shortly after that became very aggressive. The isolated monkeys were unable to
communicate or socialize with other animals and were aggressive toward them as well. The isolated primates participated in self-mutilation, tearing hair out, scratching, and biting their arms and legs.

The conclusion of this observation was that deprivation of attachment has the potential to be permanently damaging. The extent of this abnormal behavior had a direct correlation with the amount of time that the monkey was kept isolated. Those monkeys held in isolation for three months were the affected the least, but those in isolation for a year or more never recovered the effects of deprivation. Harlow’s research, although controversial, influenced the theoretical work of Bowlby who has become known as one of the most influential psychologists in attachment theory. Here is where attachment research moves from the evolutionary lens to the human social framework of study.

John Bowlby (1958) is a British psychologist, psychiatrist, and psychoanalyst well known for his work and his research in the area of child development. He is renowned as the founder of attachment theory. Bowlby's birthplace is London England whose family is an upper-middle-income family. He had five siblings and was raised by a nanny as is common in Britain for the middle-class during that period. The Bowlby family hired one nanny to raise the children in a separate nursery. This nanny took care of the children and had two nursemaids to help her. Primarily a nursemaid raised Bowlby. The nursemaid acted as a mother figure to him and his siblings. It is proposed that this potentially may have been the inspirational motivator for Bowlby's desire to investigate the notion of attachment theory.

Bowlby (1958) was the psychiatrist for the Child Guidance Clinic in London in 1930 where he treated numerous children with emotional difficulties. During this time, Bowlby studied and observed the importance of the child's relationship with their mother and/or caregiver with regard to their social, emotional and cognitive development. Specifically, his research shaped his belief about the link between early infant separations with the mother and later maladjustment. This knowledge led Bowlby to formulate his attachment theory.

Bowlby (1958) observed that children could experience extreme distress when separated from their mothers. He also noticed that even when children were fed and cared for by other caregivers, this did not diminish the child’s anxiety. Bowlby’s findings contradicted the dominant behavioral theory of attachment, which underestimated the child's bond with their mother believing that a child becomes attached to the mother because she is the one feeding the infant.

Bowlby (1969) defines attachment as a “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings” (p.149). He suggested that attachment could be understood within an evolutionary context and that the caregiver provides safety and security for the newborn child to enhance the chance of survival. Bowlby believes that infants could have a universal need to seek close physicality with their caregiver when circumstances became stressful or threatening (Prior & Glaser, 2006).

Bowlby formulated the basic tenets of the human attachment theory. Attachment theory draws on concepts from cybernetics, ethology, developmental psychology, information
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processing, and psychoanalysis. The psychological description of attachment theory suggests that it is a matter pertaining to the function of the brain or some mental phenomena and therefore, becomes the subject matter of psychology.

Attachment theory deals with the affects the mind. The effect is primarily found to be a function of awareness, feeling, and/or motivation. When humans, namely children, normally attach to their caregivers they establish normal and healthy responses to the caregivers and the environment. Attachment theory is one explanation that describes the dynamics of short-term and long-term interpersonal relationships between humans.

Attachment is a profound and long enduring emotional bond that does not necessarily have to be reciprocal. One party could be attached and the other party not. One of the main characteristics of attachment is to seek out proximity regularly. This tends to occur especially when the person is upset or feels threatened in some way (Bowlby, 1969). Attachment behavior occurs not only in children but also in adults. Adult attachment towards the child includes responding sensitively and appropriately to the child’s needs. Bowlby contends that this responsivity behavior appears universally similar across cultures. Attachment theory provides an explanation of how the parent-child relationship emerges and influences subsequent development.

Following in the footsteps of Bowlby, Mary Ainsworth also researched attachment theory using different methodologies than Bowlby. Ainsworth was an American-Canadian developmental psychologist. She was known for her work in emotional attachment with the Strange Situation Procedure, as well as her work in the development and confirmation of the components of attachment theory.

Ainsworth’s methodology was innovative. Her methods not only made it possible to test some of Bowlby’s ideas empirically but, also, helped expand the concepts of attachment theory. Ainsworth (1964) contributed the hypothesis that the attachment figure should be a secure base from which a newborn can explore the world. Also, Ainsworth articulated the concept of maternal sensitivity to infant gesticulations and how that behavior impacts the development of the newborn's attachment patterns to the mother.

Ainsworth (1964) used Bowlby’s research as a base to determine individual differences in attachment. She used the Strange Situation Procedure to measure the types of attachment classifications. The attachment types were identified as secure, insecure avoidant, insecure ambivalent/resistant and anxious-disorganized-disoriented attachment. Ainsworth (1964) concluded that these attachment styles were the direct result of early interactions that the child has with the mother. An important fact is that all of Ainsworth's participants were Anglo-Germanic child and mother dyads.

Securely attached children comprised the majority of Ainsworth’s (1971, 1978) studies. Securely attached children feel confident that the caregiver will be available to meet their needs. They use the caregiver as a secure base as is noted in Harlow’s research (1958) to investigate their world and seek the caregiver in times of stress or uncertainty (Main, & Cassidy, 1988). Securely attached babies are quickly comforted by the caregiver when upset. Children develop a secure
attachment when the caregiver responds appropriately and promptly to their needs and has proved to be sensitive to their gesticulations. Bowlby (1980) states that an individual who has experienced a secure attachment “is likely to possess a representational model of attachment figures(s) as being available, responsive, and helpful” (Bowlby, 1980, p. 242).

Another attachment style identified by Ainsworth is the insecure avoidant attachment style. These insecure avoidant children do not orient to their attachment figure while exploring their surroundings. These children are very independent physically and emotionally. These children do not seek contact with the caregiver when they feel stressed. According to Ainsworth (1978) these types of children tend to have a caregiver who is not sensitive and rejects their needs. Another notable characteristic of the caregiver in this attachment style is that they may withdraw from helping the child during difficult tasks and are regularly unavailable during times of emotional distress.

Ainsworth (1970) identifies a third attachment style labeled as insecure ambivalent (also called insecure resistant). In this attachment style, children demonstrate an uncertain behavioral style towards the attachment figure. The child exhibits a strange and contradictory behavior. The child is clingy and dependent but rejects the attachment figure when they try to engage in any type of encounter.

The child fails to feel secure with regard to the attachment figure. Correspondingly, they exhibit difficulty moving away from the attachment figure to explore their environment. When under stress these children do not soothe with ease. They are not soothe-able by interacting with their caregiver. This behavior is the result of inattentive responses to their needs from the primary caregiver.

Ainsworth (1978) suggests that there is a caregiver sensitivity hypothesis. This is an explanation for the various attachment types. Ainsworth's Maternal Sensitivity theory argues that a child's attachment style is dependent on the behavior and interactions that the mother shows towards them. Ainsworth hypothesized that sensitive caregivers are responsive to the child's needs and respond to their interactions and needs accordingly. Responsive and attentive caregivers are the most likely to have securely attached children. Conversely, mothers who are less sensitive towards the child, respond inappropriately to the child's needs, which are not patient, or ignore the child, are likely to have the result of developing an insecurely attached child.

When infants have responsive caregivers, the result will be securely attached, children. Inconsistent interactions with the caregiver result in insecure ambivalent attached children. Sometimes the child's needs and met, and sometimes they are ignored. Insecure avoidant infants are associated with unresponsive care. When the communication needs have little to no influence on the caregiver, the child comes to believe that communication is of no use. Ainsworth’s (1971, 1978) research provided the first research-based evidence with regard to Bowlby’s attachment theory.

Ainsworth established that securely attached children develop a positive working self-perception and have healthy mental representations of others as being helpful. These children
view themselves as worthy of respect. Avoidant children think themselves unworthy and unacceptable, caused by a rejecting primary caregiver. Ambivalent children have a negative self-image. They tend to amplify their emotional responses.

**Cross-Cultural Studies of Attachment Theory**

It is equally important to establish the cultural, anglophile and somewhat androcentric positionality of the aforementioned theorists and theories by reviewing the cross-cultural attachment studies. This establishment is important because of the influence and alteration to the original theoretical formation of attachment theory.

All of these theorists hail from anglophile backgrounds. This is an important aspect of this study since it potentially has an impact on the outcomes of the subjects involved. One must question as to whether this fact directly or indirectly affects conclusions of these studies. One must also examine how children that are from other cultures will interact and respond to Anglo researchers taking into account the researcher’s positionality. The fact remains that culture is relevant because various societies will innately either support or reject the initiating party impacting research results.

Modern researchers of Cross-Cultural patterns of attachment Van IJzendoorn & Kroonenberg (1988) have used the foundational works of Bowlby and Ainsworth to study attachment theory. According to Bowlby’s research, attachment has evolved over the history and evolution of the human species and exists to perpetuate human existence. Therefore, a foundational basis of attachment theory is that infants must become attached regardless of the cultural affiliation. The evolutionary perspective suggests that global adaptive behaviors actuate depending on the culture to which the child belongs to survive. This theory then forces infants to develop avoidant attachment patterns to meet the cultural demands. These avoidant attachment patterns require adaptations. The adaptations then become dependent on the known culture and childrearing arrangements. It has been found that the principal attachment patterns are universally normative suggesting that the secure attachment pattern is the primary strategy for social environment adaptation.

In the studies of Western countries, all infants became attached to their caregivers. The only children that were found not to attach had profound neurophysiological deficits comparable to being intellectually delayed. In Western Societies, the majority of infants are securely attached. Attachment security depends on the antecedents during childhood and leads to the child's ability to regulate negative emotions, establish healthy relationships and to develop cognitive skills in the areas of literacy and metacognition. Conversely, in cross-cultural studies, approximately 40% of infants are insecurely attached Van IJzendoorn & Kroonenberg (1988), and the number of securely attached infants varies considerably among cultures.

Cross-cultural studies of attachment review the universality of the components of attachment, the culturally specific dimensions of attachment patterns, and the generalizability of attachment patterns and constructs across cultures. This is important as a comparative because attachment to the caregiver has been studied cross-culturally, but attachment to literature for reading receptiveness has not been studied across cultures. The cultures that will be reviewed in
the cross-cultural study of attachment to the caregiver are various African cultures, Chinese, Israeli, Japanese and Indonesian cultures.

To explore the African cultures the researchers reviewed the work of Ainsworth (1967, 1977) in her exploration of attachment within multiple-caregiver contexts. Ainsworth found that when mothers shared caregiving responsibilities with other adults and older children infants still became attached to their mothers and used the parent as a secure base to explore the world.

Ainsworth began her work with Africans, and subsequent researchers followed her lead and revisited the research of attachment with other African groups. The Ugandans, the Gusii, the Hausa, the Dogon and the Khayeltsha peoples were studied. The Gusii study findings showed that the attachment outcomes of the Gusii children to their mothers were very similar to the Western results. The Hausa research showed varying results, and that may be due to the fact that the Hausa people are Muslim. Hausa men are allowed to marry up to four wives. Therefore, all of the caregivers share the social, verbal, and play tasks. The biological mothers take care of the physical care needs. These infants displayed attachment behavior to more than one caregiver. The principal attachment figure was identified to be the caregiver that held and interacted with the infant the most. The Dagon study demonstrated siblings as well as their biological mothers caring for the infants. The Dagon people are a farming people, and the infant mortality rate is 25% in the first year of life. This high mortality rate led to mothers feeding their children on demand and as frequently as the child requested. This study shows that there were more disorganized infants than in Western studies. Interestingly, a high percentage (88%) of the Dagon children were securely attached. 12% of the Dagon children were resistant and 0% avoidant. These results support that the Strange Situation procedure holds true as being classifiable. The lack of avoidant attachment may be a result of a high-stress situation and therefore producing differing results. The Khayeltsha study was comprised of mostly impoverished people. In this study, despite the poor living conditions, the majority of children were securely attached (62%). 26% were disorganized attached, 4% were avoidant attached, and 8% were resistantly attached. The summary of the African research shows that one sub-cultural group had similar results to the Western studies. The other three sub-cultures had some outside influence that may have impacted the research results from multiple wives to sibling caregiving and impoverished living circumstances. All of the studies, however, were able to use attachment theory components to define the outcomes of the research.


Chinese culture was studied with regard to attachment theory. In Beijing, researchers wanted to know if the attachment and secure base phenomenon exist in Beijing. Do mothers and experts evaluate secure attachment similarly to those of Western experts? Do mothers and experts agree with each other about the ideal typical secure child? The patterning of attachment behaviors, as a result of self-identified behavioral descriptions, showed that Chinese parents, as well as experts, found that the concept of attachment is applicable within the Chinese cultural context. The Chinese mothers did not deviate from mothers of other societies when describing the relevance
of the secure-base phenomenon to their children and the Chinese mothers were in agreement in the description of the ideally secure child.

Israeli culture was researched, and the findings showed that 59% kibbutz infants are securely attached while 72% Israeli city infants were securely attached compared to 65-70% of infants being secure worldwide. Other factors may have influenced the Israeli study. The ecology of the home, separation anxiety issues, infants' temperament, and mother-infant play interactions were taken into account for this study. The outcome showed that regardless of any outside factors the primary impact for infants being securely attached was the level of maternal sensitivity.

The Japanese study had the most severe analyses of attachment theory. The issue here was the contention that there was an inhibition of "cultural blindness." Researchers in Japan claim that ambivalent attachment relationships are overrepresented, and avoidant attachment is underrepresented. The Strange Situation study is criticized as being invalid for Japanese infants who are used to continuous and close proximity to their mothers. Lastly, the concept of attachment may not be relevant to Japanese culture because of the cultural idea of Amae. Amae (as a culturally expected dependency) is specifically a representation of the production and reproduction of Japanese culture. Japanese social bonding is expected in the mother-child experience. A Japanese mother is expected to carry or hug her child as expected by the dependence inherently displayed in Amae way of life. The Japanese overprotect and have over-indulged their children. The Japanese mother monitors her child and embraces the Amae way, is rewarded with identity reinforcing responses like clinging behaviors by the child.

Lastly, attachment of Muslim families in Indonesia will be reviewed and is a relatively new study implemented in 1997. Indonesia is a highly populated country with approximately 200 million citizens. The Sudanese-Indonesian children usually have long periods of close physical proximity to their mothers. They are carried in a carrying cloth or Slendang during the child's first year of life. The children are breastfed on demand through the first 2-3 years of age. The children are allowed to sleep with their mothers until the age of four in the same bed as mother. When these infants are fussy, the mother soothes the child promptly. Sudanese-Indonesian women marry at a very young age, and the divorce rate is very high. Unstable and unpredictable jobs add to family instability. Poverty and health problems lead to high infant mortality rates. When studying the Indonesian attachment rate 57% were securely attached, 33% were resistantly attached, 7% were avoidant, and 4% fell into the category of other. The majority of Muslim children appeared to be securely attached, and secure attachment was associated with maternal support in the predicted way.

It is important to identify and recognize how various cultures display attachment. The cultural behaviors of refugee, immigrant and disenfranchised children coming from a variety of homelands may provide insights as to how attachment is perceived and addressed especially with regard to education. In addition, due to global migration, or circumstances of poverty, these children have experienced some form of trauma, and therefore the issues surrounding trauma needs to be recognized.
**Current Classification of Attachment Theory**

Currently, attachment has been defined as a disorder and renamed and reclassified by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V) as Reactive Attachment Disorder. As of 2013, the DSM-V classifies Reactive Attachment Disorder as a trauma and stress-related disorder. This stress-related disorder is more commonly known as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In children, this disorder is especially relevant when the interactions with caregivers and the subject have included patterns of extreme or insufficient care.

Researchers in the field now view attachment as being a cross-cultural disorder as seen from a clinical perspective. Attachment research continued after Bowlby's death in 1990, and some argue that attachment should not be viewed as a trait or characteristic but instead should be considered as a behavioral condition resulting from traumatic influences. These traumas are cross-cultural and should be re-evaluated because attachment is not expressed identically in all human, social, or cultural categories as proven through the research of the cross-cultural patterns of attachment.

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder among Syrian and Iraqi Refugees**

Currently, Syrian and Iraqi refugees are among the most current displaced mainstream refugees in the United States. This demographic group exhibits a variety of signs and symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Robertson & Breiseth (2017). Among the symptoms observed and recorded are sleeplessness, irritability, inability to get along with others, intensive anxiety etc. These students need support and resources that include increased exposure to language, keeping them engaged and peer support students Robertson & Breiseth (2017). In addition, the British Council Report Delaney (2016) claims that language classes can help with trauma because of the structure and support systems that are put into place. Learning English as a second language is especially important to refugees in order to function in their newly adapted country. Therefore, it is proposed that reducing the stress for refugee students and providing structured support will lay the foundation for attachment to literature in the second language and provide a foundation for literacy acquisition.

**Attachment as it Pertains to Literature and Literacy Acquisition**

Now that the history and current state of attachment theory have been established, it is important to understand the correlation between attachment, literature, and emergent literacy acquisition. Children appear to get some awareness into the characteristics of written language from an early age Teale & Sulzby (1986), and therefore it is critical to examine the circumstances under which all children are establishing their attachment to literature and written language. While current research does evaluate attachment and literacy acquisition, studies have not addressed attachment to literature for young immigrant, refugee, and disenfranchised children. All the while, this description of marginalized children exemplifies an ever-growing portion of the current student population included in the globalized educational system today. Educators are being asked to instruct these distinct and unique groups of students without the skill set needed to meet their educational needs. Studying how attachment to literature is perceived for disenfranchised children is an examination area that is in need of additional research based on the fact that we are living in an era of an ever-growing, and ever-changing academic forum with a new and diverse demographic composition.
The need for research regarding attachment to literature and reading readiness for these specific demographic subgroups deserves further research investigations. Researchers have approached attachment to literature in a variety of ways. They have looked at the adult to child relationship and attachment. They have taken into consideration developmental stages as it may or may not affect attachment to literature in tandem with attachment to the caregiver. They also have looked at the lack of attachment to literature as it corresponds with insecurely attached children.

Bus & Van IJzendoorn (1988) reviewed the relationship between mothers and their children to assess how and if the relationship impacts attachment security and performance on emergent literacy measures. The purpose of their study was to describe the relationship between the mother and child and analyze how this relationship related to the interactions with written text. These researchers deduced that early reading acquisition did not appear to be a natural process but viewed as an informal teaching and learning process between mother or caregiver and child.

While Bus, Belsky, Van Ijzendoorn and Crnic (1997) focused on the quality of the parent-child interactions during book-reading assessments including the evaluation of the child-parent attachment security. This study reviewed toddlers of 12-20 months of age. This study included videotaping of the book-reading sessions. During the first and third interaction, the mother-child security level was assessed. The secure children would point and label during the reading sessions and were actively engaged with the text. The insecure-avoidant children were more distracted and less inclined to respond to the book. One important outcome was that the age of the child did have an impact on the interactions and reading-related activities over the child’s development. Therefore, the implication is that one-year-olds and three-year-olds will respond differently to interactions and are at different states of preparedness for emergent literacy skills and measures aside from the mother-child security and attachment status. Another important finding was that the older dyads would pay more attention to the reading and the younger pairs focused more on the narration by the mother as told and represented by the pictures within the story.

Some researchers have found that mother-child interactions affect emergent literacy skills especially when mothers watch educational television, look at books, and read to their child. Unbeknownst to the mothers, they are scaffolding literacy for their children (Bruner, 1985; DeLoache & Mendoza, 1987; Ninio & Bruner, 1978). From a cultural perspective, it appears that mothers try to create and teach their children lessons that the child can perform with guidance Pellegrini et al. (1985). This could be interpreted as mothers having the sense to scaffold and teach their children instinctively where they are in the best place of learning.

The age of the child is another important consideration in attachment to literature and the mother-child relationship. It is assumed that from a cultural-historical perspective, older children will have the ability to pay more attention to the various aspects of reading. Younger, and less developed children are more in tune with mother's narration and interpretation of the text, pictures, and story within the literature.

In addition to the child’s age, one should take into account the affective atmosphere during storybook reading since the environmental setting tends to have some impact on the reading
experience. Another consideration when studying instructional interactions, as identified by attachment theorists (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, Wall, & Bowlby, 1980), is that children who are more securely psycho-socially and emotionally attached to their mothers or caregivers, are also more likely to readily acquire new literacy skills when they are exposed to them by this same caregiver. Securely attached children are less disruptive and are behaviorally more cooperative especially compared to anxiously attached children (Bretherton, 1985). This could be interpreted as the mothers of securely attached children place higher demands for reading instruction on their children. Anxious children have less coping skills to deal with problems, especially problems that related to reading acquisition, take fewer risks and explore the environment less. Although there has been much discussion about attachment theory and the age that particular attachment behaviors occur and become stabilized, there is evidence that there is a high correlation between security of attachment between year one and six years of age (Main, Kaplan & Cassidy, 1985). This research looked at concurrent relations between attachment security and the written language activities during mother-child interactions and one of the factors that influenced children’s written language experience is how often reading-related activities occurred in the context of mother-child interactions. These researchers investigated whether emergent literacy interaction of activities such as jointly reading a storybook, was affected by mothers who would pay more attention to reading functions during reading-related activities to surmise whether the child would be more advanced in emergent literacy skills of letter knowledge, print motivation, vocabulary, print awareness, phonological skills, and narrative skills. Another deliberation is that children who obtain emergent literacy skills are generally more curious about formal literacy and illicit reading instruction by their caregiver while keeping in mind that when there is more maternal or caregiver attention to reading, emergent literacy skills are emphasized.

Conclusion

After reviewing how attachment pertains to literature, emergent literacy skill acquisition, and reading readiness, one should ask how this information applies to the current state of education today especially for marginalized student groups. Research has addressed developing literacy skills for Anglo-Germanic, African, Chinese, Israeli, Japanese, and Indonesian cultures. However, attachment to literature and reading readiness has not been studied as a part of immigrants to Western society, refugees assimilating into Western culture and how disenfranchised children of poverty within the United States gain access to literature in meaningful and long-lasting ways.

Examining the findings that address attachment to the mother-caregiver and attachment to written language, the hypothesis propositions that with early childhood intervention secure emotional attachments to literature and reading readiness may occur. There will potentially be an increase in reading receptiveness and reading aptitude for immigrant, refugee, and disenfranchised children. The key to this hypothesis will be to uncover the treatment(s) or intervention(s) that provide the greatest impact and opportunity for literary attachment and reading readiness for academic success for all marginalized children.

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The Resurfacing of Arabic Qaf [q] in the Speech of Young Ammani Females: A Sociolinguistic Study

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Abstract
The main objective of this study is to explore the factors that affect the absence of the glottal stop [ʔ] and as a result, the resurfacing of the standard Arabic Qaf variable [q], in certain lexical items of young Ammani females who associate themselves with the Jordanian Arabic madani ('urban') dialect of which [ʔ] is a predominant feature. In particular, the study explores why this absence occurs from the perspectives of the speakers themselves in relation to their own language choices. Empirical data are collected through the use of a closed questionnaire and a focus group discussion. The findings reveal that one of the major factors for the resurfacing of [q] is related to the influence of family dialect and social networks and not because the target words are of a religious or formal origin, as once they might have been attested in the speech of older generations.

Keywords: glottal stop [ʔ], Jordanian Arabic, Qaf variant [q], resurfacing, social networks

Introduction
This is a sociolinguistic study, specifically in the area of dialectology, the study of "sub-standard, low status, often rustic forms of the language, generally associated with [...] groups lacking in prestige [...] [and] which have no written form" (Chambers & Trudgill, 1980, p. 3). It focuses on the factors which determine the resurfacing of Qaf ([q] henceforth) and the absence of the glottal stop ([ʔ] henceforth) in certain lexical items of the speech of young Ammani females in Jordan who otherwise associate themselves with the madani (urban) dialect which is marked for its predominant use of [ʔ]. This objective comes in contrast to previous studies that have compared the use of other variants of /q/, i.e. [g], [k], [ʔ] or [q], in relation to social or geographical background, age or sex (Abd-El-Jawad, 1986; Abu-Haider, 1989).

Individual speakers of other Jordanian Arabic dialects (especially the younger generation) who also use [ʔ] tend to be influenced by the urban dialect through contact with Ammani speakers, as a result of mobilisation (Herin, 2010). The absence of [ʔ] in certain lexical items of young Ammani females (as opposed to speakers of other dialects) is significant since these speakers have predominantly reached the ‘completion stage’ i.e. [ʔ] is used in all the speech styles of their linguistic repertoire (Al-Wer & Herin, 2011, p. 62). In an earlier study, Haeri (1987) posits that [ʔ] is "associated with modernity and progress" (p. 176) and thus is more common in the speech of women. The fact that young women are the innovators of linguistic change is not an isolated phenomenon. As Shin (2013) states, "the role of gender differences in language change has been widely discussed in the variationist sociolinguistic literature. The broadest generalization is that women are at the vanguard of change in monolingual settings" (p. 135). Furthermore, Al-Tamimi (2001) and Al-Wer and Herin (2011) argue that young Jordanian females often lead the way in linguistic innovation in speech. In light of this, the researchers find it appropriate to select this section of the population to provide the data for the study reported here.

As the main feature of the speech of young Ammani females in Jordan who associate themselves with the urban dialect is the predominance of [ʔ], it is of real interest to examine why such speakers choose not to employ this sound in certain words even though this variant is central to their own speech variety. Based on the researchers’ observations and preliminary data obtained from relevant informants, it was decided that focus would lie on seven factors (given as possible reasons in the questionnaire) for the resurfacing of the standard Arabic (SA) [q], and consequently the absence of [ʔ], as explained in more detail in the methodology section. One of the predominant factors focused on in the present study is that of social networks (Cheshire, 1982; Milroy, 1987) which can affect the linguistic choices of individual speakers as well as speech communities as a whole.

The Concept of Social Networks
A social network can be defined as "the aggregate of relationships contracted with others" (Milroy, 2002, p. 549), i.e. the whole makeup of one’s relationships with various different people such as family members, friends, peer groups and, perhaps to a lesser extent, neighbours, trade associates and so on (Milroy & Milroy, 1997, p. 199). Milroy (2002) states that "[a] social network may be seen as a boundless web of ties which reaches out through a whole society, linking people to one another, however remotely" (p. 550). Milroy developed this definition from her own Belfast study in 1987, which established a direct link between social network and language use. Further, she
highlighted the relationship between low-status, non-standard speakers and the nature of close-knit communities (p. 178). Cheshire (as cited in Al-Wer, 2000) also found, on the basis of her study of adolescent friendship groups in Reading, a "systematic relationship between linguistic behaviour and social network" (p. 4). Milroy (1987) argues that it is possible to make some general statements about "the informal social relationships in which everyone is embedded" (p. 46). Based on this assumption, Milroy (1987) defines different types of social network as 'network zones' in which "each person may be viewed as a focus from which lines radiate to points (person with whom he is contact)" (p. 46).

Therefore, a given individual may have different order zones. A first order zone consists of people who are directly linked to an individual (X), e.g. his core family members and close friends. The second order zone consists of people that X does not necessarily know but might come into contact through people in his first order zone, e.g., a friend of a friend (Milroy, 1987). Though a third, fourth and nth order zone might be eminent "the first and second order zones appear, in practice, to be the most important" (Milroy, 1987, pp. 46-47). In relation to language, individuals are also under pressure to conform to the linguistic norms of their given first and (to a lesser degree), second zones in order to express solidarity and uniformity. In an earlier study, Milroy (1972) concludes that "[the theory of social networks] ultimately [...] can be used to account for variability in individual linguistic behaviour in communities, which is something a large-scale analysis like Labov's in New York City does not set out to do" (p. 21). Furthermore, Milroy (1987) believes that small-scale community studies are able to provide a more detailed account on the language variability of speakers, "particularly with reference to the less formal parts of the linguistic repertoire" (p. 21).

**Historical Overview**

Although Classical Arabic (CA) and its contemporary offshoot Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) are often perceived by most native Jordanians as superior to other dialect varieties (DVs), the latter still heavily persist (Hussein & Nasser, 1989). In order to contextualize our study, it is important to gain a somewhat broader perspective on the persistence of DVs and the decline of CA in Arabic-speaking communities today. While the study of dialectology has become common in the field of Arabic studies, until recently most university departments of Arabic have continued to concentrate on SA, with little emphasis on DVs (Versteegh, 2000, p.6). However, there has been a steady increase in the interest in DVs with Arab and Western linguists alike recording dialectal grammatical descriptions, as well as engaging in sociolinguistic analysis of grammatical patterns in the Arabic speaking world (Versteegh, 2000, p. 7). A question of great interest in Arabic sociolinguistics today is why DVs have continued to flourish in comparison to the decline of CA usage.

Historically, Arabs were known for the richness of their language and ability to use CA, yet today it is DVs that are commonplace. It has been suggested that historical factors have played a large part in the current linguistic situation of the Arabic-speaking world. Al-Wer (1997) argues that when the Arab Islamic Empire began to weaken in the sixteenth century and the Ottoman Turkish rule expanded over the Arabic-speaking provinces, considerable pressure was placed on the Arabic language. Turkish replaced Arabic in state administration and was even adopted by Arab officials. Furthermore, illiteracy in the Arabic-speaking communities prevailed, which was
somewhat ignored by Turkish rulers who failed to establish schools leaving it to mosques to provide some elementary education, mainly reading, writing and religion. Subsequently, there was a general decline in the use of CA. By the nineteenth century, the number of people who had knowledge of CA decreased significantly. Further, the domains of the language became limited to mainly religious settings. However, at the beginning of the twentieth century with the end of Turkish rule, "there were signs of a revival of the Arabic culture in general" (Al Wer, 1997, p. 253).

Within modern Arabic studies, there is a growing and continuing debate as to the most effective and relevant factors that impact the linguistic context of the Arabic speakers (Al-Wer, 2000). In the past, Ferguson (1959) drew comparisons between CA and the spoken dialects by applying the concept of ‘diglossia’ to such speech communities, when "two or more varieties of the same language are used by some speakers under different conditions" (p. 325). However, Haeri (as cited in Chambers, 1995, p. 143) posits that "Classical Arabic is not a synchronically relevant variety of modern day Arabic on a par with the living vernaculars". Moreover, Abd-El-Jawad (1987) notes that in the past, sociolinguists have tended to "equate the terms ‘prestige’ and ‘standard’; consequently [considering] Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) as the only prestige variety in all settings" (p. 359). He further suggests that there are "also local or regional varieties which act as local spoken standards competing with MSA in informal settings" (p. 359). Kaye (1972) also argues that Ferguson’s work is much too simplified to be applied to Arabic.

Al-Wer and Herin (2011) state that the emergence of [ʔ] (as a non-standard variant of /q/) in Jordanian Arabic occurred through contact with urban Levantine dialects, noting that the most significant influence came from urban Palestinian due to the migration of Palestinians to Jordan after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. As a consequence, the intermingling between Jordanians and Palestinians led to the emergence of [ʔ] in local dialects, perhaps initially through the borrowing of individual lexical items. They go on to argue that women have led the way in this linguistic innovation, as a means to elevate their social status. This innovation occurred most notably between the 1950s-70s (especially in the linguistic centre of Amman), when [ʔ] was quickly incorporated into their speech and thus paved the way for younger generations to follow (p. 73). Additionally, a significant number of girls who grew up in [g] or [q] speaking environments have even started to use the [ʔ] variant in their speech (El Salman 2003, p.413).

The variant [ʔ] is not “intrinsically 'softer' or 'feminine’” (Al-Wer & Herin, 2011, p. 71), when compared to other variants of [q], but the fact that it is used more by women has led to this classification, which makes many male speakers feel prohibited from using it. A study by Al-Essa (2009) of dialect contact in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia also suggests that women are more innovative than men in adopting new features typical of the variety spoken by the broader community. Sadiqi (2003) further advocates that variations in speech may be due to 'space dichotomy’. In this case, it is argued that the public space (where standard Arabic is used) is associated with men, whereas the private space (in which dialect varieties are commonplace), is associated with women (as cited in Al Wer, 2014, p. 398). However, Bassiouney (2010) concludes that in particular instances (in this case, an Egyptian talk show on political and social issues) women are more likely than men to adopt standard Arabic.
Although the urban dialect holds the most prestige in Amman in relation to the other spoken varieties (especially in relation to females), this is not the case in other areas of Jordan such as the north. In a fairly old study by Hussein and El-Ali (1989), the urban dialect was ranked least favoured by the sample, as opposed to the Bedouin dialect which was considered the most prestigious, highlighting the fact that speakers tend to stay loyal to their own varieties (p. 37). To examine the extent to which the results of this study still hold, further research is needed. The missing link in the literature and what this study aims to address is why young Ammani females who have passed the completion stage still choose, in certain contexts, to use the SA [q] as opposed to the variant central to their own variety, i.e. [ʔ]. Haeri (1997) argues that the use of [q] itself (in Cairo) is related to lexical choice as the deciding factor in its use, rather than a structural rule. What remains is to identify the factors that constrain this lexical choice in the speech of young Ammani female speakers of Jordanian Arabic, the main focus of our study.

Research Questions
The study seeks answers to the following questions:
(1) Which words (out of the 37 items provided) are more likely to be pronounced with [q] or [ʔ], respectively?
(2) What reasons (out of a given list) are associated with the resurfacing of [q] (and hence the absence of [ʔ])?

Methodology
In order to examine the extent to which young Ammani females use the SA [q] variant instead of using their usual [ʔ] in certain lexical items and to establish the reasons for doing so, the researchers employed both quantitative and qualitative measures, in the form of a closed questionnaire and a focus group. The total number of questionnaires originally distributed was 200 but after refining the sample in relation to urban speakers (excluding non–urban dialects and non-Jordanians), the responses of questionnaires from 70 female students at the University of Jordan were valid for analysis. They belonged to four specializations, viz., 16 (23%) Arabic Language and Literature, 12 (17%) Islamic Shariah, 25 (36%) Foreign Languages and 17 (24%) Business. All subjects acknowledged themselves as urban speakers who predominantly use [ʔ] for the SA [q], and therefore the variants [g] and [k] were excluded. The subjects were selected from different majors to further examine if there was a correlation between language use and major. For example, it was useful within the context of the study to examine whether subjects studying Islamic Shariah and Arabic Language and Literature are more likely to use [q], say for religious or formal language use.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section was intended to elicit demographic data including subjects’ personal and family dialect and type of specialization. In the second section, the subjects were presented with 37 lexical items (the underlying form of which contains the variable [q]); they were asked to state whether they use the variants [q] or [ʔ] in each case. A significant number of the words provided were deliberately selected by the researchers with the knowledge that such words are expected to be pronounced with [q]. This was done in order to help the researchers establish the reasons behind such usage.

The subjects were also provided with seven potential reasons for their language choice between the use of [q] or [ʔ] in addition to a free eighth reason, ‘other’. However, none of the
subjects stated different reasons to those already provided. The reasons were as follows: (1) 'I feel the word has a religious origin', (2) 'I feel the word relates to the dominant fusha (SA) form', (3) 'This pronunciation is from a dialect I don't want to associate myself with', (4) 'I feel there is stigma in using the other form', (5) 'I wish to imitate my friends', (6) 'I like the pronunciation of this form with this word (personal preference)', and (7) 'It is my family's dialect so I find myself naturally conforming to it'.

The qualitative element of the study came from a focus group discussion which involved 15 female Jordanian students at the University of Jordan who predominantly associated themselves with the urban dialect. These subjects were prompted by the researchers to discuss a number of issues related to the use of [ʔ] and [q] in their speech such as the extent to which their family affects the way they speak and the main reasons for the resurfacing of [q] in particular lexical items and hence the absence of [ʔ]. Answers given by the focus group provided rich qualitative information in support of the quantitative data collected from the questionnaire.

Results and discussion
As was mentioned in the previous section, two sets of data were collected; quantitative from the questionnaire group and qualitative from the focus group. Below is a presentation and discussion of the results.

Analysis of the quantitative data
This subsection presents and discusses the results related to the two study questions. The subjects’ preferences for either [q] or [ʔ] will be addressed followed by the reasons underlying their choices.

Preference for [q] or [ʔ]
Table 1 presents the percentages of [q] or [ʔ] responses given by the subjects. A closer look at the table indicates that the following 11 words were pronounced with [ʔ] by at least 70% of the subjects: qaḥwa ‘coffee’, qamīṣ ‘shirt’, qalam ‘pen’, qabl ‘before’, qamar ‘moon’, muqrif ‘disgusting’, miqqaṣ ‘scissors’, maqluuba (Jordanian dish), qaĝd ‘intention’, qaliil ‘small amount’ and qa‘d ‘said’. These are all high frequency ‘everyday’ words, which may explain the subjects’ tendency to pronounce them with [ʔ]. Interestingly, although the majority of subjects (61%) used [ʔ] for qirsh ‘ten fils’ (as opposed to 39% for [q]), they showed significantly different behaviour with its hyponym qirsh ‘shark’ where 91% of them opted for [q]. This difference in pronunciation perhaps originally occurred in the speech of older generations of the urban dialect to distinguish between the two words, with younger speakers unconsciously following suit. Further, qirsh ‘shark’ is not perceived as a ‘frequent and everyday word’ in contrast to its money-based cognate.

As for [q], 23 (62%) out of 37 words were pronounced with [q] by more than 80% of the subjects. It seems that the subjects tended to use [q] for words linked to formality such as qabas ‘flame’, qawm ‘nation’, qathf ‘throwing’, qimma ‘mountain peak’, qanata ‘behave desperate’, qabas (name of a newspaper), quut ‘food’, qanaʔa ‘content’, qasam ‘oath’, qindiil ‘lantern’, qasiima ‘document’, qadīl ‘libel’ and qamʔ ‘oppression’. The word qabr ‘grave’ was the only lexical item where subjects were almost equally divided with 51% of them opting for [q] and 49% for [ʔ], which may be explained in terms of idiosyncrasies particular to individual speakers. Only one subject pronounced dimašq ‘Damascus’ with [ʔ] while the majority (99%) used [q].
Interestingly, *al-quds* ‘Jerusalem’ (although being a religiously significant location in Islam) was pronounced with [q] by a lower percentage of subjects (81%) than *dimashq* ‘Damascus’.

### Table 1. Percentage of subjects who pronounced each of the given words with either [q] or [ʔ]*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target word</th>
<th>[q] (%)</th>
<th>[ʔ] (%)</th>
<th>Target word</th>
<th>[q] (%)</th>
<th>[ʔ] (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>dimashq</em> ‘Damascus’</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>20. <em>qathf</em> ‘throwing’</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>al-quds</em> ‘Jerusalem’</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21. <em>qaːsf</em> ‘bombardment’</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>qazam</em> ‘dwarf’</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>22. <em>qindiil</em> ‘lantern’</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>qanata</em> ‘became desperate’</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>23. <em>qasam</em> ‘oath’</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>qadh</em> ‘libel’</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>24. <em>qaʃima</em> ‘document’</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>tuqa</em> ‘piety’ (girl’s name)</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>25. <em>qaal</em> ‘said’</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <em>qabr</em> ‘grave’</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>26. <em>qasd</em> ‘intention’</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <em>qarrara</em> ‘decided’</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>27. <em>muqrif</em> ‘disgusting’</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. <em>qimma</em> ‘peak’</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>28. <em>qalam</em> ‘pen’</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. <em>qumama</em> ‘rubbish’</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>29. <em>qahwa</em> ‘coffee’</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. <em>qawm</em> ‘nation’</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>30. <em>qamar</em> ‘moon’</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. <em>qirsh</em> ‘shark’</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>31. <em>qamii</em> ‘shirt’</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. <em>qabas</em> (name of a newspaper)</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>32. <em>miqqaʃ</em> ‘scissors’</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. <em>qabas</em> ‘flame’</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>33. <em>burtuqaal</em> ‘orange’</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. <em>quut</em> ‘food’</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>34. <em>maqluuba</em> (Jordanian dish)</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. <em>qirsh</em> ‘food’</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>35. <em>qaliil</em> ‘small amount’</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. <em>qam?</em> ‘oppression’</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>36. <em>qabl</em> ‘before’</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. <em>qinaa</em> ‘oppression’</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37. <em>qaraʔa</em> ‘read’</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All target words are transcribed here with /q/ (i.e. the underlying form)*

On the sidelines of presenting and discussing subjects’ sound preferences, Table 2 shows the distribution of [q] and [ʔ] occurrences in terms of specialization. As is clear, the ratio of subjects who chose [q] in each of the four majors is remarkably high in comparison to their use of [ʔ]. This result is not completely unexpected as some of the words provided were selected by the

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researchers with the knowledge that many speakers of the madani dialect tend to pronounce them with [q]. This was in fact purposely done in order to elicit the reasons behind such usage.

Table 2. Distribution of the use of [q] and [ʔ] in terms of specialization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialisation</th>
<th>No. of subjects</th>
<th>Total usage of [q] and [ʔ] per specialisation*</th>
<th>No. and % of [ʔ] usage</th>
<th>No. and % of [q] usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>103 (17.4%)</td>
<td>489 (82.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Shariah</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>148 (33.3%)</td>
<td>296 (66.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Languages</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>341 (36.9%)</td>
<td>584 (63.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>212 (33.7%)</td>
<td>417 (66.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>2590</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total usage = No. of subjects in each specialization x 37 (i.e. the no. of target words)

The percentage of Arabic students who use [q] (82.6%) as opposed to [ʔ] (17.4%) is comparatively greater than the other specializations, most likely due to the fact that these subjects are more conscious of the SA [q] and are more familiar with it through their specialist classes and academic interactions. However, the percentage of Islamic Shariah students who use [q] (66.7%) as opposed to [ʔ] (33.5%) is not as high as expected, given the fact that Standard Arabic is also predominantly used in this major and that [q] is the variant normally used in religious contexts. This rather surprising result may be ascribed to the belief that such subjects are more sensitive to [q] in formal religious contexts, e.g. class or prayer, than in neutral and general texts and contexts, let alone when interacting with isolated lexical items as is the case in this study. In fact, the Islamic Shariah students’ overall use of [q] (in relation to the words provided) is similar to that of Foreign Languages students (63.1%) and Business students (66.3%). The results in Table 2 clearly indicate that the subjects of all specializations have shown a significant preference for [q] in pronouncing the target items. Furthermore, the results suggest that the reasons for using [q] in certain lexical items is constrained by variables that go beyond academic specialization, to say the least.

Reasons for [q] or [ʔ] usage

Table 3 shows the number and percentage assigned by the subjects for each of the reasons suggested in the questionnaire for the use of [q] or [ʔ].

Table 3. Number and percentage of responses for reason preferences assigned by the subjects for the use of [q] and [ʔ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>No. of [q] or [ʔ] usage for each reason</th>
<th>% of [q] or [ʔ] usage for each reason*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[q]</td>
<td>[ʔ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is interesting to note that for all subjects, the highest percentage is given to the reason 'It is my family's dialect so I find myself naturally conforming to it', for both [q] and [ʔ] (29.3% and 22% respectively). This suggests that the subjects are very much tied to their first zone social network. For [q] specifically, this is followed by 'I feel the word relates to the dominant fusha (SA) form' (20%) and 'I like the pronunciation of this form with this word (personal preference)' (10.3%). The second highest response (5.1%) for the use of [ʔ] was 'I like the pronunciation of this form with this word (personal preference)'. Unexpectedly, for the reason 'I feel the word has a religious origin', only 2.4% of responses were given to this answer. Percentages associated with other reasons are also significantly low across the board. For instance, the percentages for the reason 'I wish to imitate my friends' was only 1% for [q] and 0.8% for [ʔ]. Hence, we can conclude that there was a general preference for [q] in relation to the 37 lexical items provided. This preference was for the most part, related to a desire to conform to family dialect (whether [q] or [ʔ]), across all four specializations.

Analysis of the qualitative data

Here, we present and discuss the possible rationale behind the reasons given by the questionnaire group (whether high or low in percentage). These justifications were provided by the focus group, as well as commenting on their own personal motivations for the use of [q] (as opposed to [ʔ]) regarding particular lexical items. The rationale behind employing a focus group was to provide detailed information in terms of subjects' own perspectives on their language use, which can help
the researchers confirm (or otherwise) the findings derived from quantitative data collected from the questionnaires. As Edley and Litosseliti (2010) suggest, focus groups are "a mechanism by which one party (i.e. the interviewer) extracts vital information from another (i.e. the interviewee)" (p. 157).

The main reason given by the focus group for replacing [ʔ] with [q] in particular lexical items (in comparison to the questionnaire sample (29.3%)) was related to their family (first zone network) dialects, i.e. the dialect they had been raised to speak. There was a general consensus that they had subconsciously acquired these particular lexical items from their families which were then reinforced by wider social networks such as friends, classmates, tribe, workplace environment, neighbours and other members of the community. In other words, as one participant suggested, "it is not the case that we make a conscious decision to use [q] [in certain lexical items], but it's more because of the way we have been brought up". It seems that young Ammani females wish to adhere to their family dialects out of pressure to conform and out of a sense of solidarity and group identity. According to Ryan (1979), "[certain] varieties basically persist because the speakers do not want to give them up" (p.155). In this context, Gubuglo (as cited in Ryan, 1979, p. 147) refers to the "value of language as a chief symbol of group identity". However, in relation to the present study, it is not the case of a particular variety per se, but an actual specific feature of pronunciation. Nevertheless, it is relevant in highlighting the extent to which elements of language can serve to unite the people who use them.

Twenty two percent of the questionnaire group stated that they use [q] with words like qaṣam ‘oath’ qasiima ‘document’ and qadḥ ‘libel’ because they think that the use of this variant relates to the dominant fusha (SA) form. On discussing such words with the focus group, they suggested that the use of the vernacular [ʔ] here is deemed inappropriate in formal contexts, adding that they would naturally use [q]. Sawaie (1987) posited that university students idealize the standard variety [q] and associate it with education. In this regard, the focus group also mentioned that (in line with formality) education had a role to play in the [q] usage. Many of them reported that the words they acquired at home with [q] were standardised in the written texts they were exposed to at school. For example, one participant stated, "the classroom acts as confirmation to what we already know". In support of this finding, Abdel-Jawad and Abu Radwan (2013) argue that "SA pronunciation [q] assumes supremacy in formal settings" (p. 5). Yet, as Al-Wer (2000) suggests, "it is not level of education per se which correlates with linguistic usage, rather that level of education is actually an indicator of the nature and extent of the speaker’s social contacts" (p. 3).

Personal preference of a particular form entails that a particular pronunciation is preferred by the speaker, i.e. they happen to prefer using [q] or [ʔ] depending on the particular word. This was the third highest reason stated by subjects in relation to [q] (10.3%) and the second highest for [ʔ] (5.1%), which suggests that [ʔ] (and the use of [q] for particular lexical items), along with the madani dialect in general, is an admired and sought after variety. In relation to words of a religious derision or connotation which account for 2.5% of subjects’ use of [q], some of the focus group suggested that speakers who used [q] here were motivated by its occurrence in similar words in the Holy Qur’an and Hadith (‘sayings of the Prophet Muhammad’). For example, tuqa is a girl’s name which is derived from taqwa ‘piety’ and thus [ʔ] is considered inappropriate (96% of subjects
chose [q] for this lexical item). Only one percent of subjects’ responses indicated that they don't use [ʔ] for certain lexical items because it is used in a dialect they don't want to associate themselves with. Some of the focus group commented that although [ʔ] is in fact a central element of the Ammani urban dialect, certain items pronounced with [ʔ] are associated with varieties other than madani. Hence, the standard [q] variant is used in this context. For instance, three subjects said that the girl's name tuqa pronounced with [ʔ] is associated with some Egyptian dialects, so young Ammani females prefer to use [q].

Regarding stigma attached to using the other form (two percent of responses by the questionnaire group gave this as a reason for [q] and [ʔ] usage, respectively), some of the focus group expressed that they would be stigmatized for using [ʔ] with regard to particular lexical items such as qaṣf ‘bombardment’, qathf ‘throwing’ and qumama ‘rubbish’. They ascribed this to the fact that the majority of Jordanian Arabic speakers (even from other dialects) use [q] at least for the last two words, and therefore [ʔ] would sound unusual here. The same can be said for the use of [ʔ] with qirsh ‘shark’ which all of the focus group agreed would sound "ridiculous"; hence, perhaps due to fear of being stigmatized by their first zone social networks (i.e. family and friends, colleagues etc.), young Ammani females tend to avoid it.

Other reasons of significance given by the focus group (not provided in the questionnaire) were that they felt that using [q] was a sign of respect to the listener as well as gaining respect themselves as women in a male-dominated society. As one participant put it, "If I want to be taken seriously, I use [q], especially in formal situations". This observation is in line with the general belief that the variant [q] holds prestige in more formal situations and thus it was felt by respondents the most appropriate to use. The variant [q] in some instances was also described by the focus group as sounding more "natural" as if using [ʔ] in these cases indicates "putting on an accent".

In summary, having provided the percentages of preference for the use of either [q] or [ʔ], as well as the various potential reasons for the use of [q] as opposed to [ʔ], the data suggest a general trend towards echoing family dialect as the most significant reason for subjects' use of [q]. As the present study shows, first order zones were the most prominent in affecting language use amongst young Ammani females. The researchers of the present study further argue that the salience of the media, literature and textbooks affect Ammani females use of [ʔ]. For instance, words like dimashq ‘Damascus’, al-quds ‘Jerusalem’ and so-called al-qaʾida ‘Al-Qaida’ are rarely or never pronounced with [ʔ], which infiltrates the psyche of the general collective, whereby the pronunciation of [q] (as opposed to [ʔ]) is considered the norm.

The researchers suggest that while historically [q] was probably borrowed by older generations for certain factors pertaining to religion and formality, this is not the case for young Ammani females. For example, words like al-quds ‘Jerusalem’ (a highly revered location in Islam), the name tuqa ‘piety’ (derived from a religious origin), or words like qanata ‘became desperate’ (from classical Arabic) are predominantly pronounced by madani speakers with [q]. Yet, young Ammani females are often oblivious to the reasons for doing so and simply follow the norms of their family dialects. This is reflected in the fact that even students of Islamic Shariah and Arabic stated that they use [q] in certain instances because it is their family dialect, rather than
for religious reasons that one might expect in comparison to other specialisations (see Table 2). In a nutshell, the study has shown that Ammani females’ first zone social network (in this case, family) help to maintain and promote their usage of a particular variant in certain lexical items, which is also to some extent reinforced by education.

Conclusion and recommendations
The findings suggest that there is a strong relationship between family dialect and social networks and the absence of [ʔ] in particular lexical items in the speech of young Ammani females. Females who consider themselves speakers of the urban dialect use [q] in a relatively small set of words which unveils the subconscious echoing of the dialect of their immediate social network. More specifically as discussed earlier, because Jordanian society consists of strong and dense social networks predominantly made up of first zone networks, the findings show that Ammani females adhere to the language norms of their family. Social networks perform the function of a norm enforcing mechanism, in this case with specific reference to linguistic behaviour.

Further work in the field might include contrastive research drawn from empirical data collected in other Arabic-speaking countries, to establish if patterns exist between the general findings of this study and the speech patterns of other communities. The role of education in relation to young Ammani females’ speech, and its effects on the influence of family dialect may also be examined in a future study. Another interesting line of research might relate to whether a correlation exists between reasons given by older generations of the madani dialect for the use of [q] in certain lexical items (resulting in the absence of [ʔ]), with younger Ammani speakers (as investigated in the present study).

Notes
The following special symbols are used to represent some unique Arabic consonants as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʔ</td>
<td>voiceless glottal stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>voiceless pharyngeal fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kh</td>
<td>voiceless uvular fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>voiceless emphatic alveo-dental fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>voiced emphatic alveo-dental stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>voiceless emphatic alveo-dental stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>th</td>
<td>voiced inter-dental fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>voiceless uvular stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sh</td>
<td>voiceless alveo-palatal fricative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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References


The Resurfacing of Arabic Qaf [q] in the Speech

Al-Hawamdeh & Hamdan


Abstract
This paper is a qualitative case study that aims to explore beliefs and practices of four English lecturers, by focusing on two components related to content knowledge of spoken language teaching, namely spoken forms (grammar and vocabulary), and interactional skills. It also aims to see how their held beliefs influence their teaching practices. To fulfil this purpose, four English lecturers teaching communicative English subject, contextualized in one polytechnic in Malaysia, were purposively selected as participants of the study. The data were gathered through interviews, non-participant classroom observation, as well as collection of relevant documents. The Atlas t.i. program was used to manage the data and thematic analysis was applied in data analysis. Generally, the findings indicate that the participants viewed the knowledge about spoken form as a relevant exposure to students, but it should not be the focal attention of the lesson. They also believed that interactional skills could be acquired through frequent speaking practices, and these beliefs are consistent with their teaching practices. The data also revealed some misconceptions about certain concepts in spoken language, and the teaching of the components in focus is found to be limited. This indicates a lack of depth content knowledge among the lecturers in these specific areas, hence recommendations for appropriate trainings and professional development programs are made to facilitate teachers to be more well-informed with their pedagogical decisions in classroom. In conclusion, this study illuminates the salient role of content knowledge among practicing teachers, as it potentially affects their teaching practices.

Keywords: interactional skills, spoken forms, spoken language teaching, teachers’ beliefs

Introduction

Teachers have a range of beliefs about the subject matter taught - what the subject is about, what it means to know the subject or to be able to carry out tasks effectively within the subject domain (Calderhead, 1996), and these beliefs contribute to the decisions made in their teaching (Richardson, 1996). Calderhead (1996) suggests variation in how teachers view their subject, from being very limited to being very eclectic depending on contexts. It potentially exposes the differences or similarities of how teachers make sense of their instructional practices, in particular language skills subsets, as compared to their conceptions of language teaching and learning in general (Borg, 2003). Beliefs about subject matter and teaching methods that teachers hold guide their beliefs about what students should learn and how the subject should be most effectively taught (Hall, 2005).

Beliefs about subject matter closely reflects teacher knowledge. Research on teacher knowledge commonly investigates Shulman’s domains of knowledge and the knowledge base of specific subject matter possessed by both pre-service and in-service teachers. Teacher knowledge not only serves as the primary source of students’ understanding, but their attitudes and values towards the subject potentially influence students’ conceptions about the subject (Shulman, 1987). Thus Shulman (1987) asserts that “This responsibilities places special demands on the teachers’ own depth of understanding of the structures of the subject matter, as well as on the teachers’ attitudes towards and enthusiasms for what is being taught and learned” (p.9). Relating this to the context of this study, Goh et al. (2005) confirm that lacking of content knowledge (CK) of English language teaching may negatively affect students’ literacy since oracy skills fundamentally related to the development of reading and writing. Besides, Baker (2014) finds that second language (L2) teachers who are pedagogically well equipped tend to apply a wider range of teaching techniques as compared those who are not. Insufficient knowledge of a broad range of techniques put teachers at disadvantage specifically in helping learners to learn the target language (TL) successfully.

Therefore, the study aims to investigate beliefs and practices of four English lecturers in a Malaysian polytechnic, in regard to spoken language teaching by specifically focusing on two essential concepts embedded in the CK of spoken English language teaching, namely spoken forms and interactional skills. Spoken form refers to lexical items and grammar used in English speech corpus, while interactional rules are sub skills required when involved in an interaction, such as opening conversation, turn-taking, interrupting, topic nomination, and etc. These two components are among the salient concepts encompassed in the teachers’ CK of spoken language teaching.

In addition to this, studies in the domain of L2 teachers’ beliefs about oral communication and speaking have been inadequate, except for pronunciation teaching which has recently received much attention (Baker, 2011; Baker & Murphy, 2011; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005; Timmis, 2002). In the area of beliefs and practices about spoken language teaching such as oral skills and conversation, relevant studies have been known to be “rare” (Borg, 2006, p.109) and “underrepresented” (Baker, 2014, p.137), and “relatively little has been documented” (Goh, 2013, p.36). Hence, the present study aims to add the literature in this area, and answers for the following research questions:

i. What are the lecturers’ beliefs about the teaching of spoken forms and interactional skills, as essential content knowledge components in spoken English language teaching?
ii. How do the beliefs affect their teaching practices?

**Literature review**

**Speaking competence**

Communicative competence plays a vital role in L2 pedagogy as it guides language teachers the types of knowledge and skills that should be taught to L2 learners. Furthermore, it provides basis for teachers to strategize their teaching approach, design and select materials that aim for communication in L2 teaching (Celce-Murcia, 2007). Communicative competence, however, has received several criticisms.

Young (2011) points out that the communicative competence model (Canale & Swain, 1980), attempts to establish a link between linguistics acts in social situations and a language user’s underlying knowledge. This model views competence as “a characteristic of a single individual” (Young, 2011, p.429) that distinguish one individual from others. In other words, communicative competence ignores learners’ ability, skills and knowledge to interact and co-construct meanings with others. This is also echoed by Walsh (2012) who stresses that much emphasis has been placed on individual performance than collective competence in language teaching and testing. As a result, learners’ ability is constantly measured according to their accuracy, linguistic forms and range of vocabulary, but their interactional ability in co-constructing meanings with others is overlooked. Hence, interactional competence is conceptualized as the ability to perform the interactional resources mutually and reciprocally, with all participants in a particular context (Young, 2011). McCarthy (2005, p.27-28) refers this as “confluence”, where “speakers contribute to each other’s fluency; they scaffold each other’s performance and make the whole conversation flow”. Unlike other skills, competence in speaking or conversation depends on speakers’ fluency, i.e. using formulaic chunks to collaboratively co-construct, manage and maintain the conversation. Chunks and incomplete sentences are not dysfluent, instead they contribute to fluency and speed up speech rate and conversational flow (McCarthy, 2005).

The plausible role of interactional competence suggests that it has an exceptional contribution to spoken interaction compared to writing skill. Therefore, interactional and communicative competence should be guidelines for language teachers, specifically in English courses where speaking and oral communication are primary. This may suggest that explicit instruction on conversational rules and interactional skills are imperative if teachers are achieving for interactional competence.

**Spoken language instruction**

Guiding by both interactional and communicative competence, the following language components are typically recommended in L2 teaching speaking and teaching conversation guide books and references. Among important components are the generic structure and rules of conversation. L2 learners need to be informed that a conversation has a generic structure (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994; Richards, 2008; Thornbury, 2007). Participants take part in a conversation have the responsibility to keep it going, ideally remain the interaction organized though there are interruptions and simultaneous talk, and adhere to conversational rules when interacting. Hence knowing the typical features of conversation, such as openings, turn-taking, interrupting, topic nomination, adjacency pairs and closings, raises learners’ awareness on how to participate effectively in communication.
Similarly, Richards (2008) suggests teaching oral English according to the purposes of talk. Teaching talk for interaction (establishing and maintaining social relationship), for instance, should include opening and closing conversations, making small talk, recounting personal incidents and experiences, and giving feedback (or back channelling) to what others say. Meanwhile, the teaching of transactional talk (information-transferring function) could be implemented by first exposing students them to relevant lexical phrases and tasks that expose them to real-world situational contexts.

Another component is the linguistics features of spoken register. Thornbury (2007) suggests that L2 learners may not be taught rigorously the grammatical and lexical features of spoken discourse, but they have to be informed and possess the basic knowledge. For instance, employing lexical items of spoken language in the form of formulaic chunks and spoken grammar helps producing fast speed and natural speech. In the same vein, Romer (2008) recommends teachers to teach learners based on language corpora, i.e. exposing them to typical lexical items, the patterns and meanings of a language. This helps learners to improve their receptive and productive skills, compared to teaching uncommon words and structures that are seldom used in real life. Consequently, it enhances fluency and interactional competence. Thornbury (2007) also recommends including in the knowledge of speech acts as this knowledge helps them to recognize the purposes of using the language. Learning speech acts promotes learners to employ formulaic language e.g. lexical phrases, idioms, collocations; in a specific context (Celce-Murcia, 2007; Dörnyei, 2013; Richards, 2008). This is because competent language speakers possess ample of language chunks that become the basis of their speech and is useful for producing automatized, natural and fluent speech under real-time conditions (Dörnyei, 2013; Richards, 2008). According to Hunston (2002 as cited in McCarthy & O’Keeffe, 2004), if learners learn and store this specific feature systematically and holistically, it contributes significantly to their attainment of spoken fluency.

The language components recommended could better inform teachers on how to tailor their lessons and conform to what is supposed to be included in spoken language lessons. But research on classroom practice shows that despite all the theories and principles available, teachers still ground their teaching based on their personal assumptions about language and language learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2001), and how they interpret their surroundings (Borg, 2006; Pajares, 1992; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). For that reason, it is important to understand teachers’ teaching process and the basis that direct their actions. The relationship between belief and practice needs to be understood for the improvement of teachers’ professional development and efficacy particularly in spoken language teaching.

**Studies on teacher knowledge related to oral English teaching**
Zooming the scope into teaching speaking and oral English skills, several studies that specifically examined teacher knowledge related to oral English instruction have pointed out substantial contributions of knowledge base in teaching practices. Goh et al. (2005) investigate teacher knowledge and beliefs about the implementation of the new English language syllabus in Singapore. A part of the study explored teacher knowledge in speaking, listening, grammar, writing, reading and vocabulary teaching. The study discovered that the teachers were least familiar with concepts related to teaching oracy (speaking and listening) skills. Majority of the
teachers had little or no knowledge about significant concepts in teaching speaking (namely talk as performance, talk as process, meaning negotiation, management of interaction, and communicative competence) and only few declared applying the concepts into their teaching. It was deduced that pre- and in-service trainings that inclined to value other language areas more than the oracy skills led to knowledge inadequacy among the teachers, in which potentially influenced literacy since oracy skills is fundamental to the development of reading and writing. The study however did not include in teachers’ actual practice since it relies on only teachers’ self-reported writing and questionnaire.

Grounding on Shulman’s framework of teacher knowledge, Deboer (2007) investigated teacher knowledge of oral language instruction among teachers teaching young children in Utah, USA. The results demonstrated that majority of the teachers had adequate or more than adequate knowledge in only one (general pedagogy) out of seven knowledge domains. Overall, nearly one third of the teachers had less than adequate knowledge of various aspects of oral language instruction. Teachers’ specific knowledge was contributed by English as Second Language (ESL) endorsement, years of teaching experience and special education endorsement but not their level of education. Half of the teachers admitted having less than adequate knowledge of diagnosing students’ language proficiency, which consequently affects their ability to decide appropriate concepts for students from different backgrounds and cognitive abilities (Shulman, 1987). Another relevant study conducted by Baker (2014) looked into pronunciation teaching. The findings demonstrated that teachers who had undergone a course on pronunciation pedagogy employed a wider range of teaching techniques compared to those who did not. This implies that intensive knowledge on specific subject matter positively shapes teachers’ knowledge base particularly on the teaching techniques. In addition, having a limited range of teaching techniques is a drawback for both teachers and students, as it may restraint teachers from exploring further their teaching effectiveness with students.

Other than emphasizing the vital role of knowledge in oral English instruction, there are several other important points highlighted from the studies. First, it could be said that teaching experience may and may not determine teachers’ knowledge development of oral English teaching. As shown in Chen and Goh (2014), though the teachers had more than 10 years of teaching experience, they claimed that they did not have sufficient experience in teaching oral English due to infrequent engagement in teaching and learning oral English. On the contrary, Deboer’s (2007) study confirms that teaching experience lends a hand in the growth of the teachers’ pedagogical knowledge. The diverged findings of both are probably resulted from where the studies are contextualized. Chen and Goh’s (2014) contextualize in China where English is a foreign language which is rarely spoken in social context, but Deboer’s (2007) study situates in the USA, where English is the spoken language. Hence, the context of both studies exerts influence on teachers’ engagement in teaching oral English. Secondly, specific knowledge from professional programs and courses also lends a hand to how they approach the subject and their expansion of knowledge base as corroborated in Goh et al. (2005), Deboer (2007) and Baker (2014). Solid knowledge base facilitates teachers to apply wider range of techniques and strategies which in turn help boost their expertise and confidence to teach. Therefore, this highlights the role of teacher education and professional development programs to both pre- and in-service teachers. Also, it is a challenge for teachers to achieve successful instruction when theoretical guidance is not available, meaning,
lacking of knowledge base in certain subject matter is an obvious disadvantage for both teachers and students.

Methodology

Respondents and Data Collection Sites
As this study employed a Case Study research design, four English lecturers were purposively selected based on three criteria; i) having at least 4 years of teaching English language, ii) having taught English courses in polytechnic for at least 4 semesters, and iii) having bachelor degree in TESL at minimum so that they were equipped with academic knowledge about pedagogies, teaching methods and principles of language learning and teaching for English in L2 context. The research site of the study was a local polytechnic, which was chosen due to its accessibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent (pseudonyms)</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Years of experience</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azra</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>B. Sc. with Ed. (TESL), M. Ed. TESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliza</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>B. Ed. TESL, M. Ed. TESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiro</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>B. Ed. TESL, currently pursuing Master’s degree in TESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirda</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>B. Ed. TESL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study employed multiple sources of data collection namely semi structured interview, stimulated recall interview, classroom observations and collected teaching documents. Multiple sources of data are useful for triangulation which ensures the validity of a qualitative study (Merriam, 2009). Interview intends to obtain matters which cannot be directly observed, such as feelings, thoughts and intentions. To avoid any form of coercion, semi structured interview was carried out during the respondents’ free time or when they were willing to be interviewed. Each respondent was interviewed once, and the audio recording lasted between 32 to 53 minutes. Stimulated recall interview is a strategy where respondents were given a stimulus to verbalize their thoughts about teaching activities that took place during classroom observations. This was to explore their “interpretations of the events represented in the stimuli and of their reasons for the instructional decisions they were taking” (Borg, 2006, p.219). This strategy has been extensively applied in educational research, particularly in the area of language teachers’ beliefs such as in Basturkmen et al. (2004), Wu (2006), Phipps (2009) and Baker (2014) to name a few. In this study, audio recordings, lessons’ descriptions in field notes and instructional materials were the stimuli used to facilitate the respondents to verify their thought processes while teaching or performing certain activities. The first stimulated recall interview session was carried out after three to four observed lessons, and each respondent underwent three stimulated recall interview sessions. All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed for interpretation and then verified by the respondents.

Classroom observations allow researchers to identify routines practiced by individuals under observation which in turn helps to understand the context and occurring behaviours.
Spoken Language Teaching: What Do Teachers Believe in? Abdul Rahim, Yamat & Shah

(Merriam, 2009). Since the study was concerned with spoken language teaching, lessons that represented transactional and interactional functions of language were selected for observations. Each respondent was observed 7 to 8 times that totalled up to almost 39 hours of observations. The observations were audio recorded and illustrated in the field notes.

Data Analysis
All transcriptions of interview interactions were transferred into ATLAS.ti. (v7.5.3) to manage the data and observational data were manually analyzed. The data analysis was guided by Saldana’s (2009) steps of identifying codes-codifying-categorizing-developing themes/concepts. Observational data were meant to record whether or not what the respondents said was consistent with what they did in the classroom. First, the field notes were read and re-read and the audio recordings were listened and re-listened to concurrently to make sense of the observed lessons. Next, significant instructional episodes were transcribed verbatim. In other words, the process of analyzing data in this study was continuous, cyclical and complex. It was continuous in the sense that the initial analysis actually began during the transcription process and ended before the writing-up phase. Grouping the codes into category, how categories formed themes, and the interrelatedness of categories with the identified themes went through multiple rounds of refining process and repeated many times across data sources and individual respondents.

In this paper, words that are italicized are original words used by the participants, meanwhile, ( ) is used in conditions where words are added to enhance clarity of reader’s understanding of the participants’ original utterances. To ease reading, acronyms are used to describe the data sources such as A (Azra), E (Eliza), J (Jiro), W (Wirda), ssi (semi structured interview, sri (stimulated recall interview).

Results and discussion

Spoken form (Grammar and vocabulary components)
The data from interviews and observations demonstrate that the participants perceived spoken form as a supplementary component in spoken language teaching. For instance, Azra would only teach spoken form if she had more time available after covering all other sub skills stated in the syllabus. Meanwhile, both Wirda and Eliza felt that the information about spoken grammar and vocabulary should be integrated in their lessons, and inform students when only needed or incidentally related to the lesson/topic discussed. For Wirda, spoken form should not be the focus of the lesson (W_sri3) and Eliza thought that it should be explained in passing and “...not to the extent of giving notes (to students)” (E_ssi). Although they perceived spoken form as supplemental in spoken language teaching, they felt that the component is a necessary exposure to learners. For instance, Jiro believed that components like colloquial language is necessary for oral communication skills teaching and Wirda expressed that students need to know the differences between written and spoken language (J_ssi; W_ssi). Even though Jiro mentioned colloquial language and Wirda was aware of the differences between spoken and written forms, all participants’ classroom observations did not show any teaching of spoken grammar and vocabulary to students.
Misconceptions

Interestingly, the data gathered led to an interesting finding that exhibits the participants’ misconceptions about spoken form which surprisingly shown by all participant. Eliza interpreted *jargons* as a part of spoken grammar and vocabulary, which she associated that with technical terms used by students related to their field of studies, as she said “*technical students, they have their own terms that they themselves should know* (E_ssl). Oxford dictionary defines jargon as “special words or expressions used by a profession or group that are difficult for others to understand”, and it is typically contextualized to specific types of occupations. This differs from spoken form, which is rather general that includes both linguistic and paralinguistic cues produced during speaking, and atypically related to specific group of people or occupations.

Jiro also appeared to misconstrue a conception about spoken grammar. According to Jiro, group discussion is a task that requires formality, so that students need to be taught *proper grammar* (J_ssl). When he was asked the meaning of *proper grammar*, he explained that it is “*the one that we typically use and write* (J_ssl3). This reflects his misinterpretation that interaction in group discussion requires proper grammar i.e. written grammar, which connotes certain level of formality. Instead, written grammar is typically used in talk-as-performance events that heavily resemble written language and highly value accuracy on forms, such as in classroom presentations, public speaking, and public announcement. The language used in these situations differs considerably from the language used in interpersonal and transactional situations (Richards, 2008). Jiro’s misconception of spoken grammar seems to fit in Thornbury and Slade’s (2006) statement that spoken grammar is assumed to be “…written grammar realized as speech” (p.73). They argue that traditionally, written grammar is thought to be sufficient for both spoken and written language teaching. In fact, written grammar seems to be the ‘default’ grammar for both learning speaking and writing. This is rather misleading since choices of language are not solely generated from written texts but also from oral production (ibid.).

Azra and Wirda also showed misconception pertaining to spoken form. In Azra’s case, her misconception was identified in observation 6, where she was showing some language expressions of making and declining invitation on a power point slide. She explained that these expressions are normally used verbally, though she was aware that they were formal and scripted, as she further added “*maybe it’s very polite, very formal, but that’s how it should go actually*”. These phrases are not typically expressed in social situations where the social distance among speakers is closer. In addition, the choice of lexical items clearly reflects written form. Likewise, Wirda’s verbal data reveal interesting beliefs that indicate her misconception about spoken form. Personally, she felt that students need to be informed the existence of spoken form *but not to really focus that*. In addition, she believed that most importantly, students need to know the proper language construction as found in written texts as this is implied in this quotation “*They are just like ah as we goes by, ‘ah they are actually like this’. The main thing is that thing (proper language construction, expressions)*” (W_ssl3). Another excerpt shown below further indicates her misconception of spoken form.

W_ssl3
...yeah there is tendency of us, like speaks words in chunks, so its habit of us, we tend to do that but actually for conversation maybe you need to consider of the use of full sentences to convey message, something like that. It’s ok to expose them to that I guess

In this excerpt, she perceived speaking in chunks i.e. a feature of spoken form, is a result of speaker’s habit and tendency. She also believed that one should consider of the use of full sentences to convey message in conversation. This implies her concern over producing proper syntax in learning language, her attitude towards spoken forms and her conception about spoken language.

This specific excerpt fits in a conventional argument that views spoken language as low standard and should not be a model for language teaching. Hughes (2011) argues that this negative impression affects how spoken language is treated in teachers’ teaching practice since it is viewed as something that should not be learned and taught to students. Furthermore, this notion opposes the fact that humans speak in chunks, incomplete sentences due to the process of speaking itself, as they need to speed up their speech rate in order to remain fluent and spontaneous (Bygate, 2001; Louma, 2004; McCarthy, 2005). Unlike written language, speech production produced by native English speakers are commonly in simple syntax and the vocabulary are rather general. In fact, competent language speakers are defined by those who possess ample of language chunks that become the basis of their speech, which helps them produce automatized, natural and fluent speech under real-time conditions (Dörnyei, 2013; Richards, 2008). Furthermore, grammatical structure is also proven to be dynamic, contextualized and could be influenced by information structure and interpersonal patterns of interacting (Carter & Nunan, 2001). Hence teaching such information to learners is appropriate and useful for their speaking competence.

Reasons for misconceptions
Interview data show that lacking of CK possibly contributes to the participants’ misconceptions. CK that typically gained during teacher training program did not contribute much to the formation of the participants’ teaching knowledge as disclosed by all participants. For instance, subjects related to discourse in the postgraduate programs attended by Eliza and Jiro were not inclusive as core subjects therefore the subjects were not opted. Besides, programs attended by Jiro and Wirda, while they were in teaching preparatory institutions, such as School Orientation Program, microteaching and practical training, are not significantly useful for real teaching. For Jiro, microteaching and practical training are not relevant as what he learned during the programs could not be assimilated into the real situation. He said that the ideas can be taken but in terms of practicality, it would be different (J_ssi). This finding is comparable to teachers in past studies stated in Goh et al. (2005), Deboer (2007) and Baker (2014). Hence this confirms that professional programs from teacher training institutions potentially contribute to the foundation of teachers’ content and pedagogical knowledge, which in turn, affects how they approach the subject.

Professional development trainings and courses also play a significant role in the construction of the participants’ CK since it offers continuity in teacher professional learning (Goh et al., 2005). However, the courses and trainings organized by Polytechnic Education Department are not specifically related to CK, instead, they aimed for general pedagogy and classroom management as claimed by Wirda and Eliza. The only course that directly relates to the spoken language CK is an oracy course reported by Azra. She described the course as helpful, the input
given refreshes the insight of oracy and literacy and there are interesting ideas that she could apply (A_ssi). Although she claimed to benefit from the course, it is indeed insufficient. The participants strongly felt that the teaching knowledge particularly the ones related to spoken language teaching mostly formed by their former teaching experience, language learning experience, supplemental knowledge gained from internet-self-search, and people from the immediate surrounding such as superior and colleagues.

The participants’ misconceptions about spoken form highlight the need for CK as it could rectify their conception of how spoken language is produced, learned and how it differs from written form. CK related to corpora for instance, informs teachers better about spoken form hence thoughtful considerations could be placed in planning teaching and preparing materials. Not only it benefits teachers, knowing the most common lexical items, the patterns and meanings of a language definitely facilitates learners to develop their receptive and productive skills, as compared to being taught with words and structures that are rarely used in reality (Romer, 2008). Meanwhile, learners also need to have the knowledge of spoken grammar, though conventional grammar knowledge is undeniably fundamental to the development of speaking skill. This knowledge enables them to speak naturally instead of entirely emulating written grammar in their speech production (McCarthy & Carter, 2001). In fact, it would not be effective for L2 and foreign language learners to learn spoken language that grounds on ‘decontextualized written grammar’ (Burns, 1998, p.113).

**Interactional skills**

Interactional skills are skills required when involved in small talk and conversation, which is another component embedded in spoken language teaching. To effectively function in these communicative events, learners have to master the skills including initiating a topic, opening and closing conversation, providing relevant feedbacks through back-channelling, taking turns at appropriate points, acquiring routines and formulaic expressions, using appropriate intonation to express meaning. The participants believed that such skills could be acquired by making students involved in frequent speaking practices. This belief is shared by Azra, Eliza and Wirda and it was reflected in their teaching practices.

Azra believed that interactional skills could be acquired through planned, rehearsed speaking practices where constant practices lead to fluency and help attain interactional skills. This principle is identified in observation 7, where she showed students a video of a small boy (around the age of 5-6 years old) attending phone enquiries. Her justification for the video verifies her belief that speaking naturally could actually be acquired through practices. As she said “…that boy practiced that’s why he managed to…look very natural.” (A_sri3). The boy in the video appeared to be fluent and confident, manage and maintain the conversation successfully. The interaction seemed genuine hence; the phrase look very natural possibly refers to the boy’s fluency, as he displayed certain degree of automaticity and produced effortless and smooth speech. The next evidence is exhibited in observation 5 where a group of students appeared to do group discussion assessment in a scripted dialogue and pre-planned turn taking, albeit it was an impromptu task. When she was asked why the students behaving such a way, she justified that “they plan, they strategize the group discussion in such a way, they want to make sure that everybody speaks. Everybody takes turn” (A_sri2). She also expressed concerns over the task
completion time that the students had. As a result, she reminded students to arrange their turns prior to the task as observed in observation 4.

To show how turn taking should be done, Azra utilized a video (used for Malaysian University English Test (MUET)) to display interactional skills. Handouts photocopied from MUET reference books, containing discussion scripts, along with outlines and language expressions were distributed to students. However, it was found that the MUET video was minimally utilized only for the purpose of showing how group discussion was conducted. The typical features of skills involved in small talk such as openings, turn-taking, interruption, topic nomination, adjacency pairs and closings demonstrated in the video were hardly highlighted. Meanwhile, notes on paralinguistic features were presented in the form of tips of conducting group discussion shown in a slide presentation (A_s2.1).

Similarly, Eliza echoed the same principle as she repeatedly stated that spoken language could be taught through a lot of (speaking) practices that aim to make students perform their interactional skills (E_ssi, E_sri2). When she was asked how to improve students’ interactional skills, she expressed that more role plays and practices (communicative activities) that are out of class activity are needed, referring to activities that take place outside classroom or in real setting. Such activities require students talking to real people, which then develop their confidence to speak (E_sri2, E_sri3). This corresponds with her view on effective oral communication activities or tasks, which she mentioned discussion, exchange dialogue, and role play (E_sri3). Her teaching observation showed that the skill of opening conversation was highlighted through the phrase how do you, how it differs from the phrase how are you, and the proper way of responding to the phrases (observation 2). Paralinguistic features were briefly explained in observation 7 when discussing the topic ‘enquiries about jobs’. She highlighted the importance of intonation and attitude in making phone enquiries since voice intonation gives people impression on callers’ feelings and moods. Overall, classroom observations indicated that the teaching of interactional skills was implicit and in passing, whereby the skills were embedded in the explanation of language functions. The skills were also highlighted through feedback typically given after completion of activities. Input related to conversational rules was explained in brief, i.e. limited to what was included in the module. In fact, she admitted that teaching turn taking and language functions (e.g. giving suggestions) was done as found in the module (E_ssi). Students were given numerous group-mode speaking activities so that they practiced using the TL with their friends, which this reflects communicative approach principles.

In the similar vein, Wirda believed in giving students ample of speaking practices, so that students would literally use the TL. She opined impromptu speech conducted with students individually, is an effective way to improve students’ interactional skills as the activity promotes spontaneity and confidence (W_ssi, W_sri3). In addition, she believed that speaking practices should not focus on forms; instead students should be encouraged to speak freely as long as the message is delivered. Wirda also stressed the importance of having background knowledge about topics discussed in improving interactional skills. In observation 3, she assigned students an assessed task, two weeks prior to the assessment day, so that students could research on the assigned topic. Ideally, students were expected to discuss extensively and confidently due to lengthy preparation time given. However, during the actual assessment observed, it was noticeable
that some students might have used the time, to write and memorize their discussion script. Thus, the distribution of speaking turns and their intonation appeared to be pre-planned, artificial and scripted, though it helped the weaker ones to accomplish the task. For this, she justified that knowing the discussion topic well would give students confidence and this would help them to deliver points naturally (W_sri2). Therefore, adequate time was given to student to search for points so that they would be confident to speak. Another component taught was speaker’s role and intentions which was unintentionally taught (in observation 5). Strangely, this topic was taught in the final lesson of the unit oral communication skills. Finally, paralinguistic features were highlighted through feedback after practices done by students, as seen in observation 3.

Jiro’s teaching practice exhibited that turn taking and providing appropriate feedback and responses were taught when students were preparing for their group discussion (observation 2 and 3). In observation 3, turn taking was highlighted while he was giving feedback to students after their group discussion practices, as he said, “Don’t wait for your friends to speak, because you only have 3 minutes”. Another spotted example was when he taught student to interrupt only in the second round of the discussion, as he said “interruption is not allowed in the second round. So you make interruption in the second round”. Meanwhile, in observation 2, providing appropriate responses was taught on how to perform language functions such as through making and countering suggestions. However, he inclined to associate the targeted language functions to assessment and attaining marks. As seen in observation 2, he cautioned students, “You cannot counter suggestion in the first round because you are given 2 minutes to introduce your points”. Other than that, students were frequently reminded to use variety of phrases to perform speech acts so that they could achieve high marks for language (J_sri1). His teaching practice suggests his inclination towards assessment whereby lessons were meant to prepare students to attain high marks. Meanwhile, Jiro’s explanation on paralinguistic features (voice projection, facial expressions and eye contact) was identified in observation 3, yet again; it was associated with scoring marks, reflecting his overriding concern for passing assessment. Unlike the other participants, Jiro seemed to be assessment oriented as his beliefs and teaching practiced were mostly guided by obtaining marks and completing assessments.

Azra, Eliza and Wirda’s beliefs and practices grounded on the notion that frequent speaking practices would lead to acquisition of interactional skills, which consequently build their confidence to speak. This notion seems to be rooted from indirect approach that views communicative competence as the product of engaging learners in conversational interaction (Richards, 1990). Cook (1989) argues that this approach may provide learners the knowledge of language system but it does not provide learners with appropriate skills needed when interacting in small talk. In a multiple-speakers-interaction, learners should know their responsibility as a speaker and a listener, as speaking is reciprocal where meaning is jointly co-constructed, and turns and interaction are cooperatively contributed and maintained to achieve a smooth discussion (Tannen, 1989; McCarthy, 2005). In other words, a multiple-speakers-interaction is multifaceted and involves complicated skills, thus having confidence to express words fluently is insufficient. Besides, teachers and students need to know that real communication demands “more than knowledge of the language system and the factors creating coherence in one-way discourse” (Cook, 1989, p.117). Hence it rationalizes why interactional skills were not the focus of their instructions, as it was minimal, implicit and lacks of emphasis.
Conclusion

The findings exhibited that the lecturers believed the knowledge about spoken form as a relevant exposure to students but it is a peripheral component in spoken language teaching. This is reflected in their teaching practices whereby none of spoken forms were taught in their teaching practice, perhaps due to their belief that spoken form is a less significant component.

They also held several other discrete beliefs that indicate misconception about spoken form, which suggests lack of depth CK in these specific areas (spoken forms, conversational rules). For instance, there is an indication that they thought spoken grammar as a less formal version of written grammar. This notion is rather inaccurate, as corpora have confirmed that there are apparent differences between the two (their structures, in particular) even though they share similar foundational grammar (Biber, 2010). In addition, Wirda had the idea that spoken language that typically produced in chunks and incomplete, should not be a model taught to students because of its improper structures and features. On the contrary, speaking in chunks and incomplete nature of spoken language contribute to speakers’ fluency as it accelerates speech rate and conversational flow (McCarthy, 2005). This is, in fact, a requirement of being a competent speaker of a language who should be in “in command of thousands (if not tens of thousands) of language chunks, and use them as basic building blocks in their speech and writing” (Dörnyei, 2013, p.168). These misconceptions are also representations of their beliefs which are reflected in their teaching practices.

Also, the lecturers believed that interactional skills could be attained through frequent speaking practices. This belief guided their teaching practices as students were immersed in ample of communicative activities to literally practice the TL. This approach, however, is proven to be less effective for interactional competence. Hence, the findings signal a need for the lecturers to re-examine their teaching strategies that promote interactional competence and prepare learners for more challenging communicative situations. Finally, since their beliefs about CK components of spoken language instruction have been linked to knowledge inadequacy, the findings of the study could illuminate the potential types of courses and trainings needed by in-service English lecturers in polytechnic. Providing courses related to content and pedagogical knowledge also seem to appropriately fill the needs of these lecturers.

About the Authors

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References


Spoken Language Teaching: What Do Teachers Believe in?  Abdul Rahim, Yamat & Shah


Students’ Attitudes towards Cambridge Unlock Workbook: English Intermediate I Level at Birzeit University

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Abstract
The purpose of this study is to investigate the attitudes of English Intermediate I students at Birzeit University (BZU) towards Cambridge Unlock online homework. It also aims at evaluating the effectiveness of the online activities, from the students’ perspective, in regard to their in-class language learning skills; reading, writing, listening, speaking, and vocabulary building. The sample for this study is 200 undergraduate students at BZU who were placed at English Intermediate I level. A questionnaire was given to the students during the second month of their second semester. The overall results of the students’ responses showed inconclusive attitude towards online homework. Only 22.5% of the students thought it was more helpful than traditional homework. While an average of 66% of students’ responses showed that the online homework was beneficial to their in-class language skills activities; reading, vocabulary, and listening; an average of 48% only stated that it was effective in improving their writing skills. In addition, the written comments on the online program provided by a total of 141 students showed a negative attitude towards the online homework program with only 20% who stated that it was beneficial to their language learning.

Key words: attitudes, Cambridge Learning Management System, Cambridge Unlock online workbooks, language learning, online homework

1. Introduction

Birzeit University has adopted Cambridge Unlock English teaching program for the academic year 2016/2017. The decision was based on the assumption that upon the completion of the required courses, exiting students would be able to meet the standards required for the job market and/or further studies.

The Cambridge Unlock English program has four levels: Remedial (A1), Intermediate I (A2), Intermediate II (B1), and Advanced (B2). Freshman students who enter BZU take a placement test and are placed in the appropriate level based on their score. Students who enter at a level lower than English communication Intermediate I (1201/1202), which is the focus of this study, must complete the Remedial (A1) English communication course as a prerequisite. To advance from one level to another, students at BZU are required to complete a minimum of 150 to 180 instructional hours spread over two semesters.

2. English 1201/1202 A2 Course Description:

The Unlock Cambridge courses are aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) which divides language activities into four kinds: reception (listening and reading), production (spoken and written), interaction (spoken and written), and mediation (translating and interpreting).

ENG 1201/1202 is a two-credit hour courses that integrate the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing which help students do the following:

1. Understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (basic personal and family information, local geography, employment).
2. Communicate in basic and routine tasks requiring simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.
3. Describe background immediate environment, interests or activities.
4. Read short simple texts, including short, simple personal letters and emails; find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables.
5. Write short simple notes, messages, and emails relating to matters in areas of immediate need; write a simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something (A2 Cambridge Course Mapping).

The Unlock Cambridge Online workbook works hand in hand with the main course book. The A2 Level course books are divided into ten themed-based Units: Places, Festivals and Celebrations, School and Education, The Internet and Technology, Language and Communication, Weather and Climate, Sports and Competition, Business, People and Space and the Universe (A2 Cambridge student textbook).

The online workbook provides a structured approach to learning that builds on the language and critical skills covered in the classroom through fun, engaging, and interactive reading, writing, speaking, listening and language development activities with easy to use multiple choice questions, drag and drop, and unscrambling words. In addition, the online workbook includes high interest
documentary style video from Discovery Education and fun games like Sentence Stacker and Speak or Swim (Cambridge LMS Video).

3. **Research Questions**
   
   This study attempts to answer the following questions:
   
   1. What is the students’ attitude towards Cambridge Unlock online workbook?
   2. Do the students believe that the online workbook practice is an effective tool that enhances their face-to-face in-class language learning?
   3. Compared to traditional homework, do the students believe that online homework is more effective in their language learning?

4. **Significance of the study**
   
   Cambridge Unlock online workbook is a supplement to the in-class face- to- face language instruction. The implementation of this program at BZU was an attempt to provide our English as a foreign language (EFL) students with extra exposure to activities through online learning environment in the hope of meeting language standards required for their studies and future jobs. The purpose of this study was to analyze the attitudes of the targeted population 1201/1202 (A2 level) students in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program in terms of enhancing their language learning skills and achieving the course objectives.

5. **Literature Review**
   
   Homework is an essential component of course works at many educational institutes. It is a wide spread educational activity that has been long viewed as an important part of the teaching and learning process (Xu, & Wu, 2013). Cooper (2011), an expert in homework and achievement defines homework as “tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-instructional time” (as cited in Bembenutty, 2011, p.185).

   Homework can be assigned for many different reasons. It can reinforce the material that has already been presented in class (National Education Association 2008). It also fosters students’ initiative independence (Horawitz, 2005). In addition, it helps students develop positive attitudes towards learning and personal responsibility (Cooper, 2007).

   At the language Department of BZU, EFL students are assigned homework to develop, review, and reinforce specific reading and writing skills that has been taught in class and to prepare them for up-coming materials that will be presented in class. Traditional pen-pencil homework and online home work are assigned as supplements to face-to- face in-class instruction. Hence online homework is an extrinsic motivational tool to encourage students to practice their language learning skills. To ensure that students complete their assignments, online homework is a required part of the course work representing 20% of the students’ total course grade.

5.1 **What role can homework play in EFL language learning?**

   Homework is essential for language learning for students who live in places where English is not the dominant language of teaching, and is therefore taught as a foreign language. EFL learners need to practice the four skills; reading, listening, speaking, and writing to develop their skills in that language (Yabarra & Green, 2003).
With only two to three hours of in-class instruction a week, students at BZU as EFL learners, including the sample students of this study, are given homework to increase their exposure to the English language, to encourage them to use their English knowledge and to continue learning outside the classroom. With the implementation of the Cambridge Unlock program, the students are also required to complete work on Cambridge Online workbook that has been included in the syllabus in order to provide them with a chance to learn independently, to be responsible of their own learning, and above all to become autonomous learners.

Within the context of cognitive theories of second language acquisition, language learning is perceived as a conscious, thinking process that internalizes the processes that can contribute to language development and the activities that help stimulate these processes (Lamy & Hampel, 2007). Accordingly, homework assignments that are given to students at BZU, whether traditional, or online work, can be classified as activities that contribute to students’ language learning.

Krashen’s input hypothesis (1981, 1985), which had a profound effect on cognitive theories of second language acquisition, asserts that humans can acquire second language by receiving “comprehensible input”. In regard to classroom learning, Krashen states that “the major function of the second language learning classroom is to provide intake for acquisition” (1981, p101). This can be realized through meaningful and communicative activities, and through exposure to language in a particular context (Lamy & Hampel, 2007).

With the development in technology, nowadays, most educational institutes around the world, including BZU, employ online learning environment and use computers and the internet as tools in learning. As more computer assisted-learning programs and software applications such as Learning Management System (LMS) have become widely used in educational settings, several studies and researches were conducted to study their application in the field of education. Many of these studies confirm the effectiveness of their use in EFL learning by improving the students’ language skills (e.g. Eggers & Wooten, 2011; Socket & Toffoli, 2012; Okada, Sakamoto, & Sugiura, 2014; Amiryyousefi, 2016). With the widespread use of technology in classrooms, learners are not only provided with “comprehensible input” but also with a platform for interaction where they can work with, negotiate meaning with peers as well as their instructors (Lamy & Hampel, 2007).

The Cambridge Unlock LMS which is implemented at BZU provides the instructor with tools, such as Forums, Blogs and Wikis to help manage classes and provide additional opportunities for communicative activities. Students can submit written responses to the task and attach files containing documents, slide show presentations, spreadsheets audio and images. By using the tools of the Cambridge LMS, students are provided with opportunities for communication that are extended outside of the classroom. Learners can make use of these tools to share their work with the teacher or with the class as a whole. The instructor can post a topic at the Forums that can be used for class discussions; blogs can be used for extended writing practice where the class can comment on each other’s writing; and Wiki allows the learners to work together on different class projects (Teacher’s Guide to the Unlock Online Workbooks and the Cambridge Learning Management System, 2014).

5.2 Drawbacks of online homework
In a study that was conducted by Wooten and Dillard-Eggers (2013), the researchers came up with generally favorable results regarding online homework, however, they conclude that among high intrinsic motivated students, online homework did not make a significant difference in their grade improvement. These students will do well using both the traditional pen–pencil homework and the online homework systems. Online homework will unlikely increase these students’ motivation, to the contrary, it might inhibit these students from being pushed to their full potential. The researchers also conclude that benefits from online homework were more evident among low–performing students in their grading scores (Wooten & Eggers, 2013).

In a paper that discusses the pros and cons of online homework, Penner, Kreuze, Langsam, & Kreuze (2016) infer that research is not clear on the possible benefits of online homework. They state that just like any learning tool, online homework has both advantages and disadvantages. Their conclusions were based on several studies on online homework they present in their paper. However, none of these studies were language learning related. Penner et al. (2016) classify these studies based on three main categories regarding the effectiveness of online homework; favorable results, (Wooten & Eggers, 2008, 2013); inconclusive results (Basile, 2001); (Gaffney, Ryan & Wurst, 2010); (Fatemi, Marquis & Wasan, 2014); and unfavorable results (Hahn, Fairchild & Dowis, 2013). Penner et al. specify some disadvantages of online homework system. They state that instructors may not be aware of learning difficulties among individual students, as they are not personally grading the homework. In addition, multiple submissions of answers by students may encourage lazy habits among students and professors. They also refer to frustrations encountered by students using the online homework system either with the inabilities to log on or with errors and inconsistencies in the solution. They further add that the use of technology to learn should not only be used to satisfy course requirements, but rather it should be perceived by students as an essential component for learning and academic growth (Penner & et al., 2016).

Based on our personal experience with online homework in the Language Department at BZU, some of the above-mentioned concerns hold true. Several of our EFL students encounter technical problems logging on into their accounts especially for their first time. Students also complain about technical problems while working on their activities. On several occasions, the system has rejected correct answers and failed to save some of the students’ work. Furthermore, the multiple attempts feature to submit the answer is also a major concern to some instructors since it allows the students to guess the answers without giving it a deep thought. In addition, some students, who are not highly motivated, omit ungraded activities or complete the task without exerting serious effort especially when it comes to some of the writing tasks.

5.3 What role does the student’s attitude play in language learning?

Attitudes towards the learning situation can be defined as “the individual’s reaction to anything associated with the immediate context in which language is taught,” (Gardener & Masgoret, 2003, p.172). In Gardner’s psychological theory of second language learning, learners’ attitudes towards language learning play an essential role in language learning. Gardener and Lambert (1972) consider that the learner’s motivation for language learning would be determined by his attitudes and by the orientation to the whole process of learning a foreign language. According to Gardner (1985), attitudes and motivation are just as important as aptitude for predicting second language learning. Gardener and his associates investigated the relationship of second language learning achievement to the five attitudes and motivation variables from Gardener’s socioeducational...
model: integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, motivation, integrative orientation, and instrumental orientation. The results of their study show that all five variables have a positive relationship to achievement in second language learning (Gardener & Masgoret, 2003).

From our personal experience as educators, we share the same belief that favorable attitudes towards online homework can motivate our EFL learners to take advantage of the extra practice provided by online homework to improve their language skills and their in-class face to face language learning.

6. Methodology
6.1 Student sample
The study sample consisted of 200 regular students that were randomly picked out of the 901 students at BZU of the English 1201/1202 (A2) course classes. The 200 participants, who are from different faculties at BZU, were asked to respond to a questionnaire designed by the researchers. Seven sections were randomly selected to participate in the survey at the second semester of the academic year 2016/2017. Each section was taught by a different instructor. The participants in the study were placed in the A2 level (1201/1202) based on their score in the placement test to meet the university requirement courses for EFL.

Table 1: Distribution of students according to their gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>68.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Distribution of students according to their academic year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first year (freshman)</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second year (sophomore)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>99.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fourth (senior)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 Instrument
Quantitative research methodology was utilized to carry out this study. The researchers employed a survey methodology to collect and analyze the data. The survey contained Likert-type scale. The questionnaire was administered by several course instructors in class during the second semester of 2016/2017. The quantitative data was prepared for analysis using the statistical package for research software program SPSS. In addition, the researchers used the qualitative method by including one open-ended question to generate additional comments on the students’ own experiences and personal view on Cambridge Unlock online homework.

7. Results and discussion
The questionnaire given to the students was divided into four major domains. The first is in regard to general information about the participants; gender, year at the university, and the intended major (questions 1-3). The second domain is related to students’ evaluation of the effectiveness of online homework. It answers the study question: Do the students believe that the online workbook practice is an effective tool that enhances their face-to-face in class language learning? (questions 4-13). The third domain is related to students’ attitudes towards online homework and how do these students feel about online homework compared to traditional pen-pencil homework. It answers the study question: Compared to traditional homework, do students believe that online homework is more effective in their language learning? (questions 14-17). In addition, the students were asked general questions about their experience working with online homework, their approach when they attempt to work on the activities, and the number of hours they spend working online per week (see appendix B).

7.1 General questions domain
In regard to students’ experience working with online homework, students’ responses indicated that only 40% of the students have had good working experience skills with online homework. However, the majority had limited, very limited, to no experience at all. Based on students’ responses on how they complete their online activities, almost 53% of the students stated that they work independently, while 29% ask others for help. In addition, 11%
of the students check the correct answer before doing the activities. Finally, 7.5% of the students said that they make guesses.

By analyzing the students’ responses to the time they spend working online, the responses showed that there is a big discrepancy between the time allocated by female students to online work and male students. While 69% of female students reported that they spend 1-5 hours a week working online, only 29% of male students stated that they spend the same number of hours working online (see appendix B for general questions domain).

7.2 The second domain: Students’ evaluation of the effectiveness of online homework in regard to their language learning

The overall percentage of students’ responses showed a high percentage of students who agreed that the online homework was effective with their in class language learning skills (see appendix A). Analysis of the survey revealed the following:

1. Seventy three percent agreed that it was helpful with their in-class reading passages.
2. Sixty eight percent agreed that it was helpful with understanding in-class activities and exercises.
3. Eighty two percent agreed that it was helpful with learning the targeted vocabulary for each unit.
4. Fifty nine percent agreed that the online workbook practice helped them in writing complete and grammatically correct sentences.
5. Seventy three percent agreed that it prepared them for their in-class tests and quizzes.
6. Sixty seven percent agreed that it was helpful in pronouncing difficult words.
7. Sixty four percent agreed that it improved their in-class oral communications.
8. Sixty nine percent agreed that the online homework helped them in understanding the in-class listening activities.
9. Forty four percent agreed that the online homework practice helped them in writing a well-structured and coherent paragraph.

Even though 59% of the students agreed that the online homework practice helped them in writing complete and grammatically correct sentences, only 44% believed that online homework helped them in writing a well-structured and a coherent paragraph. Even though the two tasks are related, the divisiveness in opinion could be explained by the fact that the majority of the in-class writing tasks are at a paragraph level. So even if the students were able to write grammatically correct and complete sentences, they still need other skills to enable them to write a well structured and organized paragraph.

7.3 The third domain: Students’ attitudes towards online homework

By studying the responses to these questions, we noticed that even though only 31% of the students said that they prefer traditional homework, the students’ responses did not show any significance difference in preference to the type of homework. None of the mentioned features of online homework received a high percentage of choice. Only 15% of the students thought that online homework was engaging, 42% preferred online homework for providing extra practice, and 40% thought that the immediate feedback of online homework is a preferred feature. Based
on these responses, there is no significant indicator of a favorable attitude toward the two types of homework among these students.

### Table 4: Preference of the type of homework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15) I prefer online homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It gives immediate feedback</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have more time to complete my work</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It provides more practice</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is more engaging</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) I prefer traditional homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It takes less time</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer my instructor's feedback</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easier</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer working with a pen and paper</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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#### 7.4 Online homework versus traditional homework

When students were asked to evaluate how helpful the online homework was compared to traditional homework given by their instructor, only 22.5% responded that online homework was more helpful. With a 39% combination of those who said it was less helpful and not helpful, the response to this question can be interpreted in more than one way. If we consider the “just as helpful” neutral, then we can come to the conclusion that the majority of the students believe that online homework is not a helpful tool and therefore is not needed, but if we count that percentage as” just as helpful”, then that could mean that majority of students see no difference between traditional homework and online homework.

Figure 1: Overall comparison between online and traditional homework
7.5 *Qualitative open ended question analysis*

In the survey, students were also asked to add any additional comments on Cambridge Unlock online homework. The students’ responded with comments on time on task, program evaluation, experience, effectiveness of the program to their learning, recommendations, technical problems etc. Based on the students’ comments, the researchers grouped these responses into seven major items. The online workbook activities were: a) time consuming, b) not beneficial and a waste of time, c) beneficial to language learning, d) difficult, e) boring, f) with technical problems, and g) should be cancelled.

A summary of the major findings are listed in the following table

**Table 5: Students’ written comments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time consuming</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not beneficial and a waste of time</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beneficial to their language learning</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>58.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boring</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difficult</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>80.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with technical problems</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>should be cancelled</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>System</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. In regard to their language learning; 40 students, (20%) commented in favor of online homework indicating that it was beneficial to their language learning and helped them improve their language learning. However, 12 of these 40 added that even though it was beneficial to their learning, online work was still time consuming.
2. The majority commented on the time on task. Twenty-one students (10%) thought that online work was time consuming. It takes too much of their studying time.
3. The third highest comment indicated negative attitude towards online homework; 22, (11%) of students wrote that online work was a waste of time and not beneficial to their learning.
4. Another negative comment was in regard to how boring the activities were; 14 students (7%) wrote that the online work was boring.
5. Eighteen students (9%) referred to technical problems and the unavailability of internet access outside the campus.
6. Sixteen students (8%) mentioned that the activities were difficult.
7. Ten students (5%) stated that they were better off with the traditional homework and recommended that the online homework should be deleted.

8. **7.6 Variables**

Correlations were computed among hours spent on the online homework activities, gender, majors and students’ attitudes. About 69% of female students spent 1-5 hours a week working online homework, whereas 29% of male students spent the same amount of time working on their online homework. We believe that this difference in percentage could be attributed to several factors. Based on our experience working with our EFL students, female students tend to be more responsible towards their studies especially in completing homework assignments. The second reason might be related to students’ schedule. Several of our male students have part time jobs to help with their tuitions and daily life expenses. Between attending classes on campus and reporting to their jobs, their schedule does not provide them with as much time as female students to spend on online homework.

A high percentage of students from the different faculties commented on time on task. About 44% of the students of the different colleges especially from the Arts and the Business and Commerce Colleges believed that the online homework is time consuming and a waste of time. About 30% of the Business and Commerce College and 20% of the Arts College went even further and recommended to cancel the program as a whole. A reasonable justification for this attitude is that students believe that the online homework is taking the time away from studying for other subjects.

9. **Conclusion**

This study has highlighted the role of online homework as a language learning tool that is utilized by EFL language learners. It attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of this tool through analyzing the attitudes of ENGC 1201/1202 (A2) EFL students towards Cambridge Unlock online homework at BZU that adopted this program. The overall results of the students’ responses show an inconclusive attitude towards online homework. While a significant percentage of the sample students stated that the online homework helped them in their in-class language skills activities; reading, vocabulary, and listening; a low percentage stated that it was effective in improving their writing skills. In addition, students did not show major significant preference to online homework. Only 22.5% of the students thought it was more helpful than traditional homework. The overall program evaluation expressed in the students’ written comments received relatively lower favorable percentages. Only 20% of the students provided positive comments on the online homework.

To conclude, no one language learning tool can be the sole “fix it all” for all language learners. What is certain in the field of EFL language learning and teaching is that every learning tool, including the online homework, can have its own advantages and disadvantages and the effectiveness of any method varies from one learner to another.
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References:
Birzeit University, English Communication Courses. http://www.birzeit.edu
Online Homework vs Pen and Pencil Homework.pdf


**Appendices:**

**Appendix A: Students’ evaluation of the effectiveness of online homework in regard to their language learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions from 3-13</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3- The online workbook practice improved my understanding of the in-class reading passages</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- The online workbook activities improved my understanding of the in-class exercises and activities</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- The online workbook practice helped me in learning the vocabulary from each unit.</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- The online workbook practice helped me in improving my writing skills</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- The online workbook practice helped me in writing complete and grammatically correct sentences</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- The online workbook practice helped me in writing a well-structured and coherent paragraph</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9- The online workbook practice helped me in completing my in-class writing task effectively</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Students’ Attitudes Towards Cambridge Unlock Workbook

| 10- | The online work line practice helped me improving my in-class oral communication skills | 8.5% | 55.0% | 29.5% | 7.0% |
| 11- | The online workbook practice helped me in pronouncing difficult words correctly | 10.0% | 56.5% | 9.5% | 24.0% |
| 12- | The online workbook practice helped me in understanding the in-class listening material | 13.0% | 56.0% | 8.0% | 23.0% |
| 13- | The online workbook practice prepared me for in-class tests and quizzes | 18.0% | 55.0% | 7.0% | 20.0% |

### Appendix B: General questions domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>While working on the online workbook activities</th>
<th>Work independently</th>
<th>Ask others for help</th>
<th>Make guesses</th>
<th>Check the correct answer first</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prior to this course my working experience with online homework was:</th>
<th>Null (had no experience)</th>
<th>Very limited</th>
<th>Limited</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours per week spent working on online homework</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hours</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Principles in Classroom Practices

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Abstract:
Vocabulary teaching and learning principles assist in providing effective teaching and learning methods, in accordance with the learners’ proficiency level. However, studies that looked into the relevancy of those principles are rather limited. Thus, this study focuses on finding the common practices of vocabulary teaching and learning principles in the classroom. Interviews involving three experts were done to determine their vocabulary teaching and learning principles application in their teaching. Based on the data analysed using Atlas.ti, out of ten Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Principles, only eight were practiced by the participants. The findings revealed that these experts, even though practice the principles, the approaches were varied. Finally, the data points to the need for future studies on the importance of having good vocabulary instructions in teaching and learning vocabulary.

Key words: principles, vocabulary teaching and learning, vocabulary

Introduction

Language has given human beings the ability to communicate with each other, forming a complex system of communication, and within each language vocabulary stands as the basis for the language. Schmitt (2008) states that vocabulary should be considered as more than a set of single-word units, and Ngan-ha (2007) defines vocabulary as the smallest unit in the language. Thus in mastering a language, it is crucial for the learner to acquire the vocabulary. It is known that vocabulary is significant in learning of language, particularly of a second language or foreign language learning, for vocabulary holds an important role in learning English because it is the basic of the language skill (Kurniawan, 2009). Wilkins (1972) briefly notes: ‘without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed’ (p111-112). Acquiring vocabulary and gaining sufficient vocabulary size have often become a stumbling block to some students due to several discerning factors including learning disability, lack of exposure to English, lack of self-confidence, and lack of knowledge about the right vocabulary strategies (Yunus et.al, 2016).

In acquiring vocabulary, many strategies and principles have been introduced (Barcroft, 2004; Kang, 2015; Kurniawan, 2009; Lopez Campillo, 1995; Manyak & Bauer, 2009; Meara, 1984; Nation, 1995; Schmitt, 2007; Rashid, 2012), even though there are many principles, studies that looked into its applicability are rather limited. Thus this paper aims to determine the most applicable vocabulary teaching and learning principles, and what experts say about those principles in term of their applicability in classroom practices.

Vocabulary Learning

In learning new language, learners would apply as many strategies as possible in order to master the target language in the shortest time possible. Most of the strategies practiced are usually focusing on the vocabulary acquisition. The reason is that vocabulary is the smallest unit learners need to know in order to use the target language properly (Ngan-ha, 2007; Deighton, 1971; Kurniawan, 2009; Milton, 2008; Seville, 1976). Learners must attain a certain level of vocabulary knowledge in order to understand the written and spoken forms of the target language (Ngan-ha, 2007). This is why Long and Richards (2007) regard it as ‘the core component of all the language skills’. Thus failure to gain an adequate vocabulary can give negative consequences to communication.

In order to achieve a certain level of vocabulary acquisition, learners have to use various strategies to be successful in their learning process (Schiefkele as cited in Zhelyazova, 2011). Besides, teachers also hold an immense responsibility in ensuring the success of acquisition among learners. This is because learners are particularly interested in receiving vocabulary instruction (James as cited in Barcroft, 2004). Thus, vocabulary acquisition depends not only on how learners learn, but also how they are taught. Consequently, many scholars have come out with teaching and learning principles for teachers and learners to teach and learn vocabulary respectively. Of all the principles introduced, ten principles were found to be essential in ensuring vocabulary acquisition (Richards and A. Renandya, 2008).
Principle 1: Select Appropriate Words
Selecting appropriate words is the most important principle in teaching and learning vocabulary. Words that are considered appropriate are words that are comprehensible by learners and are coherent to their proficiency level. In the case of vocabulary acquisition, the input needs to convey meaning and be comprehensible so that learners are able to attach form to meaning. The meaning of a new word may be more readily inferred by learners if they could completely comprehend the larger input set in which this word appears (Barcroft, 2004). Besides being comprehensive, words chosen should also be advantageous for students (Kurniawan, 2009). Useful words are words that learners need to use often in their language use situations (A, 2000).

On the one hand, learners should know what their vocabulary goals are and choose what vocabulary to focus on in terms of their selected goals (He, 2010). This is why Nation develops a general classification of vocabulary learning strategies, and the first planning is to choose words (Nation, 2001).

Principle 2: Focus on Different Aspects of Words
Vocabulary acquisition will be more effective when a particular word is learned based on several aspects. The reason is that a word carries so much more than just its meaning (Kieran A. File, 2000). For example, amongst other things, students can learn a word’s stress (accent), pronunciation (phoneme), its collocations and word family members, its grammatical patterns and word parts of speech. Learning different aspects of words may help learners to enrich their knowledge on vocabulary.

As for teachers, one of the strategies that they should be using to teach vocabulary more effectively is by introducing (if there is no special purpose) a variety of vocabulary type (noun, verb, adjective, adverb) to learners (Kurniawan, 2009). Study of roots and affixes is also known to be helpful to multiple student populations. This is because word parts, especially affixes and roots, are vital for English language learners who need the tools to deconstruct unfamiliar words independently (Carol & Nancy as cited in James & Erik, 2013). Thus, teachers should be able to introduce two word parts each week, either an affix (there are two kinds: suffixes, which usually come at the end of words, and prefixes, which come at the beginning of words) or a root word, or some combination thereof (two affixes, an affix and a root, a root and a suffix, etc.) (James & Erik, 2013).

Principle 3: Progress from Less Demanding to More Demanding Vocabulary-related Activities
Learners should not be expected to use new words in activities that require them to know every aspect of the words. This is inconsistent with how the process of language vocabulary acquisition must take place (Barcroft, 2004). Instead, the process of learning vocabulary needs to be implemented step by step, and learners are encouraged not to immediately use new words in vocabulary-oriented activities. For instance, learners need to be given an opportunity to process the new words as input first. Then, learners should be getting a chance to use the new words in contexts, based on their parts of speech.
Once learners are able to identify new words in their contexts and make meaning out of it, more demanding vocabulary-related activities can be done. This is similar to Kieran’s (2000) fourth principle of teaching vocabulary which highlights that it is not enough to simply tell students the meanings of words or get them to only study words out of context. They need opportunities to see or hear target words in a meaningful context, and opportunities to use target words in meaningful writing and speaking tasks. Students need to be challenged to find these words in reading or listening passages and use them in particular writing and speaking tasks.

**Principle 4: Limit Forced Semantic Elaboration during the Initial Stages of Learning New Words**

Following the third principle above, teachers should limit the explanation of meaning of the new words to just the basic meaning, as to avoid confusion and misunderstanding from learners of the new language. For example, teachers should not explain the word “bear” by giving a complicated unrelated definition to the students like “a person who expects the price of stocks to go down and who sells them to avoid losing money” which is a term under “finance” and a “noun”. Instead, teachers should limit the meaning of “bear” to just “one of a group of large and heavy animals that have thick hair and sharp claws and that can stand on two legs like a person” which is as a “noun”, and “something that is difficult to do or deal with” which is a “verb”, and not to relate to any other complicated meaning that is out of the learners’ lexicon or understanding.

Additionally, RobWaring (2002) states that students should not face with material that is too difficult as they will not be able to guess successfully. It will also not be easy for them to add new knowledge to what they already know. Material that is a little easy is beneficial for language learners to improve themselves. This is because they already know all the words and will soon be able to build their word recognition speed.

**Principle 5: Encourage Interest among Students during Learning Process**

Vocabulary teaching and learning should be interesting and enjoyable as to keep motivation high while encouraging students to develop strategies that they can continue to use once they leave the classroom. Besides giving learners some opportunities to enjoy their learning process, teachers should also take learners’ perspective into consideration when it comes to preparing the learning materials. In other words, learners should be given a chance to say what they like and dislike. Most often, pictures as visual aids will attract students' attention, and motivate them to learn (Febrianti, 2013). In whatever way language is taught and learned, the key element is to ensure the learning process is easier for students. When students have no interest in the subject, it would mean that there shall be less attention given by learners (Kurniawan, 2009). Thus it is important to maintain the learners’ motivation so that they are able to be attentive and willing to participate within the classroom (Clydesdale, 2006).

**Principle 6: Accommodate Use of Contextual Cues**

Vocabulary can be taught better through the use of contextual cues. It helps to ease many teachers in explaining the meaning of new words to learners. Teachers can use materials such as realia, pictures, past experiences and examples to depict the connection between the new words and their
meaning. This is similar to Kluth’s (as cited in James & Erik, 2013) suggestion to use graphic organisers, picture books, fascination focused materials, graphic notes, and story kits to assist learners especially those with learning disabilities.

The accompanying of illustrations or visual cues, for example, may help to eliminate the need for readers to be singularly dependent on text to decode meaning. Thus it is a particularly convenient tool for language learners who frequently pause to consult dictionaries in search for the meaning of unknown words or phrases (Fewell, 2011). Besides, Burmark (as cited in Fewell, 2011) also states that pictures can truly help learners to improve their memory recall of material that they have read.

**Principle 7: Expose Learners to the Use of Dictionary**

A dictionary is one of the important references in learning new words, especially for new learners. There are many types of dictionary in the market including picture dictionaries which are targeted toward the young learners who are still learning to expand their vocabulary in both their mother tongue (L1) and second (L2) languages. It is up to teachers and learners which dictionary would benefit them the most. As mentioned by Luppescu and Day (as cited in Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001), dictionary would help learners to attain better memorisation of new words, as they found that learners who read a text and looked up unknown words in the dictionary remembered them better than learners who read the text without a dictionary.

The same opinion was given by Hulstijn et. al. (as cited in Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001), as they found the relatively few words that were often looked up by the students in the dictionary during a reading task yielded much higher retention scores on a subsequent test than the same words in other conditions. Based on these, dictionary can be considered useful especially in helping new learners to understand new words.

**Principle 8: Exercise Repetition by Introducing Words Frequently Inside the Module**

The more frequently language learners are exposed to a particular vocabulary, the more likely they are to remember it. This is one of the basic principles in memorising new words as with repetition, learners would be able to memorise, and produce the word appropriately when they understood the meaning. Waring (2002) states most words that are taught will be lost to the Forgetting Curve, it is therefore essential that the new words are repeated soon after the initial learning, and repeated at spaced intervals many times and in many contexts thereafter to cement them in memory.

In line with the above, studies suggest that most learners need between 5-16 ‘meetings’ with a word in order to retain it (Waring, 2002), and Folse, Hulstijn, Hollander, & Greidanus (as cited in Barcroft, 2004) found that there are positive effects of increased exposure to L2 words have been demonstrated in text-based and direct vocabulary learning. Thus, it is more effective to learn vocabulary when learners are given some degree of repetition, especially those who are considered slow (Westwood, Peter & Oliver as cited in Febrianti, 2013).
**Principle 9: Promote Deliberate Vocabulary Acquisition**

Deliberate vocabulary acquisition is the stage where the teachers introduce new words to the learners and be sure to explain it thoroughly so that the learners are able to understand the meaning of that word and memorize it. Mayer and Wittrock state (as cited in Hogben, 1996), the more effectively the to-be-learned material is elaborated during acquisition, the more readily it will be recalled by the learners. Thus, in learning vocabulary, the active, constructive elaboration of the word-meaning during the L2 acquisition influences its subsequent recall during reading.

Other strategies, such as rehearsal, may be important for maintaining a particular item, but simple rehearsal alone should not be very effective for long-term use, because it does not involve extensive elaboration of the word-meaning (Hogben, 1996). It is important for teachers to give a good explanation and elaboration when teaching the new words so that the learners would be able the successfully analyse and rehearse the new word and its meanings for long-term recall purposes. Not only that, they also can elaborate the word-meaning and establish it within a suitable network of meaning (Hogben, 1996).

**Principle 10: Expose Learners with Exercises and Activities Other Than Memorizing Words**

Instead of just sticking to the conventional teaching methods like reading textbook, referring to a dictionary for meaning or memorising new words, teachers could use their imagination to encourage learners to learn new words in different types of activities. For example, using games as part of the activity would not only help with the memorisation of new words, but at the same time help the learners to retain better attention on the learning process, and release some of the build-up stress in them, especially in a classroom consisted of learners from various background. Besides, Marsh (1978) suggests that in a foreign language class, a teacher could make use of comics, and have small group discussions take place between two or more students, after which the teacher could call upon a discussion from each group to report briefly on its observation.

Additionally, there are some other methods that can be commonly used for vocabulary teaching and learning such as extensive reading, using pictures and drawings, pronouncing words, online games, dramatisation, and realia (Cho and Krashen, 1994; Grabe and Stroller, 2002; Muhammad Sabri 2011; Robb and Susser, 1989). Whichever method used, vocabulary exercises should focus on deepening and internalising knowledge of words, not only the surface "form-meaning" level, and should deal with collocations and multiple-word units, not only single words. The type of practice in these activities allows the students to notice new words, or new features of words they already know, as well as giving them chances to internalise them (Waring, 2002).

All of these ten principles have been discussed in past studies and researches as valid vocabulary principles, however in term of its applicability in classroom practices, they have not yet been proven. Thus in order to do so, these research questions have been addressed:

Research questions:
1. What are the vocabulary teaching and learning principles commonly practiced by the teachers in the classroom?
2. How did the teachers implement the principles to teach vocabulary in the classroom?

**Methodology**

**Research Design**

This study employed qualitative research methods. The data was collected in September 2015 from the interviews with three experts at Sekolah Kebangsaan Gondang, Sekolah Kebangsaan Mengabang Telipot, and Sekolah Kebangsaan Kompleks Mengabang Telipot, which are located within Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu, Malaysia.

**Participants**

The participants are three teachers who teach English language subject in primary schools. The criteria for each participant is to have at least ten years of experience in teaching English for primary school students, and still working as a teacher for primary school around Kuala Terengganu. The interview was conducted among three experts in a separate interview session. Purposive sampling was used to select the suitable participant for the interview session. The participants who have at least 10 years of experience in teaching primary school student were interviewed in September 2015. The goal for the participants’ selection is to have their opinion on the reliability of vocabulary teaching and learning principles in classroom practices.

**Instruments**

The instrument is a set of question prepared for each participant before conducting the interview session was conducted. For each set of question, a brief explanation for each of the ten principles was included. Each participant was given one week to prepare themselves before the interview. The main question in the instrument is to ascertain which principle was applied by these participants in their lessons, and the reasons behind it. Upon the interview session, the researcher briefly explained the ten principles one more to make sure that the participants would truly understand each of the principles. Each of the participants was interviewed separately, and all of their responds were recorded. The raw recorded data was later transcribed into written form and analysed through Atlas t.i software.

**Findings**

As mentioned above, this research makes use of qualitative research method, thus the collected data were analysed accordingly through Atlas t.i. Data collected from the interviews were put into tables (see Table 1), so that each of the participants’ response would be easier to interpret.

**Addressing First Research Question**

To address the first research question, a qualitative analysis was carried out on the experts’ answers to the interview questions using Atlas t.i software. Table 1 show the principles practiced by the participants in their lessons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>PRINCIPLE</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Select appropriate word to teach</td>
<td>P1: Yes, P2: Yes, P3: Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 1, the finding showed that, among all of the ten vocabulary teaching and learning principles, only eight of them were applied by the participants. The principles; Select appropriate word to teach, Progress from less demanding to more demanding vocabulary-related activities, encourage interest among students in learning process, Accommodate use of contextual cues, Expose learners to the use of dictionary, Exercise repetition by introducing words frequently, Promote deliberate vocabulary acquisition, and the last one is Expose learners with exercises and activities other than memorizing words. However, only Participant 3 did not practise focus on different aspect of words and limit forced semantic elaboration during the initial stages of learning new words as part of the lesson strategy, as she teaches level one of primary school students. It can have deduced that teaching those principles depend on the level of English language proficiency of the students.

4.2 Addressing Second Research Question

In addressing the second research question; how did the teachers implement the principles to teach vocabulary in the classroom; the researcher arranges the answers gathered from the interview with the participants according to theme. These are the opinions given by the participant to justify his/her practice for each of the principle.

A) Selection appropriate word:
The finding showed that all of the participants made their selection of word by referring to the textbook or “Dokumen Standard Kurikulum & Pentaksiran” (D.S.K.P).

P1: 7:1 (47:49)
“I refer the text book and the syllabus. Inside the syllabus there is already a provided list of vocabulary, so I just pick any from the suggested vocabulary, and mix it with any that I want to teach to them”
8:31(84:84)
“I just printed a list of words that the students need to learn from D.S.K.P this morning, and depend on the day when we refer to the text book, we can look at the recommended words for certain topic on certain day.

P2: 8:7 (75:76)
“We refer to the text book, there is already a list provided. If we look at level 1 text book, it would be in color”

P3: 8:36 (206:207)
“I usually select the words from the textbook, because there is a list of words that we need to teach given in that book”

From the data gathered, most teachers refer to the authentic materials; textbook and Dokumen Standard Kurikulum & Pentaksiran (DSKP) in selecting suitable words to be introduced and taught to the students. It can be deduced those teachers refer to those documents in selecting the appropriate words as those words are already listed in the syllabus and appeared in the textbook.

B) Focus on different aspects of words
The finding showed that P1 teaches different aspects of words by teaching homograph, expanding the grammar, and by explaining the meaning of the word. On the other hand, P2 makes use of sentence structure to show how the word has different meanings in different context usage.

P1: 7:2 (61:64)
“We do have this… it’s called homophone… homograph… This is within the syllabus and we teach them”

“we expand the grammar, we teach present tense, present continuous tense, past continuous tense, perfect tense… all of these would be included into the teaching”

“For meaning like the word… “mean” had two meaning which is “evil” and the other one is “the definition of something”, I would have to explain this as it was also within the syllabus”

P2: 8:9 (95:95)
“On this one it is more on sentence structure at first, but we give simple sentence.. let’s say if the word is “work”… “my father works as a doctor”, and the other one is “he loves his work”

“We introduce this to them in sentence structure”
From the response, it can be generalised that these teachers do not teach the students to only focus on one meaning. They try to introduce one word that can be applied into different contexts.

**C) Progress from less demanding to more demanding vocabulary-related activities**

Under this principle, the finding showed that P1 first drills the word until the students get the word, and understand the meaning, before moving to sentences. Meanwhile P2 first introduces the category of word, and makes the lesson more challenging than before. On the other hand, P3 teaches the words first, then moves on to making phrases.

P1: 7:5 (76:77)
“Usually I start with drilling them with the word until they get the word, and understood the meaning. Then I would give them sentences, and practices on sentences”.

P2: 8:10 (99-100)
“First we introduce the category either verb or noun. I had joined it once to make phrasal verb”

“Normally if for the activity, we would do it more difficult than before, and more difficult than before, but for level 1 the level of difficulty was not that high”

P3: 9:6 (47:51)
“first I teach them about the words, and then I move to learning about making phrases with the words”
“level 1, where you have to teach them one by one… they need to be guided”

From the data it can be seen that all participants teach new words to the students first by drilling the words making the students understand the words better. Then gradually they develop the learning from word structure to sentence structure in context.

**D) Limit forced semantic elaboration during the initial stages of learning new word**

Here the finding showed that, P1 and P2 limit the semantic elaboration by only introducing the basic meaning for the word that the taught to their students.

P1: 7:33 (172:175)
“I introduce the basic meaning in class by showing them some pictures first, then I would drill the words a few times. After that I would give them some sentences and drill those sentences”

P2: 8:34 (114:114)
“I just give them the basic meaning which is easy for them. For example “orange”, I just give the meaning of it as a fruit and as a colour”
It can be generalised from the findings that both P1 and P2 restrain the meaning of new word to basic meaning only as to ensure the understanding of newly introduced words.

E) **Encourage interest among student during learning process**
Finding showed that P1 encourages interest from the students by using activities such as classroom activities, group work, language art, jigsaw puzzle, and story books. In contrast, P2 uses activities such as singing, and outside activities. While P3 makes use of quiz, group work, and point system.

P1: 7:7 (91:91)
“I use activities, classroom activities, group work activities, these students really love the language art, because they can use their creativity”

“Last is I do jigsaw puzzle, where I use pictures to make jigsaw puzzle. Other than that, I use the book “king of kite”, after they read the story, they knew the characters, the storylines…”

P2: 8:13 (122:124)
“We give something for them to create it on their own.. or something to do with outside activity.

“So I asked him to sing the song, then he can answer it. So here it really help their long term memory and encourage their interest through singing the song, and we can see that they really do enjoy the activity, as they even mimic the animals action themselves”

P3: 9:7 (66:67)
“I think quiz, when we divide the kids into different groups, which group have the best group work, which group give the best answer, they would be given points. When points were involved, these kids would be so interested in the activities.”

It can be seen from the response gathered that in order to encourage the students to learn new vocabularies, all participants integrate the learning of new vocabularies by having other interesting language activities.

F) **Accommodate use of contextual cues**
In accommodating the use of contextual cues, finding showed both P1 and P3 use the students’ past experience knowledge in introducing word, however only P3 uses the characteristic of animal to make relation with the word. On the other hand, P2 makes use of “realia” that exist inside the classroom.

P1: 7:9 (98:99)
“I asked the kids to do some sentences, especially level 2 students… they would use their past experience knowledge, what they usually see at school…”

7:10 (101:102)
“I usually apply it with writing, where I would give them picture… then ask them to write about the picture where they can use their past experience…”

P2: 8:15 (132:132)
“first we use “realia”, realia is whatever that exist inside the classroom. We introduce the words, we introduce the word cards, and the picture cards was also prepared at the school. So other than using word cards and picture cards, we can use realia”

P3: 9:5 (58:62)
“monkey”, “you’re so noisy like a monkey”… that’s how I link the word “monkey” as something that is noisy.. (laugh), another example is “tiger” where I would say “I’m angry now.. do you want me to be a tiger?”

9:10 (91:92)
“Depend on the topic, for example for topic like “technology at home”, we would link the words with what they have at their home, for example “telephone”. I’ll ask them “do you have telephone at your home?” “where is it?”, and they’ll answer at the living room”

G) Expose learners to the use of dictionary
In introducing a dictionary the finding showed that, all participants teach about finding the word by teaching them alphabetical order first. Most of the participants claim that they teach the students some basic skills to use dictionary; firstly locate the word based on alphabetical order and then to look at the category of the words.

P1: 7:11 (104:104)
“First of all we would teach them on how to use the dictionary… how to find the words, where to look at…”

P2: 8:3 (46:46)
“I teach them this skill… like how to select which category of the word, as example I asked them to find the meaning of BEAR, BORE, and BORN… the forms of irregular verb. They sometimes select bear as a noun, the furry animal instead of the verb that I want. That’s why to me it’s important that they knew this dictionary skill”

8:17 (142:142)
“For the dictionary skill we would teach them about the alphabetical order, because if they didn't know that they would take lots of time in searching for the word from the dictionary, so teach them how to arrange words in alphabetical order first”

P3: 9:11 (103:103)
“we would teach them on how to find letter “H”, first we teach them to look at the part of the letter. It is like doing the alphabetical order, where I would tell them to look at the first letter, if it is the same letter then take a look at the second letter, and so on”
H) **Exercise repetition by introducing new word frequently**

In exercising repetition, the finding showed that P1 uses drilling by repeating the word through story in the textbook. Meanwhile P2 focuses on repeating the words in the same topic that the students learn in class. P3 on the other hand will repeat the words through the language activities in classroom.

P1: 7:14 (115:115)

“Story usually, if through story we would repeat the word repeatedly”

7:19 (135:135)

“well I usually use drilling… drill… drill… drill…”

P2: 8:18 (148:148)

“It would still be based on the same topic. Let’s say we teach about animal, reading would involve animals as well, even in writing it would be about animal. Then on the last day we would usually do language art. This language art is also the most interesting activity, where we would do singing, dancing, and it would also be based on the animal topic”

8:20 (160:160)

“We would repeat the word. So the average for each word would be at around 20 to 25 words per week. Because if we didn’t repeat it, they would soon forget it”

P3: 9:13 (111:115)

“we’ll use the same words. As example the word “goat”, where we would first left the “g”… first we explain one, and then have them spell the word normally, then we would take one letter out, and then ask them to fill the right letter in for the word. Maybe after that, we would take the middle letter or the last letter, a consonant or vowel. Then we’ll jumble up the letters and have them arrange the letter to form the word, using the same word all over again for these activities”

I) **Promote deliberate vocabulary acquisition**

In order to retain the vocabulary learning among students, all participants apply the same techniques; introduce the words to the students, drill the words and ask students to search for the meaning.

P1: 7:28 (106:107)

So what I usually do, I would give vocab first, depend on the topic. As example for a topic… I would give like 5 words per day, and they would jot down in their vocab book, then they would have to look for the meaning, and we repeat this until they acquire the vocab”

7:34 (178:178)

“I introduce new vocabulary is the same for each topic, which is by showing them picture or realias. Then I would drill the words to them until they can remember it”
“I would usually use new passage or sentences that included words and such as. So that they would understand the meaning and how to use such words”

“I would also use pictures that are related to the word that I want to teach… I also make use of drilling to these kids about words and such as”

“First what I would do is give them simple text, short stories, or sentences for them to read it. Then I would highlight what word that I would like to teach to the class. Then I would drill the words by using pictures, games, or any other activities that would be attractive to them”

J) Expose learners with exercises and activities other than memorizing words

From the responses gathered, it can be concluded that apart from memorizing, all participants expose the students to variety of language activities in enhancing the learning of new words; singing, acting, jigsaw puzzle and many more.

“I use activities, classroom activities, group work activities… These students really love the language art, because they can use their creativity”

“Last is I do jigsaw puzzle, where I use pictures to make jigsaw puzzle. Other than that, I use the book “king of kite”, after they read the story, they knew the characters, the storylines. Then we would start with decorating the kites. They will bring all kinds of ribbons, beads.. they will make their own kite”

“would give picture and ask them to write, example where we give them a picture of “Cave”, they would attach the picture in their book, and then write “cave” under that picture, so it would became their own picture dictionary. But we can expand it more depend on the teacher’s creativity.”

“we encourage them to jot down the notes, and other activities.

“I would pick a word and have student select a card for the answer as synonym for my word, and then they would paste the word which they think is the answer on the board”

“we give something for them to create it on their own.. or something to do with outside activity”
“Usually we would do drilling, which is lots of exercise, either in oral form, writing, or through singing”

“We usually do games, where when we do it during the society or curriculum, such as the word games, or language games, as it was more on language skill”

“I would drill the words to them, where I would give pictures along with the label, then I would drill for spelling, the pronunciation, and the last would be making sentences”

“I think quiz, when we divide them kids into different groups, which group have the best group work, which group give the best answer, they would be given points”

“we would do the “word miss”. I would also give them group work, where we would only had to issue instruction to the kids, and when they’ve finished they would go to the front and present to the rest of the class. Sometimes I asked them to paste the finished works at the back of the classroom so other students can have a look at it.”

“In this activity, we make a few stations. For reading program it would be about sentences, so they shall have to change stations. For example this group would go to station A,B, and C. They’ll change station every 5 minutes, where at station A, they arrange letters, at station B they would arrange words. Once time is up, they’ll have to change station, and they also compete with other groups for this activity”

Conclusion
From here the researcher had inferred that the research objectives had been answered as these eight principles of Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Principles were the ones that are appropriate and being used in classroom practices. The researcher concluded that, even though all of the ten vocabulary teaching and learning principle are good, the experts only apply eight of them, which resulted from the background of their respective students’ English language proficiency. Thus, there is a need to have more future studies on the importance of having good vocabulary instructions in teaching and learning vocabulary. For vocabulary teaching and learning principle allows learners to acquire vocabulary of foreign language better, and at the same time helps foreign language teacher to devise a better teaching and learning strategies for their learners. The researcher suggested that foreign language learners and teachers to apply these principles in teaching and learning vocabulary, as it is applicable for other language vocabulary acquisition process as well.
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References
Problems of Pre-service Teachers during the Practicum: An Analysis of Written Reflections and Mentor Feedback

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Abstract
Knowledge of pre-service teachers’ problems during the practicum is supremely important to the design and implementation of an effective field experience. Based on this, the current study aimed to explore the most frequent problems of a cohort of English as foreign language (EFL) beginning teachers (n = 60) enrolled in a training program. Results of an in-depth content analysis of post-lesson written reflections (n = 1511), mentor feedback (n = 1624) and end-of-each-practicum reports (n = 337) reveal 23 frequent problems with teaching methodology, class control and time management as the top concerns. Results also indicate that trainees’ development seems to go through five distinct stages. These findings offer for the first time an insight into the most pressing needs of Moroccan EFL pre-service teachers. Interpretations of the results and recommendations are discussed in relation to the context of the study.

Keywords: journal writing, mentoring, practicum, reflection, training

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1. Introduction

While it takes different structures and lengths, there is a consensus in the literature on the practicum’s usefulness to help new entrants to the profession learn the requisite competences. In the case of Morocco, the Ministry of Education has adopted a more school-based model of teacher training whereby prospective teachers spend 60% of their training in the classroom supported by formal mentors. With the advent of this model, it becomes important to explore the frequent problems of beginning teachers. Identification of pre-service teachers’ problems will contribute to an understanding of the difficulties and help optimize the practicum by building in much-needed support. It can also be used for training mentors to help them understand the needs of prospective teachers (Ganser, 1999). However, no research to date has investigated this topic and the present study tries to address this gap and the results will describe for the first time Moroccan EFL teacher trainees’ practicum frequent problems.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Pre-service Teachers’ Concerns

A considerable volume of literature has been published on teachers’ practicum concerns and researchers reported different lists over the years. Yet, regardless of the context of the practicum, the program, and the subjects, Cherubini (2008) concludes, upon an extensive literature review (1969 to 2005), that “new teachers experienced many of the same initial concerns that have been documented about beginning teachers for over 36 years” (p.83). Likewise, based on his review of 83 studies from different countries (1960 to 1984), Veenman (1984) identifies classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing students’ work, relationships with parents, class work organization, insufficient materials and supplies and dealing with problems of individual students as the major pre-service teachers’ concerns. Although other researchers reported the same problems in addition to others with little to different rank order, classroom discipline (Berg & Smith, 2014; Guillaume& Rudney, 1993; Kyriacou & Stephens, 1999; McNally et al., 1994; Poulou, 2007; Veenman, 1984), time management (Adams & Krockover, 1997; Ballantyne et al., 1995) and teaching methodology (Hoover, 1994; Numrich, 1996) are by far the most serious problems for novice teachers.

2.2. Reflective Teaching

The resurgence of interest in reflective teaching was largely inspired by John Dewey and Donald Schön. Dewey (1933) considers reflective thinking as a systematic, purposeful form of problem-solving both as a process of meaning-making and as a product in terms of the solutions the reflective activity yields. It is his belief that reflection is precipitated by a problematic situation and the practitioner has a genuine purpose to search for a solution along with the adoption of the attitudes of open-mindedness, whole-heartedness and responsibility.

Schön (1983) further develops Dewey’s notion of reflection and embeds it deeply in action. For Schön, reflective practice is essential to the professional development of practitioners’ tacit knowledge (knowing-in-action). Schön distinguishes between two types of reflection and these are reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. While the former implies the practitioner’s reflection
and real time adjustment in the midst of performance, the latter denotes the same process but after the action has happened. Being reflective-in-action is argued to be the ideal end-point of professional practice (Hatton & Smith, 1995).

To explore the problems of beginning teachers during teaching practice, the instruments used were mainly questionnaires and to a lesser extent with follow-up interviews (Cherubini, 2008). Trainees were mostly asked to rate the critical aspects of teaching on a scale of difficulty and the highest-scoring items were considered the most problematic. Journal writing, as a common practice in teacher education to promote reflection and help teachers diagnose their weaknesses and difficulties (Ho & Richard, 1993), was largely used and supported by numerous researchers and believed to be better than just interviews or observations (Numrich, 1996). Guillaume and Rudney (1993), for instance, argue that journal writing provides educators with a subjective lens to uncover the characteristics of the learning process to teach from the inside. Similarly, McDonough (1994) asserts that keeping a journal is a ‘real insider instrument’ and an effective tool for “methodological reflection and professional development” (pp. 63 & 57).

For the purposes of the study, ‘reflection’ is operationalized as the “deliberative thinking about and acting on action with a view to its improvement” (Hatton & Smith, 1995, p.40) and a ‘problem’ as “a difficulty that beginning teachers encounter in the performance of their task, so that intended goals may be hindered” (Veenman, 1984, p.143).

The present study aimed to answer the following two questions:

a) What are the frequent practicum problems of Moroccan EFL pre-service teachers as evidenced by their post-lesson reflections, final reports and mentors’ feedback?

b) Based on their problems, how do Moroccan EFL pre-service teachers develop during the practicum?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The sample of the study consisted of a cohort of 60 high school EFL teacher trainees (aged from 22 to 36) enrolled in a yearlong teacher training program. Candidates join the center after a three-year university coursework study and getting a BA. Successful candidates get employed as public high school teachers.

The training year is built around seven teaching practice (TP) periods that total 19 weeks of classroom teaching (Table 1). During the first TP, trainees pay school visits to get information about structure, administration and counsels. Trainees then study modules at the center before they join their practice schools. In the last 6-week TP, trainees assume complete classroom responsibility. Unlike most practicum practices, trainees rotate schools and mentors with every TP.

3.2. Data collection and Materials
The data (Table 1) consisted of copies of post-lesson reflections, practicum reports and mentor feedback comments. Trainees were required to keep a teaching journal to write their lesson reflections and share it with mentors for feedback. Trainees were also required to submit a report at the end of each TP. Journals were checked (not graded) to make sure trainees go through the reflective process. The material for the study was collected immediately after the last TP.

Table 1: Subjects and Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TP2 (3 weeks)</th>
<th>TP3 (3 weeks)</th>
<th>TP4 (2 weeks)</th>
<th>TP5 (2 weeks)</th>
<th>TP6 (2 weeks)</th>
<th>TP7 (6 weeks)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TR*   MF**</td>
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<td>Males (45)</td>
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<td>244  231</td>
<td>197  221</td>
<td>167  145</td>
<td>171  137</td>
<td>215  327</td>
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<tr>
<td>Females (15)</td>
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<td>TR   1624</td>
<td>TR   337</td>
<td>TR   3.472</td>
<td>TR   215</td>
<td>TR   327</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Trainees’ reflections. ** Mentor feedback

Notably, some trainees did not provide their final reports while some others did not write some post-lesson reflections as they were instructed. Similarly, some mentors on some occasions did not provide any written feedback.

3.3. Data analysis

A qualitative methodology was employed to content-analyze the data to identify the most frequent problems the participants faced during the practicum. The analysis involved six main steps:

1) Dividing the data into TP periods.
2) Reading the data multiple times to determine each reported problem’s frequency.
3) Using a tally to document problems and their causes.
4) Calculating and ranking frequencies of the problems.
5) Categorizing the problems into big themes based on relationship.
6) Examining the change patterns of problems and trainees’ development over the practicum.

Expectedly, some post-lesson reflections and their corresponding mentor comments mentioned the same problem, in which case the problem was counted as one occurrence. The same one-occurrence principle was applied between reflections and TP reports.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Pre-service Teachers’ Frequent Problems

The frequent problems (see Appendix A) were organized into seven main themes and 23 sub-themes.
4.1.1. Teaching Methodology

4.1.1.1. Lesson delivery

Problems related to lesson delivery were the most frequently mentioned during the practicum. These problems ranged respectively from a complete lack of (or insufficient) knowledge of how to proceed through a lesson, a difficulty managing the lesson pace, the inability to create relevant teaching contexts and examples, failure to prompt students to interact with the teacher, managing transitions, insufficiency to lack of checking students understanding and assessing their learning.

A. Inexperience

The results clearly suggested the inexperience of trainees with the practice of teaching and that they were just beginning to learn the ropes like any other new recruits in any other profession. Since the program stipulates that trainees alternate coursework and fieldwork, this mode of training presented further challenges as trainees were required by their mentors to follow the syllabus - which obliged them to teach a skill or a lesson on which they had not yet received any training. A trainee, for example, wrote that:

“First time to teach grammar. It was a great challenge since we didn't cover all the strategies concerning the teaching of grammar.”

This programmatic alternation of training and fieldwork seems to contribute to trainees’ inexperience.

B. Lesson pace management

Many trainees did not seem to have a clear concept of neither lesson pace nor when exactly to shift gears up or down. There was no significant difference between the cases of quick and slow pace management problems (74 and 69). This result shows trainees’ constant search for the appropriate lesson delivery pace.

Three factors were frequently cited to explain the ‘rush-rush’ attitude to deliver lessons, namely 1) too much focus on lesson teaching than on student learning, 2) racing against time, 3) intention to cover more content during the available timespan. For the slow pace cases, trainees’ reflections revealed that the main causes were 1) students’ low proficiency as they had to decrease the pace to over-explain, 2) lack of teaching experience and 3) class control issues.

C. Contextualization and Modeling

Part of this lack of methodology knowledge had to do with trainees’ inability to provide students with relevant contexts and modeling of the language to help them understand easily. For instance, a trainee reported that all the steps to prepare students for a reading lesson were followed but the key words explanation was not contextualized, which made it later difficult for students to answer related tasks. Similar examples included providing ambiguous contexts, absence of effective prompting students to interact and finally taking students’ language knowledge for granted.
D. Managing lesson transitions

Managing effectively transitions among the different activities placed an extra burden on some trainees. The reported cases described how they were unable to create smooth transitions across the activities. The aspects of this problem were the non-use of appropriate language to signal transitions and sometimes a failure to mobilize students by getting their listening attention before starting the next activity. In this respect, a mentor advised a trainee to:

“Try to bridge your activities with smooth and meaningful transitions → part of planning! Telling the class you are “moving to the present” is not well thought. Remember also to attract students’ attention before you start the next activity and make sure they are quiet, on task and not doing something else.”

Just as this problem reflects the inexperience of the concerned trainees, it also shows their tendency to view teaching as discrete, each time focusing on one aspect.

E. Assessment for learning

The insistence to get all the lesson steps correctly seemed to haunt trainees and consequently oriented their attention to themselves and on what they were doing more than on student learning whose assessment was not initially of high priority for some trainees. A trainee regrettably concluded that:

“It’s important while planning to not plan only the lesson content and instructions, but also how to involve the students and prompt them to speak. Unfortunately, I focus a lot on what I have to do and forget about what the students will or could do!”

Asking students whether they have understood and addressing ‘is this clear?’ question was the mainly used pattern of checking students understanding. In other instances, mentors reported a complete absence of any learning assessment. What could be another explanation is that the assessment module is usually taught later in the year.

F. Time management

Time management was a major concern that received much attention till the last TP period. Based on their frequency, inability to cover the whole lesson plan (414), wait time issues (196) and inadequate timing of activities (96) were the main problems of time management.

Trainees found it very difficult to finish all the planned activities. Given the view that any lesson consists of three parts, namely the pre-, while- and post-phases in teaching the four skills or three stages of presentation, practice and production in the case of grammar and communication lessons, trainees expressed their dissatisfaction at their continuous inability to cover the third part of the lesson at best and the second and the third at worst.
Trainees were torn between either respecting each activity’s pre-set timeframe to cover the whole lesson plan or allowing students more time and leaving some activities uncovered. The wait time was reported to be either 1) very long and untimed, 2) short or not enough or 3) not set at all. Trainees varied widely on this concern but the majority provided longer wait time periods, sometimes on purpose and other times out of oblivion.

Additionally, some trainees were unable to estimate exactly the time each activity would take while teaching. The majority tended to time activities shortly and, thus, including more tasks to fit the 50-minute span. The consequence was spending more time on the first activities and failing to cover later ones. Reasons provided ranged from overestimating students’ linguistic level, planning many activities and inexperience in teaching certain lessons.

G. Board management

Inconsistent with the literature, the results suggested that the board use was a highly frequent problem for trainees. It might be the fact that in Morocco, due to the lack of smart boards, photocopying facilities and even, to a lesser extent now, video projectors in the majority of public schools, the blackboard is still the main tool for teachers to transmit a major portion of the lesson.

Board management presented four areas of difficulty and the top difficulty was illegible handwriting. Trainees also had a real difficulty deciding what to write, where to place it and how to present it. Some utilized color chalk randomly while others used only white chalk for everything on the board. Additionally, certain trainees tended to write almost everything on the board, which had an adverse effect on time management and students’ engagement. Conversely, some trainees who, instead of committing certain content to the board, opted for orality.

H. Teacher Talking Time

The data suggested that high TTT levels were due to over-explaining new information to students, repeating and echoing their answers and finally over-emphasizing a unidirectional mode of teacher-student interaction.

There was a general agreement that students’ low proficiency was the main cause to trainees’ high TTT. Using a teacher talk that is complex or contains difficult words and expressions was identified as a second cause in that some had to repeat explanations to make their language comprehensible. In this respect, a trainee wrote that:

“The only problem I had was their level was low. So I had to over-explain and go slowly through the lesson/tasks. I also still need to work on my elevated language and use simple terms and vocabulary to avoid repeating and raising my TTT.”

Trainees sometimes resorted to over-explanation due to using difficult materials, the nature of lessons and teaching inexperience.

I. Giving Instructions and Questioning

Many trainees found giving clear instructions and/or asking questions a real challenge. The four major causes ranged from 1) improvisation, 2) students’ low proficiency, 3) trainees’ difficulty to
adapt to students’ level and finally 3) trainees’ inability to choose the appropriate timing for instructions and questions.

Lack of clarity was frequently used to describe the unsuccessful instructions and/or questions trainees gave. It was also found that some trainees, instead of rephrasing the difficult instruction/question, kept repeating it with no clear understanding of why students did not interact. Others were aware they needed to produce clear instructions but discovered the task too challenging.

J. Reinforcement

The findings showed that many trainees found difficulty correcting students’ errors. The reported behaviors were a lack of correction to inappropriate or insufficient correction know-how. Mentors reported numerous cases of trainees who did not intervene to correct students’ mistakes as was expected.

Additionally, trainees’ reception of students’ correct answers vacillated from a lack of positive reinforcement, through insufficiency and inappropriateness of thereof to the use of a limited set of non-differential praise expressions. The following extract is a mentor’s plea to a trainee to praise students’ correct answers:

“Try not to forget praising your ss’ correct answers because it’s very encouraging when you do praise, and a lot discouraging when you don’t. Positive feedback encourages ss to participate and work harder.”

Trainees tried to frequently provide positive feedback, but the praise words used were either few, limited or not emphatic enough. Some trainees overused ‘yes’, ‘ok’, ‘good’ and ‘that’s great!’ as sole positive reinforcers. While these words are encouraging, they tend to lose their effective force if over-utilized non-differentially with all answers.

K. Students’ Proficiency

Analysis of trainees’ reflections exhibited serious concern over students’ linguistic level and how the latter constituted a hindrance that created (and blamed for) numerous challenges with other teaching areas. The following extract is illustrative. A trainee stated with a tinge of frustration that:

“One of the biggest challenges I had in this TP was the low level of students. It is highly challenging to teach students who can’t even understand the simplest instructions.”

Trainees adopted three attitudes when reflecting on the issue: defensive, self-critical and realistic. Some pinned the blame entirely on students and defended their inability to teach classes with serious language problems. Others were too self-critical of their inability to adjust their teaching to students’ learning and the third category of trainees were too realistic in their approach
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and viewed that their inability to simplify their talk and/or materials was compounded by students’ low proficiency.

L. Use of the first language

The findings of the study showed that the cases of first language (L1) use were limited during the practicum, inclusive of both trainees and students as users. Due to students’ low proficiency and sometimes their lack of interest, some trainees used L1 in the majority of cases to either explain some vocabulary words, to clarify a given rule or to help students (through translation) do tasks successfully. Trainees also used L1 as a class-controlling strategy to stop misbehavior when all else failed.

4.2.2. Classroom Management

4.2.2.1. Class control

Trainees’ struggle to maintain classroom order and to practice teaching, already fraught with challenges, had a negative impact on delivering lessons. Trainees reported how, in their trial to manage misbehavior, they finished with incomplete lessons, de-concentration, loss of temper and, worse still, getting confrontational with disruptive students. The following extract is illuminating:

“The lack of discipline was a big hindrance to the delivery of the lesson. Students did not keep quiet. I had to interrupt the lesson several times. As a result, I lost control and concentration.”

In fact, the primary focus of trainees to teach well was straitjacketed by a forced call to tackle misbehavior.

The data revealed four causes to class control issues, namely (i) students’ indifference and demotivation, (ii) their perception of the trainee’s classroom role, (iii) the mentor’s absence and finally (iv) trainees’ approach to class control. Trainees frequently complained about how hard to teach students who were uninterested, unmotivated, reluctant to learn and defiant at times.

Mentors’ feedback indicated that some trainees lacked effective class control strategies to rein in disruption. Among the trainee-related variables, mentors reported exaggerated nervousness against what mentors qualified as ‘healthy noise’, stopping the lesson at each trivial incident, getting sometimes confrontational with disruptive students, using threats, shouting, scolding, use of games, jokes, using untimely fun and finally the inability to strike a balance between being authoritative and creating a safe learning environment.

4.2.2.2. Class coverage

Consistent with the evidence that trainees were too focused on teaching, they seemed to want to waste less time on how many students were involved in the lesson so long as the delivery was going as planned. Ineffective class coverage cases (232) outnumbered those times when trainees tried to involve students (13). The findings showed that certain trainees, when trying to interact
with students, focused mainly on high achievers and front-seaters. Following is a sample of mentor feedback on this issue.

“Class coverage is still missing in your teaching. Only few students were involved and participated while backbenchers and side benchers were merely watching.”

Students received unequal amount of teacher attention depending on where they sat in the classroom and whether they participated or not. This ineffective class coverage was attributable, by trainees, to several factors, particularly lack of knowledge, class control and class size. Some trainees clearly admitted that they did not know how to engage students in their lessons.

4.2.2.3. Classroom groupings

Classroom management was also a challenging area for many trainees, especially in terms of working with, managing and monitoring groups. Lack of experience, over-preoccupation with content delivery, undesirable students’ noise and over-crowdedness were the chief factors that militated against trainees’ efforts to manage group work. To illustrate, some trainees were frustrated over their inability to manage groups of students in an over-crowded classroom filled with unhealthy noise. They found difficulty with both controlling their noise and monitoring their work. Consequently, grouping students, for trainees, was often synonymous with a jam session of noise generation.

Tolerating some healthy noise when working with groups is expected if under control. This healthy noise was, however, an issue for some trainees who were too strict about class control. A mentor advised that:

“N.B. group work activities are always associated with some kind of noise. So, you should tolerate some healthy noise while dealing with group work activities as there is no way of asking students to work in groups and keep silent meanwhile!”

Over-crowdedness and grouping students seemed to complicate the challenge to master other aspects of teaching and rendered classroom management a complex goal to achieve.

4.2.2.4. Classroom Interactions

Many trainees’ classroom communication was characterized by a teacher-student interaction mode, where TTT outweighed student talking time (STT). While there was far more teacher-student interaction than student-teacher interaction, student-student communication was by far limited. The following excerpt is illustrative:

“T-S interaction overweighs S-S. You should vary your mode of work. Try to increase ss-ss interaction by using more pair and group work. For example, you could have asked students to work in pairs to discuss important changes in the family code.”
This teacher-centered mode of teaching at times escalated into a lecture, which explains, in part, trainees’ high TTT ratios. Trainees seemed content with a more teacher-centered approach to classroom interaction - focusing more on content delivery than on student-student communication.

4.2.2.5. Rapport with students

The data disclosed only a limited number of cases where trainees either had trouble rapport-building or were advised to avoid certain unhelpful behaviors. Mentors employed a variety of adjectives like ‘over-serious’, ‘tense’ and ‘threatening’ to describe the attitude of trainees who struggled with rapport-building. Few trainees adopted a negative attitude towards students and addressed negative comments to them.

4.2.3. Getting Prepared

4.2.3.1. Lesson planning

Due to inexperience and that the lesson planning module is taught late, the task of designing lesson plans constituted a real challenge in terms of content, procedure and form. Content-wise, many trainees tended to include numerous activities, which created problems of time management and at times exhibited a mischoice of materials that were either irrelevant, lengthy, or difficult. Procedure-wise, the main problems were the erroneous succession of steps and the absence of assessment measures. The number one problem, form-wise, had to do with the unclear formulation of the lesson’s objectives. Mentors frequently criticized the generic statement of objectives. Other issues concerned lesson plans that were either un-elaborated, disorganized, contained misspellings or lacked timing for activities.

4.2.3.2. Working with materials

Materials preparation was a trying long process for almost all the trainees. Despite the huge time invested, the process was a worthwhile learning experience for them. Significantly, the results indicated that trainees can be conveniently divided into two groups: those that over-relied on the textbook as the only resource and those who were more emancipative with new materials. The second group was highly critical of textbook materials and used several adjectives like ‘boring’, ‘challenging’, ‘outdated’, ‘poorly designed’, and ‘lengthy’ to describe them.

4.2.4. Reaching Out

4.2.4.1. Voice Projection

The findings revealed that many trainees had a difficulty with projecting their voice over the whole classroom while several others’ speech was either ‘monotonous’, ‘unclear’ or lacked the right intonation pattern. For instance, the following excerpt highlights some aspects of this issue:

“Although your voice was clear, it was not loud enough for ss to hear. Often times it was not audible. Make sure your voice projection is better to have more presence in the class.”

As the teacher’s presence is not only physical but also oral, speaking quietly, quickly and/or monotonously seems to de-emphasize the teacher’s presence in the classroom, which in turn may
lead to misbehavior. A teacher then needs to have an articulate and strong voice that can carry above the noise and over large distances.

### 4.2.4.2. Classroom Mobility

It was found that the majority of cases related to classroom mobility were about trainees who tended to stick to one spot, especially by the desk or the board. These trainees were encouraged to navigate the classroom and change places as needed. The following extract shows a mentor enticing a trainee to wean himself away from sticking to one place:

> “Watch backbenchers. Often times, they are totally isolated from the class. How? Don’t stick to BB, turn around the class. Don’t stick to one place.”

The fact that these trainees were not totally aware of their classroom immobility shows clearly that their whole attention was placed on delivering the lesson more than on anything else. Developing self-awareness of one’s body movement in action seems to need more reflection-in-action practice.

### 4.2.4.3. Body Language Use

As the teacher is the most important visual aid in the classroom, the findings revealed that trainees seemed to underuse the power of body language to communicate and reinforce the vocal message. There were numerous cases of trainees’ failure to use their body gestures purposefully to support an explanation, explain a vocabulary item, control the class, ask students to do something, etc. Examples included lack of eye-contact, turning one’s back to students and pocketing hands.

### 4.2.5. Context of Placement

#### 4.2.5.1. Mentor Support

Trainees’ reflections were replete with highly positive feedback about mentors’ support during the practicum. Yet, the mentoring was not without its downsides as the data revealed few cases of dissatisfaction with few mentors on a variety of issues, namely model lessons observation, feedback, and absenteeism.

**A. Observation**

The program requires of mentors to model varied lessons during each TP’s observation session. Yet, the data disclosed few cases where trainees had reduced observation time (one day instead of two or three), observed the same lesson taught repeatedly, or had, at worst, no observation at all. All the mentors provided model lessons on various skills but few failed to give the same modeling experience to each hosted group of trainees.

**B. Feedback**

It was found that trainees preferred to receive plenty of feedback that is both written and oral, more performance-based than content-based, specific and helpful, honest and constructive, and encouraging and motivating. Almost all mentors provided generous feedback except for a few
cases when trainees expressed a need for it but it was either not provided or communicated in a disagreeable form. While trainees thrive on positive feedback, positive-but-orally-only feedback was not of much help to them. In fact, it, regardless of its sincerity, puzzled trainees as to how they were doing. The following reflection is illustrative:

“As the lesson was successful, Mr. [name of mentor] didn’t write anything again in my teaching journal about the lesson. He only provided oral feedback that was all praising and positive. I really don’t know how to feel about this. I hope he is not saying so without meaning it as I find it strange to be praised by him all the time.”

It is therefore likely that positive feedback, be it written-only or just oral, may not be of much help if not coupled with an emphasis on specific areas that needed attention.

The data suggested that some trainees were provided with ‘very negative’ and ‘discouraging’ feedback at times when the reverse was badly needed. On this issue a trainee wrote:

“I totally find myself in positions where I was not before in the last practicums. For example, in this practicum, I succeeded in reaching the production stage easily without any constraints and successfully managed to engage almost 80% of students in my classroom activities. The responsiveness of the students was enough to demonstrate the success of my lessons. Yet, the mentor criticized the seemingly relaxed pace, and the logical steps I followed in teaching certain elements and skills.”

This trainee felt demoralized at his mentor’s unpathetic feedback that failed to put his performance in its correct developmental perspective. It follows that mentors need to be aware of trainees’ needs at different stages of their development.

C. Absenteeism
Some trainees reported that their mentors were sometimes either absent during some of the lessons or observed only parts of them. This absence (complete or partial) had a negative impact on trainees’ performance in terms of feedback and class control. The role of the mentor in the classroom is important, not only as a second pair of eyes but also as an authority that deters students’ misbehavior and allows the trainee an optimal practice environment.

4.2.5.2. Practice School
The findings suggested that when the mentor’s classroom is under-equipped, trainees’ practice teaching is seriously crippled even when appropriate mentoring was provided. Specifically, the data highlighted three main problems that had to do essentially with (i) deficient classroom
equipment, (ii) the over-crowdedness issue along with students’ indiscipline and (iii) the remoteness of the school location.

Classroom-wise, the top complaint was about the non-availability of a video projector - a factor that limited the use of ICT materials. They also complained about the lack of loudspeakers, enough classroom tables, color chalk and the absence of plug sockets for the projector in some of the classrooms.

School-wise, the fact that three practice schools are located remotely from the training center seemed to pose serious problems for trainees who described the trip to and back as ‘long’, ‘exhausting’ and ‘money-consuming’. The commute’s expense was a heavy burden on the majority, if not all, given the often-delayed meager scholarship. Regardless of its delay’s reasons, this practice does not serve the greater purpose of the new reform in teacher education.

4.2.6. Content Adequacy

Analysis of mentor feedback revealed that some trainees still had gaps in their language knowledge. The reported errors related to mispronunciation, lack of knowledge and/or confusion of some grammar rules, provision of some inaccurate vocabulary definitions and various misspellings on the board.

4.2.7. Self-concerns

Unsurprisingly, it was found that trainees felt mostly stressed, nervous or anxious and lacked self-confidence when they either first started the practicum or met their classes for the first time. In fact, trainees seemed to harbor self-doubts about their competence through the first teaching experience. As such, it is strongly suggested that pre-service teachers are highly preoccupied with their self-concerns more than with teaching or students at the beginning of their practicum (e.g. Fuller, 1969; Hoover, 1994). The following excerpt is typical:

“This is the first session that I teach in my training as a whole. I felt very nervous and agitated. This was reflected in the way I treated students in a very firm manner, fearing that they will feel my restlessness. As far as the lesson was concerned, I can tell it was victorious especially if we consider that it is my first time that I teach the whole session.”

It was a struggle for the trainee to establish her authority as an able teacher in front of students and do her best to maintain self-composure and class control. The lesson was ‘victorious’, which indicates the trainee’s success to lift the challenge of controlling her emotions, managing the class and eventually doing a satisfactory performance.

4.3. Question 2: Developmental Changes of Trainees’ Concerns

While the majority of problems were completely resolved or dropped in frequency, the issues of methodology, class control and time management persisted.

Based on the analysis of problems, the development of Moroccan EFL pre-service teachers seems to consist of five general and interdependent stages (Figure 1). During the initiation stage,
trainees are introduced to the school buildings, counsels, administration staff members’ functions, daily administrative routines and observation of teachers at work. Trainees are encouraged to ask questions and complete a range of observation grids to write a report about their visit. This stage can be described as worry-free in terms of practice teaching.

![Diagram of the Five-stage Conceptual Model of Trainees’ Development]

In the *self-establishment* stage, trainees get paired with their mentors for their first practicum period. During this stage, trainees’ main concerns seem to center on survival issues like facing an audience and trying to overcome their first-encounter-with-students anxiety, stress, fear, and feelings of lack of self-confidence, adequacy and authority. Given the rotational nature of the practicum, these self-concerns recur with every TP and new classes but with less intensity thanks to experience and successful performances.

In the *discrete teaching* stage, trainees seem over-concerned with specific aspects of teaching that are too challenging for them. With each teaching experience, trainees focus exclusively on one problem at a time, trying different strategies and workarounds to resolve it. During this stage, trainees tend to view teaching as made up of discrete skills that have to be mastered separately.

In the *holistic teaching* stage, trainees start to view teaching as a holistic experience - its once-discrete parts need to work in unison for better results. For instance, some trainees clearly realized that when teaching a class with a majority of low achievers, they tended to over-explain things which resulted in high TTT ratios that in turn affected classroom interaction and time management. This and similar ‘domino effect’ scenarios were the main driver of trainees’ holistic perception of teaching.
In the final learner-focused teaching stage, trainees further realize that effective teaching is not only staging a successful performance, but rather a performance that maximizes student learning. Trainees, at this stage, start to believe that effective teaching should necessarily include an awareness of students’ differing needs, interests and learning styles. Aware of this, other examples demonstrated trainees varying activities to match students’ proficiency and make a wider student appeal.

It is noteworthy that these stages are not linear but highly recursive in that some trainees sometimes seem to be in more than one stage in one time, and that the amount of time trainees spend in each stage may differ widely dependent on a variety of personal, contextual, economic or professional factors. Yet, despite trainees’ idiosyncratic differences, the general tendency and the characteristics of each TP strongly support this five-stage developmental model.

5. Implications and Recommendations for Teacher Education

The majority of trainees’ problems in this study are generally similar to those reported by other researchers in the literature review, especially methodology of teaching, disruptive behavior and time management that were ranked as the most frequently occurring problems. It can be concluded that although the specific order varies, Moroccan EFL beginning teachers’ practicum concerns are comparatively similar to their counterparts elsewhere.

Building on the reported problems, the following is a suggested 10-item set of high-priority needs of trainees during the practicum. They seem to have the need for:

1. a supportive and adequately equipped practice environment.
2. positive emotional feedback to boost self-confidence, especially at the outset of the practicum.
3. guidance on planning lessons, presentation of content and using materials.
4. managing classroom discipline and time.
5. using the blackboard effectively.
6. motivating students.
7. enhancing language awareness.
8. mentor modeling varied lessons.
9. body language and mobility awareness.
10. a suitable scholarship to the various challenges (e.g. materials and transportation).

The evidence from this study suggests that the way how teachers are selected to be mentors needs to go beyond the exclusive consideration of the candidates’ qualifications to adopt an approach that considers not only the candidate mentor but also the location of the school and the classroom where trainees will practice teaching.
The other recommendation is that mentors need training on how to mentor. The ministry places a greater emphasis on formal mentoring but when mentors are selected, they do so with relatively little understanding of what mentoring entails.

6. Conclusion

One significant finding of the study is the identification of 23 most frequent problems representing seven general themes. While the majority of problems were somehow overcome by the end of the practicum, teaching methodology, class control and time management were still unresolved. The second major finding was the theoretical conceptualization of a dynamic five-stage developmental model of trainees’ pedagogical knowledge based on their expressed practicum concerns. The current findings add substantially to our understanding of Moroccan pre-service teachers’ pressing needs and their early development. Reflective journal writing has also proved to be a rich source of insider information on trainees’ teacher learning processes and an effective instrument for data collection from a subjective lens.

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References
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### Appendix A

**A Summary of the Results: 23 Most frequent Problems of Moroccan EFL Pre-service Teachers**

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* Ranking is based on each problem’s overall frequency.
Strategies and Predictors of EFL Listening Comprehension

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Abstract
The purpose of this study is to compare the efficiency of two methods for teaching listening comprehension – the cognitive strategy-based instruction method (CSBM) and the metacognitive strategy-based instruction method (MetSBM). Additionally, this study aims to evaluate the way in which three co-variables – vocabulary knowledge (VK), word recognition (WR) and working memory (WM) – contribute to individual differences in listening comprehension. The subjects of this study, 44 female students studying on an English programme at the University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), were placed in two groups and taught a range of listening comprehension strategies, in accordance with the MetSBM and the mainstream CSBM. Seven pre- and post-tests were used (a listening comprehension test (LCT), vocabulary knowledge tests (VKK1 and VKK2), the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ), an Aural Word Recognition test (AWR), an Orthographic Word Recognition test (OWR), a Working Memory Span test (WMS). This study considers three questions: (1) Is metacognitive teaching likely to lead to higher listening comprehension scores than the teaching of cognitive strategies, (2) Are students in the control group likely to develop metacognitive strategies on their own, and (3) Are there other variables that are likely to contribute to listening comprehension. The results suggest that the MetSBM is more effective in teaching and learning how to listen for comprehension than the CSBM. In addition, other variables – OWR, AWR, and WM contribute to listening comprehension. A number of recommendations to teachers, material developers, and researchers are provided. The present study contributes to the field of listening comprehension in an Arab context (a so far an unmapped territory). It equips English teachers with feasible ways of teaching EFL listening comprehension more efficiently.

Keywords: Cognitive, metacognitive, listening comprehension recognition, working memory

I Introduction

1 Problem statement

Teaching listening comprehension to second language (L2) learners has changed considerably over the last few decades, yet learners still struggle with the task of language learning. L2 learners continue to face challenges inside and outside the classroom as they try to improve their listening comprehension abilities (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Listening is a highly complex skill, involving both linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge (Anderson, 2005; Buck, 2001).

Further complexity with regard to listening arises from the fact that the processing of different types of knowledge does not occur in a fixed linear way. Instead, various types of processing can occur simultaneously, or at any convenient sequence. In other words, listening is the result of an interaction between a number of information sources, including the acoustic input and the various types of linguistic knowledge outlined above (Buck, 2001).

Equally critical is the gap that exists between the interests of second language research and classroom practitioners. Research does not always translate into practice and despite the fact that researchers advocate that consciousness or a metacognitive awareness-raising approach to listening comprehension instruction contributes to listening comprehension, many new EFL textbooks still advocate a traditional approach to listening (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).

2 Significance of the study

By researching the applicability and effectiveness of metacognitive strategies in listening comprehension instruction, the paper aims to change the way in which listening comprehension is approached in the classroom. The researcher will attempt both to provide teachers with methods that can be used in the teaching of listening and show that metacognitive strategies, previously considered too demanding to apply, can be grasped and applied to listening comprehension activities.

II Theoretical anchoring

1. Key concepts and central issues of listening comprehension

• Definition of listening comprehension

Listening comprehension is an active process of constructing meaning and this is performed by applying knowledge to the incoming sounds (Buck, 2001). Gary (1978) describes listening as an active process in which students’ listening competence can be expanded by orally giving them non-verbal tasks to carry out. Lynch and Mendelsohn (2002) claim that listening comprehension consists of a variety of related processes comprising oral word recognition, perception of intonation patterns and interpretation of the relevance of what is being said to the current topic. In addition, for O’Malley and colleagues (1989), what makes listening an active process is that listeners focus on selected aspects of the aural input and construct meaning by relating what they hear to their prior knowledge.

• Importance of listening

There are four dimensions to the importance of listening – the cognitive, utility, efficiency and affective dimensions. Regarding the cognitive dimension, L2 listening plays a crucial role in the language process since listening provides learners with the input and data they receive throughout their language learning process Gary (1978).
Foreign language learners need listening as a receptive skill more than as a speaking skill (Gary, 1978; Vandergrift, 1999). Listening now constitutes a core component of language proficiency tests, it is an essential skill for university entrance exams (Richards, 2008).

Concerning the efficiency of listening, research shows that language teaching and learning should start with listening comprehension. In other words, exposure to listening before starting to produce language allows learners to learn more meaningful language used earlier in the course since learners can utilise all the limited attention resources of short-term memory (STM) to concentrate on meaning.

Regarding the psychological importance of listening, research (e.g., Vandergrift, 1999) has shown that exposure to listening prior to language production reduces pressure on learners.

2. Predictors of listening comprehension

• Vocabulary knowledge
  Vocabulary is now recognised as a component of language proficiency as knowledge of words is the most important factor in language proficiency and school success. A major reason for this is the close relationship between vocabulary and comprehension. Moreover, vocabulary knowledge, particularly its size, is a predictor of L2 listening comprehension. It allows L2 learners to maintain the balance between the bottom-up processes for lower order ideas and the top-down processes for higher order ideas (Vermeer, 2001).

• Orthographic word recognition
  The role of orthographic information in spoken language processing has elicited increasing interest in the field of speech perception. Nevertheless, there is still considerable debate about how precisely orthographic knowledge impacts spoken word recognition (Pattamadilok et al., 2007).

• Aural word recognition
  Word recognition in fluent speech is the basis of spoken language comprehension as it is central to the decoding process (McQueen, 2007). It is only by recognising the words we hear that we can recover the speaker’s full intentions.

• Anderson’s (1995) model of listening comprehension with relation to word recognition
  In this paper, the data relating to word recognition are analysed and presented within a cognitive model of language comprehension proposed by Anderson (1995). This model divides the listening process into three stages – perception, parsing, and utilisation. Perceptual processing is the encoding of the acoustic message. In listening, this process involves segmenting the phonemes from the continuous speech stream. During the parsing phase, meaningful mental representations are formed from words. Finally, in utilisation, listeners relate the resulting meaningful units to the information sources in long-term memory in order to interpret the intended or implied meanings.

• Working memory
  In the present paper, Baddeley and Hitch’s (1974) model of WM is adopted, as it is the most inferential one (Shanshan & Tongshan, 2007). In this model, WM refers to a limited capacity
system as the temporary storage and manipulation of input that is necessary for complex tasks such as comprehension and planning.

III The Teaching of language learning strategies

1. Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies involve the unconscious ways or specific learning tasks that learners use to acquire the language. Cognitive strategies help learners put together, construct, transform, elaborate, consolidate and apply L2 knowledge. In addition, they allow language learners both to process and recall new information and strengthen associations between their new and already learned information, i.e., background knowledge (Goh, 1998b; Oxford, 2011). Finally, cognitive strategies facilitate the mental structuring of input (White, 2008). The main types of cognitive strategies are inferences, elaboration, prediction, contextualisation, reconstruction, resourcing, grouping, note-taking, summarising, deduction, imagery, and transfer (Clark, 1977).

• Cognitive strategies in the context of EFL Arab learners

Despite all the benefits of the cognitive strategies outlined above, English as a Foreing Language (EFL) Arab learners in the context of the present paper have not yet acquired enough strategic knowledge to allow them to compensate for their L2 linguistic deficiency. There is evidence in the literature that EFL learners have not been trained in how to control cognitive strategies despite the fact that these strategies are included in EFL textbooks that these learners have been deploying for over twelve years now.

2. Metacognitive strategies

Goh (1998b) defines metacognitive strategies as the techniques that “involve thinking about the way information is processed and stored, taking appropriate steps to manage and regulate these cognitive processes” (p. 126). The above definition is based on Flavell's (1976) definition of metacognition. Metacognitive strategies are of crucial importance in all types of learning as they assist learners to regulate or control, manage and oversee their learning processes (Oxford, 2011; Vandergrift, 1999; Wenden, 1995b).

Metacognitive strategies improve language learners’ performance in a number of ways, including better use of attentional resources, better use of existing strategies and a greater awareness of comprehension breakdown (Oxford, 1990).

Metacognitive strategies include advance organisation, advance preparation, organisational planning, selective attention, strategy evaluation, self-monitoring, self-evaluation and self-management strategies (Goh, 2002b). In the present paper, the focus will be on planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

• Metacognitive knowledge

Metacognitive knowledge consists of three components, namely person knowledge, task knowledge, and strategic knowledge (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). Person knowledge consists of people’s beliefs about the nature of themselves and other people as cognitive processors as well as how a variety of that person knowledge influences language learning (Flavell, 1979a). Task knowledge includes knowledge of the purpose and nature or classification of the task, knowledge
about its demands (Wenden, 1995b) and knowledge regarding the procedures that constitute this task. Strategic knowledge includes knowledge about the strategies that work best and knowledge regarding how best to approach learning in general, or language learning in particular (Vandergrift, 2002).

3. Language learning strategies and listening comprehension: Previous studies

Thompson and Rubin’s (1996) study was the first longitudinal classroom-based study of listening comprehension strategy training to have shown a positive result from such training. The findings of the study confirmed that strategy training, in general, and cognitive and metacognitive strategy training, in particular, improved the experimental participants’ self-efficacy, which enhanced their confidence in their ability to listen to authentic Russian. Secondly, in her exploratory study, Carrier (2003) sought to confirm the hypothesis which states that focused listening strategy training allows English as a Second Language Learners (ESL) learners to improve their listening comprehension ability, which prepares them for understanding oral academic content classes. Overall, the findings showed a significant improvement in the participants’ discrete and video listening ability, as well as note-taking ability, which allowed Carrier to draw a number of conclusions. Last but not least, in their empirical study, Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) investigated the effectiveness of a metacognitive process-based approach to L2 listening. The findings showed that teaching a metacognitive cycle to the experimental group participants allowed them to outperform their counterparts in the control group. Also, the less skilled participants in the experimental group showed the highest levels of improvement in their listening comprehension.

IV The study

1. Participants and setting

The subjects that participated in the study were 18-year-old female university students all from the UAE. They were divided into two groups – an experimental group and a control group, each of which consisted of 22 students. The participants belong to the Intensive English Programme (IEP) at the University of Sharjah, Khorfakkan, UAE.

2. Instructional treatment and the two adopted methods

The instructional treatment of this study comprised a two-month training programme teaching listening for comprehension using two different teaching methods. It consisted of 25 lessons for each group. All the lessons were part of the experimental and control participants’ regular IEP listening comprehension classes which they attended five days a week for 50 minutes daily.

A. The metacognitive strategy-based listening comprehension instruction method (MetSBM)

The MetSBM was used with the experimental group. It is inspired by the cognitive linguistics approach to teaching listening comprehension. The aim of the MetSBM, as Vandergrift and Goh (2012) state, is to promote learners’ ability to self-regulate their own learning. MetSBM attempts to enable learners to manage the process and outcome of specific listening tasks in order to maximise opportunities for comprehending and using the information they have processed”. Equally important, MetSBM allows learners to select, manage, and evaluate their own listening development activities outside of formal class time.
The treatment was based on the model proposed by Goh (2000, 2010), Vandergrift and Tafaghodari (2010), Vandergrift (2004), and Vandergrift and Gogh (2012). Each week the participants took three different listening lessons (see Appendix A).

**B. The cognitive strategy-based listening comprehension instruction method (CSBM)**

The control participants were taught the same battery of cognitive strategies that their experimental peers learned in the first phase of the treatment. In the second phase of the treatment, however, the control participants applied the cognitive strategies that they learned in the first phase of their treatment to the textbook listening activities along the lines of the CBSM. This conventional method treats listening comprehension in three phases: pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening. The process of the cognitive strategy-based instruction is recommended by Goh (2000) (see Appendix B).

**3. Study materials**

**i. Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT)**

The OQPT was conducted in order to choose the participants who have the same level of language proficiency. It assesses reading, vocabulary, and grammar using a typical multiple choice format.

**ii. The Listening Comprehension Test (LCT)**

The LCT included 18 questions related to three short conversations selected from Tanka and Most (2009). One point was given for each correct answer. The scores range from 0 to 12 points maximum.

**iii. Vocabulary Knowledge (VKK1 and VKK2) Tests**

To test the participants’ vocabulary size, Paul Nation’s on-line 1000 and 2000 Level Test (version B) ([http://eish.health.wits.ac.za.39=node/199](http://eish.health.wits.ac.za.39=node/199)) was conducted. The test includes 39 items.

**iv. The Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ)**

The MALQ (Vandergrift et al., 2006) was conducted to assess the participants’ metacognitive awareness and the perceived use of strategies while listening. The questionnaire is based on a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from ‘Strongly Disagree’ to ‘Strongly Agree’ with 1 indicating that the participants ‘Strongly Disagree’ and 7 that they ‘Strongly Agree”. It measures problem-solving, planning/evaluation, level of mental translation, personal knowledge and directed attention. The MALQ consists of 21 randomly ordered items related to L2 listening comprehension.

**v. AWR Test**

The participants in both groups took the AWR test, precisely Milton and colleagues’(2010) A_Lex test. The AWR test has a Yes/No format used to estimate the students’ aural word recognition abilities. In the AWR test, each participant pressed a button on the screen in order to hear the test word as often as needed to form a judgment. In this case, the participants had to indicate whether they know each word.
vi. OWR Test
To estimate the participants’ orthographic word recognition (OWR), Meara and Milton’s (2003) X_Lex test was used. The X_Lex test uses a Yes/No format where learners see a word on a computer screen and then, without hearing the word, they have to decide if they know it.

vii. WMS Test
The WMS test included two parts: a Listening Span Test and a Listening Comprehension Test. Both parts are taken together.

The Listening Span Test
The participants’ working memory capacity was measured by a modified version of the Listening Span Test developed by Daneman and Carpenter (1980). The test consisted of 42 unrelated sentences divided into four groups. Group 1 included three sets of two sentences each, group 2 three sets of three sentences each, group 3 three sets of four sentences each, and group 4 three sets of five sentences each.

The Listening Comprehension Test
The Listening Comprehension test was used in conjunction with the Listening Span test to add to the complexity of the WMS test as a whole, providing it with more validity and reliability. It included three short passages and four MC questions on each passage.

4. Post-treatment instruments
Following the three-month treatment, the same pre-tests, apart from the OQPT, were immediately administered to the participants to track their progress in listening comprehension. The researcher retained the same tests and judged that the three-month period between the pre-tests and the post-tests was sufficient time to avoid such an overlap.

5. Methods of data analysis
Two non-parametrical tests were employed – The Mann-Whitney U test and the Wilcoxon sign-ranked test. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to measure the difference between the scores of the two groups independently, whereas the Wilcoxon sign-ranked test was employed to gauge paired differences. All the data were analysed using the statistical package SPSS 19.

V Results
1. Statistical analysis of the pre-treatment collected data
Overall, the analyzed data of the OQPT, LCT, VKK1 and VKK2, AWR, OWR, and WM show that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control participants prior to the study.

2. Statistical analysis of the difference between pre- and post-tests for each group separately
Experimental group
The Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that the difference between the scores of the experimental group in all pre and post-treatment tests was statistically significant except in VKK1 test (see Appendix C ).
Control group
The Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that the difference between the scores of the control group in all pre- and post-treatment tests is statistically significant except in VKK2 test, MALQ planning/evaluation, and MALQ directed attention (see Appendix D).

3. Statistical analysis of the differences between the two groups for the post-tests predictors of listening comprehension
Results of the post-treatment tests in terms of LC, VKK2, AWR, and WM revealed that the difference between the two groups was statistically significant. However, the difference between the two groups on VKK1 and OWR was not statistically significant (see Appendix E).

MALQ
Results of the MALQ post-test in terms of planning/evaluation, problem-solving, mental translation, person knowledge, and directed attention reveal that the difference between the two groups was statistically significant (see Appendix E).

4. Multiple regression
Experimental group
The prediction model of the experimental group contained six of the ten predictors (aural word recognition, planning/evaluation, orthographic word recognition, problem-solving, directed attention, working memory). The model was statistically significant, $F(6, 15) = 45.222, p < .001$, and accounted for approximately 92.70% of the variance of listening comprehension ($R^2 = .948$, Adjusted $R^2 = .927$) (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Results of the multiple regression
(ExperimentalGroup)(N=22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>.019</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.760*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.037</td>
<td>.369*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral word recognition</td>
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<td>.002</td>
<td>.332*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.280*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directed attention</td>
<td>.239</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.242*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working memory</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.218*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjusted $R^2 = .927, * p < .001$

Control group
The prediction model contained four of the ten predictors (aural word recognition, working memory, mental translation, person knowledge). The model was statistically significant, $F(4, 16) = 44.119, p < .001$, and accounted for approximately 89.60% of the variance of listening comprehension ($R^2 = .917$, Adjusted $R^2 = .896$) (see table 4.2).
Table 4.2 Standard multiple regression backward method results (control group)\(N=22\)

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Person knowledge</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.149*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjusted \(R^2 = .896, * p <.0.01\)

VI Discussion

1. Hypothesis discussion
In considering the study hypothesis, the results of the post-treatment LCT suggest that the experimental participants succeeded, to a certain extent, in applying the metacognitive strategies that they were taught in the listening comprehension post-test. This was a distinct improvement over those of the pre-treatment LCT, whereas the control participants achieved a much lower mean score (7.50). Moreover, the difference between the scores of both groups on the post-treatment LCT was statistically significant (\(U = 3750, p < .001\)).

2 Discussion of research question 1
With regard to the first research question, the answer was mainly ‘yes’. The MetSBM training can improve L2 listening comprehension. This confirms what other researchers have found in similar studies (e.g., Goh, 2008; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). In the present study, the experimental participants benefited from the MetSBM training. They became better at regulating or controlling, managing, and overseeing their listening comprehension process. These three benefits are confirmed in the literature (Oxford, 2011; Vandergrift, 1999). These results can be attributed to the various activities that the experimental participants performed during the treatment (planning/evaluation, self-management, problem-solving, monitoring, problem identification).

3 Discussion of research question 2
The answer to this research question could only partially be answered in the affirmative. Two different aspects of the CSBM training allowed the control group participants to gain metacognitive awareness on their own, i.e., decrease in mental translation to L1 and person knowledge.

The CSBM training enabled the control group participants to decrease their reliance on mental translation while listening for comprehension as they improved prediction and anticipation, processing inferences, and relating new information to their prior-knowledge and to previously shared information. In addition, the CSBM training increased their working memory and enhanced their word recognition abilities. Equally important, the CSBM training allowed the control participants to become more strategic, in that they reduced their access time to meaning and used their semantic knowledge while listening for comprehension. Finally, the control participants were more effective at predicting, and anticipating incoming inputs. In addition, the final multiple regression model shows that person knowledge was a nearly significant variable that predicted the control participants’ listening comprehension.
Due to the overlap between cognitive and metacognitive strategies and even though the control participants were not trained metacognitively, the explicit CSBM strategy training allowed the control participants to gain two aspects of metacognitive knowledge: task knowledge and strategic knowledge. These two types of knowledge, in addition to person knowledge, constitute the three components of metacognitive knowledge.

However, despite the overlap between the cognitive and metacognitive strategies, CSBM did not allow the control participants to get as high scores in the post-treatment LCT as those of their counterpart participants in the experimental group on the same test. Thus, there is evidence that absence of metacognitive strategies deployed in parallel to cognitive strategies prevented control participants from monitoring or controlling their use of the five cognitive strategies they deployed during listening for comprehension.

4. Discussion of Research Question 3
The answer to the third question is in the affirmative. Results of the experimental group reveal that AWR, OWR, and WM were the co-variables that had an influential impact on the experimental group. As for the control group, AWR and WM had a major impact on their performance in the post-treatment LCT.

• **The reasons behind the improved performance in word recognition of both groups**

There is evidence in the above results that the pedagogical cycle through which the experimental participants passed during the treatment contributed to their improvement in word recognition. The transcript-based activities that these students would complete at the end of the lesson acted as a reinforcement for word recognition during listening. These activities allowed them to improve at deconstructing the sections of the recording that they would find difficult to match to words. In other words, these students became more automatic at matching the oral word with its actual orthographic form in English, a task that is not easy for ESL and EFL Arab learners to do due to many factors. The major factor in this regard is that these learners would find it very difficult to recognise the written form of many familiar English words when they heard them due to the arbitrary relationship between the way these words are pronounced and the way they are spelled in English. These learners never face this problem while listening to their L1 (Arabic) as there is a regular relationship between the spelling of an Arabic word and the way it is pronounced.

The improved performance of both groups on the A_Lex and X_Lex tests shows that the potential of word recognition enabled these participants to perform more effectively on the post-treatment LCT. This is consistent with the potential contribution of word recognition to the comprehension of spoken EFL. In this respect, Jia (2010) considers word recognition in fluent speech central to the decoding process, or the parsing stage.

The increase in OWR in the experimental X_Lex post-test shows that orthographic word recognition impacted these participants’ listening comprehension. This is in accordance with the results of many similar studies (e.g., Ziegler & Ferrand 1998), confirming orthographic influence in auditory word recognition. This implies that the improved performance of the participants in both groups on orthographic word recognition positively impacted the three processing stages.
that constitute Anderson’s (1995) model of listening comprehension, namely perception, parsing, and utilization.

With regard to aural word recognition, being the highest predictor of listening comprehension of the experimental participants, it positively impacted these participants’ scores in the post-treatment LCT. This enhanced their ability to recover the speakers’ intentions. There is evidence in the literature that this ability impacts L2 listening comprehension.

As for the increase in WM, the first reason behind it is related to the impact of the first phase of the treatment in addition to the CSBM training, both of which enhanced the WM processing and storing from participants in both groups. The application of the various cognitive strategies (predictions and checking predictions, inferences, elaborations, note-taking, and summarisation) enabled the participants in both groups to become more strategic while listening to the different aural inputs which impacted processing and/or storage functions of the WM during listening.

VII Conclusion
1. Summary
This study sought to compare the effectiveness of two approaches to teaching listening comprehension to Arab EFL learners – a metacognitive-based approach based on insights from metacognition and the traditional approach based on the familiar cognitive strategies – prediction, summarisation, inferencing, note-taking and elaboration. Furthermore, the study considered the relationship between vocabulary knowledge, word recognition (aural and written) and WM as co-variables and predictors of listening comprehension.

The findings from the statistical analysis confirmed the primacy of techniques inspired by metacognition over those based on familiar cognitive strategies in learning how to listen for comprehension. Specifically, four metacognitive strategies were found to contribute to listening comprehension – planning/evaluation, problem-solving, directed-attention, and a decrease in relying on mental translation. In addition, it was shown that three co-variables come into play when dealing with learning how to listen for comprehension: aural word recognition, orthographic word recognition, and WM.

Such findings give pedagogical support to the tenets of metacognition (Flavell, 1976; Wenden, 1995b) which were also confirmed by the advocates of the contribution of metacognitive strategies to listening comprehension (e.g., Goh, 1997, 1998b, 2008, 2010; Vandergrift, 2002b). Additionally, the results of my study confirm the findings of other studies using teaching methods based on the insights from metacognition (e.g., Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari, 2010).

2. Pedagogical implications
   • Pedagogical implications for teachers
   EFL listening comprehension teachers are required to teach the main stream cognitive strategies in parallel to the neglected metacognitive strategies. They can employ two types of metacognitive activities in order to help learners to engage with the process of listening – integrated experiential listening tasks and guided reflections on listening (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012). Integrated experiential listening tasks allow listeners to experience cognitive and social affective processes of listening comprehension. This can be done by helping listeners to focus
their conscious attention on to what these processes are and reveal to them how they can manage and regulate the processes consciously in order to meet their comprehension goals (Goh, 2010). Guided reflections on listening involve activities such as those based on listening diaries, anxiety and motivation charts, process-based discussions, and self-report checklists.

According to the researcher, the issue of lexical segmentation needs to be given more attention than it currently attracts in the listening classroom. Instruction should raise awareness of cases where the perceptual evidence might match more than one segmentation candidate. One way of doing so is by means of simple transcription tasks (Field, 2008a). In addition, as recommended by Field (2008a), it is worthwhile designing exercises to make learners sensitive to segmentation cues that are specific to the target language as languages appear to vary in the strategies that determine which segmentation is preferred.

Finally, teachers need to develop their learners’ bottom-up skills so that all the components of the acoustic signal become meaningful units for listeners. Such skills need to include prosodic features like stress and intonation in order to influence how listeners chunk and interpret connected speech (Vandergrift, 2004).

• Pedagogical implications for material developers
  Developers of pedagogical materials are required to apply a sound metacognitive framework for EFL listening comprehension in order to design principled metacognitive listening instructional materials that serve the purpose of metacognitive instruction which is to provide various kinds of scaffolding, allowing EFL learners to experience the processes of listening and become aware of the factors that impact overall comprehension and listening development.

• Implications for researchers
  For researchers in the field of metacognition applicable to EFL listening comprehension to assess any aspect of cognitive and metacognitive knowledge and strategies on general terms, they should use standard definitions. Second, researchers’ assessments should clearly reflect processes. In other words, researchers need to ensure that their assessment of the metacognitive strategies (planning/evaluation, problem-solving, controlled mental translation, person knowledge and directed attention) clearly reflect the process as they have defined them. Last but not least, researchers need to identify relevant theories, as any lack of research studies creates confusion in terminology and makes researchers use terms interchangeably Schunk (2001).

3 Limitations and directions for future research
  The researcher thought of administering the delayed test, but due to the fact that the participants exited the IEP where I teach at the end of the semester, it was necessary to complete the treatment and the tests within one semester only. For future research, it might be worthwhile administering a delayed test after a period of six months (or even more) to measure the outcome of the strategy training on listening comprehension abilities over time.

  Moreover, participants in the present study did not participate in any stimulated-recall session, which might have impacted the validity and reliability of the MALQ results. For further research, it might be worth asking participants to complete the MALQ before, while and after the
strategy training and, in addition, to participate in stimulated-recall sessions each time they complete the MALQ.

Thirdly, it should also be noted that because of the low number of items in certain factors of the MALQ, it might not be possible to generalize the findings to other settings although the results were mainly statistically significant in the present study. Future researchers might be interested in examining the effects of metacognitive awareness as measured by the MALQ and actual strategy use through the use of stimulated recall or think aloud protocols.

Fourthly, the MALQ did not require the participants to verbalize all aspects of their metacognitive knowledge. Instead, it required them to reflect only on the 19 validated statements. In addition, because the MALQ, as a questionnaire, is typically used to quantify responses and examine tendencies in research studies, it did not address individual variation in the present study. This limited the scope and impacted the validity and reliability of the results of the present study.

With regard to the predictors of listening comprehension in the present study, namely WM, word recognition and vocabulary language, further research is needed to provide more insight into understanding their impact on listening comprehension.

Equally important, the fact that vocabulary knowledge, precisely (VKK1) is not a predictor of listening comprehension in the present study suggests the need for further research.

Finally, the fact that orthographic word recognition is a predictor of listening comprehension in the present study suggests the need for further research to investigate the direction of this co-variable.

About the author
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VII References


Strategies and Predictors of EFL Listening Comprehension

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VIII Appendices
Appendix A MetSBM treatment

(1) Planning: In pairs, students stated their goal. They also discussed what they knew about the topic of the listening passage and predicted the information and words/phrases they might hear. Generally speaking, at this stage, two basic listening processes were extensively applied: ‘top-down’ (using background knowledge and context) and ‘bottom-up’ (using primarily the individual words uttered).

(2) Listening 1: While the students were listening to the passage, they underlined or circled the words and/or phrases, including L1 equivalents that they had predicted correctly. They also wrote down every new piece of information they heard. After completing their predictions, students listened to the text for the first time. As they listened, they would verify their predictions by placing a check mark beside the predicted information that they may have understood.

(3) Pair process-based discussion: In pairs, the students compared what they had understood so far and explained the strategies used. They also identified the parts that caused confusion and disagreement and made notes on the parts that needed special attention in the Listen 2.
(4) **Listening 2:** The students listened to the confusing parts that had caused disagreement after the *Listen 1* and made notes on any further information they could hear.

(5) **Whole-class process-based discussion:** As a teacher, I led a class discussion confirming comprehension before discussing with the students the strategies they would use.

(6) **Listening 3:** The students who were unsuccessful in using the strategies in steps 2 and 4 could then practice using a strategy or a cluster of the strategies modelled by me with the same information.

(7) **Script-sound recognition:** I provided the students with a transcript of the recording and asked them to listen for a fourth time, allowing them to match sounds to print and versa for difficult words or phrases.

(8) **Personal reflection:** The students reflected on the lesson by answering some guiding questions prepared by me.

**Homework:** Twice a week participants in the experimental group were asked to complete a listening task, following the same pedagogical cycle and procedures they had used as well as noting how successful they felt about accomplishing the task and generally about the treatment sessions.

**Appendix B: CSBM treatment**

(1) **Pre-listening:** As a teacher, I would revisit a cognitive strategy from the first cognitive strategy training phase. I would introduce the topic of the listening passage and ask the students to say what they knew about it. I would write on the board the students’ ideas and unfamiliar words. Subsequently, they would read the instructions for the listening activity.

(2) **While-listening**

(First Listening): I would play the recording and the students would listen attentively and complete the activity by providing the correct written answers.

(Second Listening): I would play the recording a second time and invite the students to confirm or change their answers. Following this, I would elicit the correct answers from the students without asking them whether they had been inaccurate.

(2) **Post-listening:** The students would do a follow-up activity, such as writing a summary of the passage or role-playing.

**Appendix C: Differences between the pre-treatment and post-treatment Wilcoxon signed-ranks test scores for the experimental group**

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<td>Working Memory Span (WMS)</td>
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<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>Z</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural Word Recognition (AWR)</td>
<td>4.158</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthographic Word Recognition (OWR)</td>
<td>4.075</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Planning/Evaluation) (PE)</td>
<td>4.135</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Problem-Solving) (PS)</td>
<td>4.114</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Mental Translation) (MT)</td>
<td>4.142</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Person Knowledge) (PK)</td>
<td>4.041</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Directed Attention)</td>
<td>4.128</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
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</table>

Appendix D: Differences between the pre-treatment and post-treatment Wilcoxon signed-ranks test scores for the control group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Z</th>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Listening Comprehension (LC)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Knowledge (K1) (VKK1)</td>
<td>3.530</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Knowledge (K2) (VKK2)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Memory Span (WMS)</td>
<td>4.136</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural Word Recognition (AWR)</td>
<td>4.158</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthographic Word Recognition (OWR)</td>
<td>4.075</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Planning/Evaluation) (PE)</td>
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<td>MALQ (Mental Translation) (MT)</td>
<td>3.782</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Person Knowledge) (PK)</td>
<td>2.924</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Directed Attention) (DA)</td>
<td>2.514</td>
<td>028</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Appendix E: Statistical analysis of the differences between the two groups
### for the post-tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>P</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Working Memory Span (WMS)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Knowledge (K1) (VKK1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Knowledge (K2) (VKK2)</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aural Word Recognition (AWR)</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orthographic Word Recognition (OWR)</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Planning/Evaluation) (PE)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Problem-Solving) (PS)</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Mental Translation) (MT)</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Person Knowledge) (PK)</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALQ (Directed Attention) (DA)</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Effects of Formative Assessment on Algerian Secondary School Pupils’ Text Comprehension

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Abstract
Formative assessment has proved its potential in improving the learning outcomes of EFL learners. However, its use is quite restricted in the Algerian secondary school. Thus, instead of playing a formative role, the assessment found in the Algerian EFL classroom is of a summative nature. Accordingly, the purpose behind the current research is to shed light on the importance of formative assessment in the teaching and learning processes by highlighting its effect on text comprehension, as the latter may be an obstacle to effective language learning and academic achievement among Algerian secondary school pupils. To reach this end, the present research attempts to investigate the impact of formative assessment on pupils’ text comprehension as well as their achievement and attitudes through answering the following research questions: (1) how does formative assessment develop pupils’ text comprehension? (2) What changes can the experiment bring in terms of students’ achievements and attitudes towards text comprehension? This research is based on a quasi-experimental design delivered to sixteen third year secondary school pupils as the latter are required to sit for the ‘Baccalaureate’ exam in which text comprehension is of crucial importance. A pretest, a posttest, an intervention which lasted five weeks and a questionnaire were used to find out the impact of formative assessment on the development of pupil’s text comprehension. The results obtained showed a significant progress in pupils’ outcomes in the four language competences: grammatical, textual, functional and sociolinguistic and namely in grammatical and textual competences. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that formative assessment should be an integral part of the teaching process.

Key words: formative assessment, functional competence, grammatical competence, sociolinguistic knowledge, textual knowledge, text comprehension

Introduction

Drawing from the colossal work of Black and William (1998), formative assessment has been proved to be among the main factors leading to high achievements in educational settings. Lending credence to Black and William’s work, researchers and teachers all over the world attempted to test the efficacy of formative assessment within their contexts. Moreover, formative assessment has been linked to different areas including the language skills. In the Algerian secondary school textbook, formative assessment is introduced at the end of each teaching unit, the unit takes four to six weeks to be dealt with; and this actually what makes the assessment take a summative aspect rather than a formative one.

Text comprehension is among the focal areas that the teacher and the students alike attempt to develop during the language learning process in order to achieve success not only in the educational setting but also in professional life. However, text comprehension constitutes an impediment for many learners, dealing with the different parameters of the text requires a set of abilities and provokes certain strategies in order to fully comprehend the text and fulfill the different tasks that follow. As far as the Algerian context is concerned, the third year secondary school pupils have to comprehend texts in exams and tests and more importantly in the Baccalaureate exam (national exam) in order to be able to answer a set of tasks related to the text provided. Though the Algerian pupils practice reading in the classroom they still lack the necessary strategies and skills to handle text comprehension, this lack can be actually attributed to the limited practice of reading comprehension inside the classroom. Therefore, we believe that regular practice of reading comprehension inside the classroom leads to good results in text comprehension. Accordingly, the present work was carried out with the aim of checking the efficacy of formative assessment in the Algerian secondary school EFL classroom posing the following research questions: How does formative assessment help pupils develop their text comprehension? And what impact does it have on the different reading competences? Indeed, the focal point was to check the effects of formative assessment on pupils’ text comprehension with a close reference to the four language competences provided in Bachman and Palmer’s model (1996).

1. Literature Review

1.1. Formative Assessment

Formative assessment represents one of the main areas of the teaching and learning processes. Different researchers approached the concept with varying interests; it is based on the “idea that evidence of student achievement is elicited, is interpreted, and leads to actions that results in better learning than would have been the case in the absence of such evidence” (William and Black, 1998 Qtd in William, 2010, p. 18). In other words, in formative assessment the teacher gathers data from students, interprets these data to identify students’ level, and then acts in accordance with this interpretation.
The leading force of formative assessment is feedback, i.e., it is based on timely constructive feedback which constitutes the cornerstone in the teaching process, in this regard states Irons (2007, p. 07) “any task or activity which creates feedback for students about their learning achievements can be called formative assessment”. Formative assessment operates in a cyclical way through, first, stating the goals and objectives to be reached at the end of the course, second following a certain way of instruction which is meant to reach the stated objectives, and third delivering the lesson which is characterized mainly by feedback. At the end the teacher checks his pupils’ achievement including the areas of strength and areas of weaknesses and then responds to these data by adjusting teaching to reach the objectives in a more effective way. Greenstein (2010) summarizes the main instructional principles related to formative assessment in the figure below:

![Figure 1: The Cycle of Instruction with Formative Assessment (Greenstein, 2010, p. 24)](image)

Accordingly, instruction related to formative assessment is critical for its success or failure as pointed out by Greenstein: “what teachers and students need is assessment and instruction that are conceived as a unit, employed as a unit, and applied as a unit” (2010, p. 24).

1.1.1. The importance of Formative Assessment

A plethora of research works (Herman, Osmundson, Ayala, Schneider, and Timms 2006, Popham 2008, Black and William 1998a/b, Shepard 2000) came to the conclusion that formative assessment is useful for learning improvement; it is “one of the most important interventions for promoting high-performance” (OECD, 2005, p. 22). The importance of formative assessment dwells in the fact that it takes errors into account, regulates and adapts the learning materials in accordance with the learning realities in order to reinforce success. Accordingly, the assessment phase is followed by a remediation phase on the basis of the gaps encountered; the remediation activities should help the pupils overcome their difficulties. Formative assessment allows the verification of whether or not the pupils attain the different language points (lexical, grammatical and so on).
The non-judgmental feature of formative assessment makes it an important tool for both the teacher and the learner as it helps the former to diagnose his students’ level through regular practice, and also inform the latter about his abilities and weaknesses. Indeed, formative assessment “refers to frequent, interactive assessments of students’ progress and understanding. Teachers are then able to adjust teaching approaches to better meet identified learning needs” (OECD, 2005, p. 13), in this way, then, formative assessment paves the way for progress since it is based on a day-to-day interaction between the teacher and the students. Moreover, it raises the student’s responsibility towards his learning, and hence makes him involved in every step of the learning process; this involvement is guided by teacher’s feedback and opinions. In a nutshell, though formative assessment is not the “silver-bullet” to solve all educational issues, it promotes good opportunities to enhance learning by addressing the main goals of the teaching-learning process.

1.2. Text Comprehension
Defining text comprehension is somehow critical because it does not involve only one skill but rather a set of intertwined skills. However, if one attempts to define text comprehension, he would simply say that it”is the interpretation of the information in the text…At the core of comprehension is our ability to mentally interconnect different events in the text and form a coherent representation of what the text is about” (Kendeou et al. 2007, Qtd in Grabe, 2009, p. 39). Though this definition seems digestible, it provokes different skills when one digs deeper, i.e., the interpretation of information requires a set of cognitive and metacognitive skills which are intertwined together to achieve successful comprehension of the text in hand. Indeed, text comprehension requires a set of skills and competences as stated by McNamara (2007, p. 4): “deep comprehension requires inferences, linking ideas coherently, scrutinizing the validity of claims with a critical stance, and sometimes understanding the motives of authors”, in order to have a profound understanding of the text, the reader should employ a set of skills and master a series of competences. These competences can be clearly tested in relation to the different models of language ability including the model of Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996): Communicative language ability. The following section describes this language model with a close reference to the four language competences and shows how this model can be applied to text comprehension.

1.2.1. Bachman and Palmer’s Model Applied to Text Comprehension
Before digging into the relationship between Bachman and Palmer’s model and text comprehension, it is necessary to have a closer look at the model. According to Bachman and Palmer (1996) language operates through different, yet intertwined components, these include personal characteristics, topical knowledge, effective schemata and language ability. The last component is our main concern in the present study, language ability is based on the model provided by Bachman (1990); it is composed of language knowledge and strategic knowledge. The former is concerned with the information found in memory and which is available to use in a given context of language use. Language knowledge includes two broad categories: organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge.
a) **Organizational knowledge**: knowledge related to the structures of the language and the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences; it is composed of:

- **Grammatical knowledge**: similar to Canale and Swain’s (1980) grammatical competence. It includes knowledge of vocabulary, knowledge of syntax, and knowledge of phonology.
- **Textual knowledge**: includes knowledge of conversational and rhetorical organization, in addition to coherence and cohesion.

b) **Pragmatic knowledge**: refers to the ability to relate words and utterances to their appropriate context and the communicative goals of the language user, it includes:

- **Functional knowledge**: Bachman (1990) refers to it as illocutionary competence, the relationship between language utterances and the intentions. Functional knowledge is based on the following aspects: knowledge of ideational functions, knowledge of manipulative functions, knowledge of heuristic functions, and knowledge of imaginative functions. These functions do not occur in isolation but they interact in a given discourse.
- **Sociolinguistic knowledge**: enables the person to relate language to the appropriate context. It includes knowledge of dialects and registers, idiomatic expressions, cultural references and figures of speech.

Worth noting is the fact that strategic competence is not included in the present study as the researcher attempts to explore only the four language competences. Bachman and Palmer’s model is applied to the different language skills including reading. Regarding Language knowledge, McKay (2006) provides a set of skills in relation to Bachman and Palmer’s model. She lists them in relation to the different competences:

- **Grammatical knowledge in reading**: involves the ability to decode letters and words, large vocabulary and accurate grammar.
- **Textual knowledge in reading**: is related to the ability to distinguish different text genres and the ability to comprehend organizational development in a text. Accordingly, it is through textual knowledge that the person can understand the meaning of the text and also to predict what comes next and what is the purpose behind the text.
- **Functional knowledge in reading**: the ability to relate sentences and texts to their exact meaning, in addition to the intention behind.
- **Sociolinguistic knowledge in reading**: is concerned with the ability to depict and understand the cultural references in the text.
2. The Study

2.1. Statement of the Problem
Text comprehension constitutes a major pillar in pupils’ understanding of how language operates. However, this specific area of language is still seen as an obstacle for many learners. Formative assessment seems to be helpful to eliminate pupils’ difficulties in text comprehension mainly those related to grammatical and textual competences.

2.2. Research Questions and Hypotheses
The present research work is carried on the basis of the following research questions:

- How does formative assessment develop pupils’ text comprehension?
- What changes can the experiment bring in terms of pupils’ achievements and attitudes towards text comprehension?

On the basis of the afore-mentioned questions, we hypothesize the following:

- Formative assessment raises teacher’s awareness about his pupils’ difficulties and the problems they encounter in text comprehension and this, in turn, will help him in assisting them to overcome these difficulties and problems.
- The experiment is meant to enhance pupils’ achievements through regular practice of texts. Accordingly, pupils will develop the language competences mainly the grammatical one; moreover, the will build up positive attitudes towards text comprehension.

2.3. Research Objectives
Formative assessment is meant to enhance pupils’ achievements and develop their proficiency level. Accordingly, the present work had been carried out to see the extent to which this claim can be applicable to the Algerian third year secondary school pupils mainly in terms of text comprehension. The aim is therefore to examine the impact of formative assessment on pupils’ text comprehension. Another aim behind choosing these texts in the intervention as formative assessments is to make the pupils familiar with task types that they are likely to encounter in
standardized summative assessments and this, in turn, will decrease pupils’ test anxiety, and therefore increase achievement.

2.4. Research Method
Drawing from the objectives stated earlier, the researcher opts for an experimental research design which is based on the causal links as stated by Denscombe (2007, p. 49): “experiments are generally concerned with determining the cause of any changes that occur to the thing being studied”; within experimental design the cause and effect relationship exists between two variables: the independent variable and the dependent variable. In the present work the independent variable is formative assessment while the dependent variable is text comprehension. The researcher opted mainly for one group pretest-posttest experimental design. Additionally, the researcher employed also a questionnaire as a support to crosscheck data. In the present research work, the researcher opts for a one group pretest-posttest experimental research design (pre-experiment) where there is only one group who receives the treatment, thus she employs a quasi-experimental design.

2.5. Research Approach
As the work adheres into an experimental design, the approach used for data collection and data analysis is a quantitative approach in nature. Moreover, the researcher employs the qualitative approach for the questionnaire. The former approach helps the researcher to draw a link between the research variables on the basis of the numerical data gathered before and after the intervention while the latter is concerned with descriptive analysis of the participants’ views about the intervention.

2.6. Research Procedure
The researcher goes through different, yet intertwined steps to fulfill the research objectives. Three main phases were included:

- **Pre-intervention phase**: this part is concerned with exploring the pupils’ main weaknesses regarding text comprehension; the pupils are tested using a pretest. The pretest is designed by the researcher, it includes a set of tasks designed in relation to the four language competences (see appendix A). The pretest helps the researcher to design the appropriate sessions based on the pupils’ answers.

- **The intervention phase**: after identifying pupils’ weaknesses in the former phase, the researcher launches an intervention which lasted five weeks. The researcher relies on a set of previous Baccalaureate exam samples, the tasks found in these sample exams are mainly concerned with the four language competences. The design of these exam samples is similar to that of the pretest and the posttest where the pupils have to read the text provided and answer the tasks which follow. The intervention is mainly concerned with the pupils’ weaknesses in text comprehension in relation to the language competences.
• **Post-intervention phase**: this phase is concerned with the evaluation of the intervention; pupils were given a posttest (see appendix B) with the same criteria found in the pretest. Additionally, the pupils were given a post-intervention questionnaire (see appendix C).

### 2.7. Research Population
The sample population consists of sixteen pupils (12 females and 4 males), their ages range between 17 and 21 years old, their first language is Arabic and English for them is regarded as a foreign language. The participants are third year pupils at Mohammed Mchernen secondary school, Tlemcen Algeria; they are enrolled in ‘Foreign Languages’ stream. The group under study is randomly assigned, the group basically comprised 25 pupils, and the researcher randomly chooses sixteen pupils. Regarding the school as a whole the researcher opts for a non-probability convenience sampling as the school is chosen for the fact that it scored very low in the previous years in the Baccalaureate exam. The small number of participants actually serves the researcher as she was able to reach each individual pupil.

### 2.8. Research Instruments
The present research work is carried out via three main instruments: a pretest, a posttest and a questionnaire.

**a) Description of the pretest**: the pretest is conducted prior to the intervention; it is mainly intended to draw the pupils’ proficiency level in text comprehension, in addition to the following aims:

- To figure out which competence among the four competences (grammatical, textual, functional and sociolinguistic) represents an obstacle for pupils.
- To have an idea about the pupils’ overall level of text comprehension.

Accordingly, the pretest is composed of a reading passage followed by a set of tasks related to the four language competences. The activities provided includes a variety of comprehension questions, grammatical items, and vocabulary items, each activity is designed to explore a given language competence. Worth noting is the fact that the researcher designs the pretest on the basis of the previous Baccalaureate exams, besides, because of the time constraint the researcher was unable to pilot the pretest.

**b) Description of the posttest**: the participants are tested after the intervention to check the impact of the course they have received in their overall performance in text comprehension, and also to compare their achievement in the four language competences in relation to the pretest. The posttest also is designed by the researcher drawing from the previous Baccalaureate exams and taking into account the main points tackled in the pretest.

**c) Description of the post-intervention questionnaire**: after the posttest, the pupils are asked to answer a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of the following rubrics:
• **Pupils’ attitudes**: this rubric contains questions which were mainly intended to draw pupils’ attitudes concerning the intervention they have received.

• **Pupils’ difficulties**: this rubric aims at exploring whether the intervention helps the pupils to overcome the main difficulties faced in the pretest.

**d) Description of the intervention**

The intervention takes place during the third semester during the academic year 2016-2017; it is a set of sample baccalaureate exams which are given as formative assessment each Wednesday. The sample exams are mainly related to the first two parts of the English exams proposed in the different ‘Bacalaureat’ exams, i.e., text comprehension and text exploration. Each Wednesday there is an exam to deal with, pupils are given one hour to answer the different tasks, in the second hour, the researcher corrects the previous test given. During the first hour pupils are exposed to intensive feedback, i.e., they are guided by corrective feedback which is provided on the spot to each individual pupil. During the correction session, the researcher corrects the test given focusing mainly on the main difficulties detected in the pupils’ answers. The activities provided are mainly intended to develop the four language competences (Bachman and Palmer model 1996) mainly grammatical and textual/functional (including sociolinguistic and functional) ones as pupils show lack in these two areas. Accordingly, the sample exams provided are composed of a set of activities: each activity is designed for a given competence.

**2.9. Analysis of the Main Results**

**a) Analysis of the pretest and posttest results**

The results obtained from the pretest and the posttest are compared in the graph below, what can be clearly observed is the fact that the pupils’ scores increased significantly, and this is also confirmed through the table 1 which exhibits pupils’ scores in terms of the central tendency.

![Figure 3: comparison of pupils’ scores in the pretest and posttest](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>11.85</td>
<td>14.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>11.25</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is relevant from the table above is the fact that the pupils outperform in the posttest. The pupils record a difference of 2.98 in the mean scores between the two tests, and this is satisfactory. The pupils’ scores in the different tasks are also compared in the table below:

**Table 2: comparison of pupils’ scores in the different tasks of the pretest and the posttest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Proficiency</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Partially proficient</th>
<th>Not proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task one: type of text (textual knowledge)</td>
<td>Proficient%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task two: true/false (textual/functional knowledge)</td>
<td>Partially proficient%</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task three: questions related to the text (textual/functional knowledge)</td>
<td>Not proficient%</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task four: in which paragraph is mentioned the idea (textual knowledge)</td>
<td>Proficient%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task five: who or what do the underlined words refer to (textual/functional)</td>
<td>Partially proficient%</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task six: give a title to the text (textual knowledge)</td>
<td>Not proficient%</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task one: definitions (synonyms) (grammatical/functional knowledge)</td>
<td>Proficient%</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task two: complete the table (grammatical knowledge)</td>
<td>Partially proficient%</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task three: grammar (grammatical knowledge)</td>
<td>Not proficient%</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task four: phonetics (grammatical knowledge)</td>
<td>Proficient%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task five: reorder the sentences (textual/functional knowledge)</td>
<td>Partially proficient%</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results above show that the difference in the scores is significant between the pretest and the posttest. Additionally, the pupils’ responses to the different tasks vary widely between the pretest and the posttest. Regarding the first part, i.e., the part concerned with textual and textual/functional
competence, the great majority of the pupils achieve well in comparison to the pretest results, the “proficient” category exceeds the average in approximately all the tasks which indicates that the majority of pupils’ answers are correct. On the other hand, the “low proficient” category reaches very low rates with only a few number of pupils not exceeding three. Regarding the part concerned with grammatical competence, the pupils’ scores also increase considerably with a high number of correct answers: 12 while in the pretest the number of correct answers was restricted to lower scores. In the same line of thought, the pupils’ wrong answers decrease in this category of tasks.

b) Analysis of the Questionnaire
The pupils’ answers to the post-intervention questionnaire reveal that all the participants are satisfied with the intervention they have received. Moreover, they learn many points including vocabulary items, consolidation of grammatical rules, and the way to deal with the text and answer the different questions. As far as the pupils’ difficulties are concerned, all the pupils state that they overcome their difficulties in text comprehension. The results are summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternatives</th>
<th>AF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary (know the words) (grammatical/functional competence)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical structures found in the text (grammatical competence)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish the different discourse genres (textual competence)</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having enough knowledge about the topic of the text (functional competence)</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how to pronounce words (grammatical competence)</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding words separately and the text as a whole (textual competence)</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding cultural items in the text (sociolinguistic competence)</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of them</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table shows the great majority of pupils state that the intervention helps them in overcoming difficulties related to vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation in addition to discourse identification. Hence, they develop grammatical and textual competence, in addition to functional competence through background knowledge and vocabulary also.

2.10. Discussion of the Main Results
To assess the efficacy of the intervention a posttest was administered to pupils at the end of the intervention in addition to a post-intervention questionnaire which carried the same aim as the posttest. The pupils’ scores in the posttest reveal many points: the pupils’ achievements increase considerably in comparison to the pretest. This increase is clear first in pupils’ overall scores and second in their correct answers to the different tasks of the posttest. What has brought this satisfactory end is the intensive feedback which pupils receive throughout the intervention. Indeed, feedback represents one of the cornerstones of formative assessment upon which it operates.
effectively and leads to enhancement and progress in pupils’ outcomes, Gipps (1994: 129) highlights this fact by stating that feedback “contributes directly to progress in learning through formative assessment”. Additionally, the feedback that pupils receive during the intervention help them widely and wisely in overcoming their difficulties in text comprehension since it is based on error correction and guiding comments, such type of feedback is believed to be the most effective feedback mainly for low achievers (Boston 2002). Feedback that formative assessment offers is meant to reshape pupils’ understanding of the different areas and realign their acquired competences in a correct manner. Accordingly, the role that feedback plays in the process of formative assessment is crucial, in the present study for instance formative assessment allows the researcher to know the different problems pupils encounter when dealing with a text, this in turn helps her to offer appropriate feedback related to these problems, and the pupils also felt free to ask about the ambiguous points which they were unable to understand during the lesson, and also to interact freely with the teacher (researcher). Accordingly, the data gleaned by means of the intervention, the post-intervention questionnaire and the posttest confirm our first hypothesis.

The pupils’ responses to the post-intervention questionnaire reveal that they like the intervention they have received, moreover the majority of them find it very beneficial since they have learned many things including: grammar rules, new vocabulary items, some reading strategies and the ways how to deal with a text and how to answer different questions. As a matter of fact, this is the main concern of formative assessment, it improves learning in general through “helping students see the connections and clarify meaning in small, successive steps as new knowledge is related to existing understanding” (McMillan 2007: 1). As far as text comprehension is concerned, the pupils’ scores in posttest items reveal that they develop their understanding of text through the sessions that they have received; these sessions are based on feedback as it has been already clarified, the pupils are taught how to deal with the text and the strategies used to handle the different tasks linked to it. The results of the post-intervention questionnaire and the posttest demonstrate that pupils’ text comprehension develop considerably after the intervention, this is attributed mainly to the regular practice of texts. Furthermore, the pupils state that the intervention helps them in answering the different tasks related to text comprehension, besides it makes them accustomed with the text and its tasks, hence the pupils become more opened to these tasks and more importantly they develop a positive attitude towards them. Finally, the correlation between the results obtained through the post-intervention questionnaire and the posttest leads the researcher to confirm the second hypothesis which suggests that the experiment is meant to develop pupils’ achievements through regular practice of texts; therefore they will develop their language competences and also will develop positive attitudes towards text comprehension.

Limitations
As any other study, the researcher encounters some problems when conducting the experiment. The major limitation is the time constraint; first for the intervention the researcher decides for more sessions however because of the time is insufficient she shortens the intervention to five weeks. Second, the researcher cannot pilot the pretest because of time. Additionally, the researcher was
unable to investigate some focal points of text comprehension mainly text comprehension strategies because of time. As far as the research ethics are concerned, the researcher tells the participants about the nature of the experiment and the objectives behind the intervention. Additionally, the researcher asks for permission from the head of the secondary school to conduct the experiment.

**Pedagogical implications**
The present study yields important results concerning the focal role that formative assessment plays in educational settings namely in the area of text comprehension. Indeed, formative assessment provides the teacher with the necessary tools to deal effectively with the pupils. For that point, we suggest that formative assessment should be an integral part in the teaching learning process, the pupils should be assessed on a regular basis and should be provided by intensive feedback carried to each individual pupil. Accordingly, we suggest that the number of pupils should be limited in the classroom so that the teacher can reach each individual pupil and provide him/her with the necessary feedback relevant to their points of strengths and points of weaknesses mainly.

Based on the data gathered we also suggest that formative assessment should be guided by intensive constructive feedback in order to raise pupils’ awareness to the main areas of weaknesses and strengths. Moreover, teachers need to be acknowledged about the importance of formative assessment in the educational setting and be trained to use it in the classroom under different forms, in the present study, for instance, the researcher opted for a set of Baccalaureate exams which were used as formative assessments, however, teachers can use diverse methods to implement formative assessment in their classrooms according to their students’ needs, interests and learning preferences. Finally, the researcher suggests that formative assessment should be mandated in the secondary school syllabus on a regular basis.

**Conclusion**
The effect of formative assessment is acknowledged worldwide in educational arenas. Accordingly, the present study has been carried out with the endeavour to explore the effects of formative assessment on pupils’ text comprehension. The results were very satisfactory and reflected the effect of formative assessment on the improvement of pupils’ text comprehension and completion of tasks related to the text. This research offers a platform from which further research in the area can depart mainly to offer more effective strategies through which formative assessment can operate.

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References
Greenstein, L. (2010). What teachers really need to know about formative assessment. USA: ASCD.
Read the text carefully then do the activities.

In Britain there are a number of different kinds of Higher Education. First of all, of course, there are universities. Can have failed to have heard of Oxford and Cambridge, the two oldest universities in England, but, of course, there are a number of other universities, many of which have opened since the war. The latest of these is the Open University, a unique institution, which, as its name suggests, is open to all. Students of the Open University are not obliged to have any previous qualifications. All the students are part-time and are taught through the medium of television and radio, although they do receive some personal tuition as well through centers located near their own homes. The first graduate were awarded their degrees in 1973.

Besides the universities, there are other institutions such as Polytechnics and technical colleges. These tend to offer courses of a vocational nature as well as academic courses. If a student wants to study management, accounting or librarianship, for example, he would be more likely to go to one of these institutions.

The vast majority of students receive grants from their local Authority, which cover tuition fees and allow a certain amount of money to the students to pay their keep and their books. Most of the colleges and universities have a good proportion of students from overseas.

1. Choose the best answer
The text is: a. descriptive  b. argumentative  c. Narrative

2. Are these statements True or False
   a. All British universities are more recent than Oxford and Cambridge.
   b. Qualifications are required to enter the Open University.
   c. Higher Education in Britain is free of charge.
   d. The majority of colleges and universities in Britain accept foreign students.
3. **Answer the following questions according to the text**
   a. Give two reasons which make of the Open University a unique institution.
   b. Are students at the Open University compelled to attend full-time lectures? Justify by quoting from the text.
   c. Who attends Polytechnic and Technical colleges?

4. **In which paragraph is it mentioned that** students are helped to finance their studies?

5. **Who or what do the underlined words refer to?**
   a. Its (§)
   b. their (§1)
   c. these (§2)
   d. which (§3)

6. **Give a title to the text**

**B. Text Exploration**

1. **Match the words with their definitions.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees</td>
<td>a. money given by a government to help students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>b. connected with skills, knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocational</td>
<td>c. given by official decision as a prize.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awarded</td>
<td>d. grades given by a university to someone who has passed an examination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Complete the chart as shown in the example.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to educate</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualification</td>
<td>............</td>
<td>................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>............</td>
<td>Specialized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To respect</td>
<td>............</td>
<td>................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Combine the pair of sentences with the connectors provided.**

**Provided that - Although – such…..that - whereas**

1. a. In America education is considered to be the responsibility of each state.  
   b. ..........................................................  
2. a. Many students receive grants. They still have financial problems.  
   b. ..........................................................  
2. a. Reading is an important skill. Students ought to master it at an early age.  
   b. ..........................................................

4. **Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of their final “s”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges – qualifications – students – courses – suggests-kinds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/S/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Reorder the following sentences to make a coherent paragraph (1.5 pts)**

a. and then take special national examination  
   b. in order to be accepted to a university.  
   c. during the last two years of high school,  
   d. the students specialize in college preparatory courses
Appendix B: Posttest

Read the text carefully then do the activities.

The text:

South Africa has 12 million learners, 366,000 teachers and about 28,000 schools including 1,000 private schools. School life spans 13 years or grades – although the first year of education, grade 0 or “reception year” and the last three years (grade 10, 11 and grade 12 or “matric”) are not compulsory.

The educational system is characterized by diversity: schools and universities vary greatly in terms of quality, financial resources and size. Top quality schools and universities are to be found in both the state and the private education sector.

Most state schools are aided to some extent by the government that provides the minimum, and parents contribute to basics and extras in the form of school fees. Private colleges and universities are a more recent phenomenon in the country unlike private schools which have existed for centuries.

For universities entrance, a matric “endorsement” is required. The sector is vibrant with more than a million students, 21 public universities, 15 technikons and many colleges. All the universities and technikons are autonomous.

Education gets a big budget compared with most other countries. However, more money is always needed to address the backlogs left by 40 years of apartheid education, where money was pumped into white education at the expenses of black schools in the townships and rural areas.

The backlogs are immense: illiteracy rates are high, teachers in township schools are poorly trained and the matric pass rate remains low.

Redressing the resource imbalance, rebuilding the educational environment and retraining teachers is a slow and difficult process, but significant improvements have been made up to now.

1. Choose the best answer
The text is: Narrative Expository descriptive

2. Say whether the following statements are true or false according to the text.
a) Private schools are a recent phenomenon in S. Africa.
b) Universities are dependent on the government.
c) Literacy degrees are low among blacks.

3. Answer the following questions according to the text.
a) What is meant by “reception year”?
b) In what way schools and universities are different in S. Africa?
c) What is the difference between private colleges and private schools?

4. In which paragraph is it mentioned that high school in S. Africa is not obligatory.

5. What or who do the underlined words refer to.
a)…both…(§2)=
b) …which…(§3)=

6. Give the general idea of the text
a) Illiteracy in South Africa.
b) S. African educational system.
c) Public & private schools in S. Africa

B/ Text Exploration

1. Find in the text words or phrases close in meaning to the following:
   a) Independent ($§4$) =
   b) huge ($§6$) =
   c) Important ($§7$) =

2. Complete the following table as shown in the example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: educate</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>educative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contribute</td>
<td>..............</td>
<td>............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improvement</td>
<td>...............</td>
<td>..............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>................</td>
<td>................</td>
<td>trained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Complete sentence (b) so that it means the same as sentence (a).
   1. a) State schools are aided by the government.
      b) The government...........................................
   2. a) I didn’t revise well, I regret it now.
      b) I wish.......................................................

4. Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of the final “ed”.
   Passed – aided – required – pumped - trained - existed

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>/id/</td>
<td>/t/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Re-order the following sentences to get a coherent paragraph.
   a) The first were living in poor conditions,
   b) But this situation changed nowadays.
   c) Whereas the second were rich and powerful,
   d) South Africa was divided into blacks and whites.

Appendix C: Post-intervention questionnaire

Rubric one: Pupils’ attitudes:

1. Are you satisfied with the course you have received?
   Yes [ ]      Somehow [ ]      No [ ]

2. To what extent was this course helpful?
   Very helpful [ ]      Helpful [ ]      not helpful [ ]

3. What did you like most about the course?
   How?

4. What you dislike about the course?

5. What has this course taught you?

Rubric two: Pupils’ difficulties:

6. Does the course help you to overcome your difficulties in the English exam?
   Yes [ ]      No [ ]
7. Does the course help you to overcome your difficulties on text comprehension?
   Yes          no
   If yes, does it help you in:
   ✓ Vocabulary (you don’t know the words)
   ✓ Grammatical structures found in the text
   ✓ Knowing how to pronounce words
   ✓ Distinguishing the different discourse genres
   ✓ Understanding cultural items in the text
   ✓ Having enough knowledge about the topic of the text
   ✓ Understand words separately and the text as a whole
   ✓ All of them
Teachers’ Perspectives of the use of CLT in ELT Classrooms: A Case of Soran District of Northern Iraq

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Abstract
This mixed-method study aims at exploring Iraqi English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers’ attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The study was conducted in Soran town, in the northern part of Iraq. The participants of the study were 58 EFL teachers from secondary and high school classrooms. In the first phase, a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire was administered (Karavas-Doukas, 1996) to examine the participants’ attitudes towards CLT principles: “place/importance of grammar, group/pair work, quality and quantity of error correction, the role of the teacher in the classroom, the role and contribution of learners in the learning process.” The second phase of the study was qualitative and consisted of semi-structured interviews to examine the reasons behind the implementation of CLT in terms of the factors that hinder and encourage the implementation of CLT in the Iraqi setting. The results of the quantitative analysis revealed that the teachers held overall positive attitudes towards the use of CLT. The findings of the interview phase concluded that the main factors that cause the failure and success of the implementation of CLT in Iraq can be categorized under four headings: educational factors, teacher factors, student factors, and CLT factors. The results of the study suggest that the educational system and the teachers’ communicative competence are essential to promote the employment of CLT in Iraqi EFL classrooms.

Keywords: CLT, communicative competence, Iraq, teachers’ attitudes

Introduction

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been a popularly employed method since the 1990s and its use has been flourishing. This method is largely regarded as essential to second-language learning and communicative competence. Thus, how CLT becomes utilized in practice is vital and deems necessary an investigation of the attitudes of those educators employing it.

Brown (1994) maintains that the nature of CLT depends largely upon the perceptions or attitudes of educators regarding the teaching and acquisition of the particular language of study. Attitude is described as “the interplay of feelings, beliefs, and thoughts about actions” (Rusch & Perry, 1999, p. 291). Generally, teachers’ attitudes are significant in developing an educational system and progressing the learning process. Nevertheless, attitude alone is not sufficient for examining the effectiveness of an English Language Teaching (ELT) method, for socio-organizational context must also be considered.

The primary goal of CLT is to reinforce writing, reading, speaking and listening skills in various contexts via interdependent communication and learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2008). As a result, this approach has shifted classroom models from being teacher-centred toward learner-focused, meaning that the role of teachers has transformed from being a conveyor of information to that of an engager in interaction with students as well as a practical guide (Larsen-Freeman, 2008). The overall aim of CLT in an EFL classroom is to provide learners with opportunities for interaction and communication in the English language, with teachers playing various roles including that of a mediator, guide, and facilitator. In order for a teacher to fulfill these roles, they not only must guide communication and interaction within the classroom but also incorporate non-traditional materials supporting these processes (Breen & Candlin, 1980). The teacher should guide students only when dealing with the use of materials and participation in the chosen activities such as role-play, pair/group work, and games. However, students should play the dominant role in appropriating these activities to meet their individual needs.

Many scholars have emphasized that teacher attitudes should be examined closely rather than marginalized when considering the effectiveness of a language-teaching approach (Breen & Candlin, 1980). These attitudes are essential to student success, especially within CLT, in which teachers relinquish the role of controller or conveyor in order to adopt a more facilitative role. Moreover, since CLT principles were designed for a Western educational context, it is necessary to investigate factors that either hinder or promote its effectiveness in additional cultural contexts.

This study examines teachers’ attitudes towards implementing CLT in classroom practice at the secondary education level in the Soran district of northern Iraq. The key goal is to probe Iraqi EFL teachers’ attitudes towards CLT as well as to determine the obstacles and encouraging factors they encounter in utilizing this approach. To support the results of this study, the researcher describes the educational environment particular to the study’s location. Accordingly, the results may have direct implications the development of teachers and teaching methods in Iraq’s secondary English education classrooms.
This study addresses the following research questions:

- Research Question 1: What are Iraqi EFL teachers’ attitudes towards the principles of CLT?
- Research Question 2: What kinds of problems do Iraqi EFL teachers encounter when implementing CLT in their language classrooms?
- Research Question 3: What essential reasons encourage the implementation of CLT in Iraqi EFL classrooms?

CLT has been widely examined by ELT scholars (Ellis, 1996; Gorsuch, 2000; Li, 1998; Rao, 2002; Sun & Cheng, 2002; Incecay & Incecay, 2009). However, to the best of our knowledge, no studies have specifically dealt with perceptions of CLT as well as its implementation in the Iraqi context. Thus, this study gains its significance not only from the fact that it contributes to a broader understanding of CLT as an EFL approach but also from the fact that it may offer direct guidance for Iraqi EFL educators in adopting CLT in their classrooms. It is hoped that this study will enable these teachers to develop interpersonal classroom interactions while providing their students the chance to gain independence in their language learning. Additionally, the implications from this study might lead to the transformation of the relatively passive role of Iraqi EFL learners into a more active one.

Methodology

In this study, a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data collection was conducted. First, descriptive analyses were performed on the responses obtained from 58 teachers regarding their attitudes towards CLT. As De Vaus (2002, p.18) defines it, “descriptive research deals with questions of what things are like, not why they are that way.” For the first phase of data collection, a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire, adopted from Karavas-Doukas (1996) was used to measure the level of perceived attitudes of the participants.

Karavas-Doukas categorizes the principles of CLT into five subscales: place/importance of grammar, group/pair work, quality and quantity of error correction, the role of the teacher in the classroom, and the role and contribution of learners in the learning process (See Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Questionnaire Items on the subscales of CLT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place/importance of grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group/pair work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and quantity of error correction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of the teacher in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role and contribution of learners in the learning process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since a thorough understanding of a particular subject cannot be obtained via a questionnaire, the researcher supplemented these with semi-structured interviews obtaining the
subjective views and experiences of the randomly-selected six participants who had already answered the questionnaire. The aim of this was to investigate the rationales behind the implementation of CLT in their EFL classrooms (See Appendix I). Before the researcher began conducting the interviews, the interview questions were checked by a university professor of education to verify their compatibility with the research questions. During the interview process, the researcher asked the interviewees prearranged and open-ended questions; however, follow-up questions were also asked.

Participants included 58 secondary education teachers. Although random sampling would be the preferred method for this kind of a study, based on limitations of access to potential participants, we employed convenience sampling.

The researchers created an online Google form to collect the needed data. Out of 58 participants, only 30 of them responded online. The remaining 28 answered the questionnaire manually after the researcher visited their schools. Since participants were English language teachers, the researchers administered the questionnaire in English. The 5-point Likert type questionnaire consists of twenty-four statements and, therefore, the potential overall participant scores range between 24 and 120. The questionnaire consists of 12 positive and 12 reverse-coded statements. The researchers also included a background information section with the questionnaire asking for the participants’ age, gender, years of experience, number of professional training programs attended, frequency of using CLT, and majors of study.

As a questionnaire alone is insufficient to acquire a thorough understanding of an issue, the researcher supplemented this data collection tool with face-to-face interviews. These involved six randomly-selected participants and explored the factors underlying their motivation to implement CLT in their classrooms. The overall teaching experience of participants between six and ten years. Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher phoned the interviewees to inform them of the purpose of participation and obtain approval regarding their willingness to participate voluntarily. After the researcher had obtained such consent via a signed document, an interview schedule was organized to accommodate interviewees based on their availability; moreover, the interviews occurred outside of their work environment so as to encourage free discussion and avoid interjections. Before each interview commenced, the researcher thoroughly explained the reasons and protocols of the study to the participant.

After the interviews were conducted, the researcher translated two of the audios into English and transcribed the audiotapes verbatim. The transcriptions then were revised by the interviewees for verification. Also, the translated versions were reviewed for accuracy by a doctoral candidate holding a Master’s degree in ELT as well as by the first author himself, who is a professional academic translator.

As an ethical protocol, the researcher obtained an administrative consent letter from the General Education Directorate of the region. The approval letter from the Directorate of Education was attached with all the questionnaires in order to assert the purpose of the study.

For the analysis of the quantitative data, the answers by the respondents were digitalized and put into SPSS. Then, descriptive statistics were obtained to numerically determine the attitudes of the participants.
Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) suggest that for qualitative data analysis, a five-step technique is preferable for "preparing the data for analysis, exploring the data, analyzing the data, representing the data analysis, and validating the data" (p. 129). After confirming the accuracy of the respondents’ data, thematic content analysis was employed to categorize the data. This technique is preferred when "the general issues that are of interest are determined prior to the analysis, but the specific nature of the categories and themes to be explored are not predetermined", as was the case with this study (Ezzy, 2002, p. 88). Next, the coding process—described by Ezzy (2002) as “disassembling and reassembling the data process”—was considered (p. 94). That is, the data were classified into smaller items of texts. Then, each item was re-organized by categorizing and identifying the themes to yield different obtained data.

Findings

As mentioned above, the first research question probed Iraqi EFL teachers’ attitudes towards the principles of CLT. Thus, the mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum scores were calculated to define the participants’ responses. Furthermore, the principles of CLT were divided into five subscales: the importance of grammar, group/pair work, quantity and quality of error correction, teacher role inside the classroom, and the role and contribution of learners in the learning process. Thus, descriptive statistics were obtained for all five principles in order to describe the means, standard deviations and percentages for each item as well as the overall scores for principles.

Table 2 describes the overall attitudes of the participants towards the use of CLT in their classrooms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Descriptive analysis of overall attitudes of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall attitude score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (likewise)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated by Table 2, most participants had a positive (favorable) attitudes towards CLT principles. The obtained scores ranged from 63.60 (minimum) to 91.00 (maximum), with a mean of 76.29 and standard deviation of 5.65.

The results indicate that participants held favorable attitudes toward all five subscales of CLT. More specifically, they exhibited moderate attitudes towards group/pair work, with the highest mean (M=3.33), indicating the most favorable items of CLT subscales. Similarly, the participants held moderate attitudes towards “the role and contribution of learners in the learning process”, with the mean score of (M=3.31). Furthermore, the participants held moderate attitudes towards “the role of the teachers in the classroom” (M=3.25). However, their attitudes towards the “place/importance of grammar” and “quality and quantity of error correction” were also favorable but with lower means: (M=2.96) and (M=2.96), respectively.

As mentioned in the methodology section, the questionnaire is composed of five subscales. We are going to present the item-based frequencies in each subscale in this section.
For the first subscale, which is place and importance of grammar, the following findings have been obtained. Twenty-three participants (39.7%) agreed that grammatical correctness is necessary for learners to achieve communication goals (Item 1). Twenty-one (39.7%) thought that grammatical rules should be taught as a way to achieve communication, but not as the main purpose itself (Item 3). Moreover, twenty-five (43.1%) reported that knowledge of grammar rules does not guarantee learners to achieve communication skills (Item 12). Twenty-five (41.4%) believed that grammar is essential for learners who seek the capability of communicating with a native speaker (Item 17). Finally, thirty-one (53.2%) remained uncertain regarding whether a direct instruction of grammar is vital for learners to speak fluently (Item 23). The responses indicate that some teachers prefer grammar rules to be directly involved in their classrooms, while others suggest that grammar rules should be taught as a means for learners to achieve effective communication.

For the second subscale (group/pair work), the findings are as follows. Twenty-five teachers (43.1%) agreed that group work aids learners in emerging within an environment in which they themselves can communicate with one another (Item 2). Thirty-two (56.1%) argued that group activities enable students to control their learning and, thus, it is an irreplaceable communication tool (Item 9). In terms of the potentially time-consuming nature of group activities, twenty teachers (34.5%) asserted that group activities are difficult to employ in their classrooms. Similarly, the same amount of participants (34.5%) opposed the idea that such activities require time and organization (Item 13). Twenty-four (42.1%) reported that small group work activities may occasionally be useful, but it is difficult to consider them as alternatives for authentic instruction by an experienced teacher (Item 21). Finally, twenty-three participants (41.1%) agreed that group work activities cannot prevent learners from utilizing first language and monitoring them is difficult (Item 22). According to the respondents, group activities function as the main tool for learners to gain a self-confidence inside the classroom, although some of the teachers still oppose group activities inside the classroom.

The third subscale, quality and quantity of error correction, revealed the following findings. Twenty-three participants (40.4%) felt that teacher feedback should involve learners’ fluency in communication rather than grammatical errors (Item 6). Twenty-two (38.6%) claimed that it is necessary for the teacher to correct all structural rules; otherwise, he/she might contribute to students’ imperfection in learning (Item 10). Twenty-four (41.4%) agreed that error correction is a waste of time because errors are an unavoidable part of the learning process, while twenty-one (36.2%) suggested that it is a fact that errors are part of the learning process, but neglecting them results in impotent learning in future (Item 14). Most participants (38.6%) agreed that one disadvantage of CLT is that it focuses more on fluency while neglecting accuracy (Item 15). From the responses of the participants, it is concluded that error correction is a significant feature of the learning process and is essential to becoming a good communicator in a foreign language.

The role of the teacher in the classroom, which is the fourth subscale, gave us the following findings. Twenty-two participants (%37.9) agreed that teachers should act as a facilitator than an instructor inside classrooms. To the credit of this notion, it is widely argued that the classroom should be student-centered rather than teacher-centered in a CLT environment (Item 7). More than half of the respondents (53%) claimed that the teacher as knowledge provider is only one segment of his/her diverse roles, which are supposed to be fulfilled during...
the lessons (Item 16). The majority of teachers (56.9%) asserted that knowledge of the target language should be transmitted to students through examples, writings and explanations, while fourteen of the total amount (24.1%) strongly agreed (Item 19). Lastly, almost half of the respondents (46.6%) believed textbooks to be insufficient for creating a communicative atmosphere, but the teacher should take tasks and other materials into consideration in order to meet the needs of learners. Not surprisingly, twenty-three of the total amount (39.7%) strongly agreed in supporting this argument (Item 24). In their responses, teachers confirmed that the role of teacher should be varied inside classrooms and that the role of the teacher is not as a “director” or “controller” but rather as a “facilitator.” Moreover, they perceived activities as important for imparting the content of the lesson, and textbooks as requiring supplementary explanations and examples when conveying information to students.

For the final subscale (the role and contribution of the learners in the learning process), we obtained the following findings. It is observed that twenty-five participants (43.1%) thought that teachers rather than learners should decide the content of the lesson (Item 4). Twenty participants (35.1%) believed that learners should not be trained in order to be familiarized with CLT since they are not used to such an approach (Item 5). More than half of the participants (54.4%) favored learner-centered classrooms (Item 8). Almost half of the respondents (46.6%) reported that it is difficult to organize the teaching process in large classrooms (Item 11). The majority of the participants (57.9%) claimed that language is better to acquire when it is employed as a vehicle to something else, rather than as an object of study in and of itself. (Item 18). Lastly, thirty-seven participants (63.8%) agreed that forcing learners to perform tasks and activities could not achieve the goal of CL, while ten of the participants (17.2%) strongly supported this notion (Item 20). It can be concluded from participants’ responses that learners are considered key players in the process of language learning, specifically when it comes to communicative competence.

Research Question 2 inquired the sort of problems Iraqi EFL teachers encounter in implementing CLT in their language classrooms. The main purpose of the interview questions was to identify the most common obstacles encountered by teachers while implementing CLT in their classrooms. Thematic content analysis was employed to categorize the interview data. The interview transcripts were separated into two categories: factors and sub-factors preventing teachers from successfully implementing CLT in their classrooms. The researchers’ categorization is based on Li’s (1998) categorized rationales hindering the implementation of CLT, and under each factor, there are the following sub-factors: educational system factors, educator factors, learner factors, and CLT factors.

The researcher read the interview transcripts carefully and subsequently identified codes that were supported by relevant quotes from the interview data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Essential reasons hindering the implementation of CLT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Factors</strong></td>
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<td>Educational system</td>
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### Teachers’ Perspectives of the use of CLT in ELT Classrooms

**SHERWANI & KILIÇ**

<table>
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<th>Educators</th>
<th>Lack of courses and training</th>
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<td>Personal problems</td>
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<td>Unawareness of methods</td>
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<td>Lack of fluency</td>
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<td>Learners</td>
<td>Familial attitudes to ELT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicative Language Teaching</td>
<td>Contextual inadequacy</td>
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</table>

Four interviewees indicated the important roles that large classes play in preventing the implementation of CLT. They maintain that it is difficult, if not impossible, to implement CLT in a 40-student classroom. Furthermore, they reported that class activities and giving opportunity to each student, among other necessary activities, are almost impossible in large classes. Two participants explain the following:

One of the biggest problems is that we have a large number of students. There are fifty students in a classroom, which is totally bad. This surely affects the process of implementing a CLT approach. It is difficult for the teacher to control this number of students and the situation. So, this is one of the biggest problems that I have ever noticed.

Further, another interviewee reiterates that the educational system does not help in supporting the teachers:

The system of education itself is not applicable to the situation we are in now. It is completely different when you have only 20 students, not 40, and it is relatively easy to overcome obstacles facing CLT implementation. So, it is very difficult to find a mechanism to convey the very principles of this approach in a proper way. There are numerous students in one classroom, so you cannot conduct group activities.

Moreover, one interviewee emphasized the importance of speaking in the target language, stating that “a lot of the teachers who teach English do not know the language itself, let alone are able to teach it somebody else. So, I think this directly leads to failure in language teaching.” he added, “It is obvious that CLT requires a fluent teacher to impart the message of CLT principles in a successful way. Therefore, if the teachers are not fluent, problems result.

One interviewee viewed personal barriers as one of the most important factors inhibiting teachers from successfully implementing CLT. He stressed that economic hardship may isolate teachers from what they are supposed to impart, saying the following:

T4: The economic hardship of teachers is another big barrier. For example, if a teacher is well-paid, the government can punish him when he does not execute his job properly, but if not, the teachers may seek an alternative way to earn their livelihood. This results in impotence during the teaching process.

Another interviewee states that “the low level of students’ English is a major obstacle in the implementation of this approach. Some of the students can ask questions in the second language, but only 40 percent.”
To address Research Question 3, “What are the essential encouraging reasons behind the implementation of CLT in an Iraqi context?” the interview transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis once again. Based on the investigation of Li (1998) pertaining the factors promoting the selection of CLT in a Chinese context, the interview data was separated into the following four categories: educational system, educators, learners, and CLT. After a careful reading of the texts, the interview transcripts were coded under subcategories (See Table 4).

Table 4. Factors encouraging the implementation of CLT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Sub-factors</th>
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</table>
| Educational system | – Supplying necessary equipment  
|                  | – Decreasing student number in classes           |
|                  | – Fluency precedes accuracy                      |
| Educators       | – Necessity of courses, training and workshops    |
|                  | – Fluency improvement                            |
|                  | – Role of teacher                                |
|                  | – Using target language                          |
| Learners        | – Learners need to be familiar with CLT           |

Two interviewees out of six viewed the “supplying of necessary equipment” as having a crucial effect on promoting the implementation of CLT in an Iraqi context. T2 states, “Well, if you have everything like materials, a small number of students, a nice atmosphere, and air conditioners, it is much easier to implement CLT principles inside your classroom.”

Only one interviewee viewed fluency as preceding accuracy during CLT implementation, claiming that “in a CLT classroom, it is almost impossible to implement it if the system is not parallel with focusing more on communication rather than grammatical rules. Grammar should be used as a mean to achieve communication.”

Half of the interviewees reported that the role of the teacher inside the classroom is essential. When asked about his role as a teacher, one of them expressed the following:

Actually, the ways of teaching have changed rapidly; thus, we need to play the role of “facilitator” because the method demanded is a communicative one. A communicative method does not need the role of “authority,” so I think it is better to be a guide rather than a controller.

Discussion

The quantitative research questions probed Iraqi EFL teachers’ attitudes towards the principles of CLT. The results suggest that these teachers hold positive attitudes towards CLT, in general. This finding corresponds with that of previous studies conducted in China, Bangladesh, Italy, Iran and Taiwan, which similarly conclude that participants hold favorable attitudes towards CLT (Mangubai, Dashwood, Berthold, Flores & Dale, 1998; Karim, 2004; Chang, 2000; Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006; Liao, 2003). The above-mentioned researchers conclude that EFL teachers are convinced of the value of CLT in an EFL environment.
As mentioned previously, the findings suggest that the teachers held positive attitudes towards all the principles of CLT. Furthermore, the results correspond with those of Chang (2000), in which participants held more positive attitudes toward pair/group work than other techniques used in CLT. Likewise, the minimum score for the quality and quantity of error correction in Chang’s study is similar to the score determined by the current one.

Similarly, the results of Mangubai et al. (1998) indicate that participants positively favour the role of learners as the most important principle, as was the case with this study. The results of this study suggest that teachers are no longer playing the role of “controller” inside the classroom, but rather that of “contributor” and “facilitator.” Moreover, it is strongly suggested that students are able to play a vital role in the learning process.

Among the CLT principles, the quality and quantity of error correction had a minimum score, which is consistent with the findings of other studies. The findings of Mangubai et al. (1998) conclude that teachers experience worry concerning error correction. Similarly, the findings of Hawkey (2006) reveal that there are some concerns about the principles of CLT, especially when it comes to the quality and quantity of error correction. The participants of both studies argue that grammatical rules and vocabulary correction are essential since it is important for the students to know the correct form of a sentence or expression. Furthermore, even if one of the core characteristics of CLT is prioritizing fluency over grammatical rules, the results of the aforementioned studies have demonstrated that teachers worry about concentrating on grammar or fluency while correcting learners’ errors.

The findings of Rajabi and Godazhdar (2016) support those of the current study, both of which have revealed the highest attitudes score towards group/pair work. Conversely, the minimum score achieved in this study regarded the place/importance of grammar as well as the quality and quantity of error correction, while the findings of the previous study indicate the role of learners as the minimum score obtained.

Finally, the results of this study indicate that teachers’ positive attitudes are not the only factor affecting the implementation of CLT. Rather, other factors such as educational system and context should also be considered as essential factors (Carless, 2004).

The qualitative part of this study examined factors both hindering and encouraging the implementation of CLT in Iraqi EFL classrooms. The results indicate some inconsistencies between CLT in theory and in practice. During the interviews, participants suggested that the factors improving and hindering the implementation of CLT are related to the following four areas:

1. Educational system
2. Teachers
3. Students
4. CLT
Educational system factors
The interviewees expressed that an educational system can play an essential role in providing an appropriate atmosphere for the implementation of CLT. Furthermore, they specified that test-based curriculum, lack of supplies, class size, and underpayment hinder this process. The findings of this study are consistent with those of various past studies (Liao, 2003; Li, 1998; Burnaby & Sun, 1989), which reveal that a large class size and test-based curriculum are considered to be detrimental for the implementation of CLT. Additionally, the findings of the present study argue that the educational support given to teachers is essential for overcoming restraints pertaining to CLT implementation. The findings also suggest that the reduction of class size can lead to the successful implementation of CLT. The lack of support on behalf of educational authorities was deemed by participants as severely obstructing CLT implementation in their classrooms. Lastly, the interviewees also asserted that favourable buildings and salaries for teachers could also provide an appropriate CLT atmosphere inside the classroom.

Teacher factors
The results of the interviews show that teachers play a vital role in implementing the principles of CLT. Furthermore, participants suggested that communicative incompetence, lack of courses and training, personal problems, and unawareness of ELT methods severely hinder the implementation of CLT inside their classrooms. The interviewees stated that trainings and courses can promote the awareness of teachers regarding CLT. On the other hand, a lack of training may lead to an insufficient understanding of CLT. The results of studies conducted by Liao (2003), Li (1998), and Tsai (2007) support those of the present study by suggesting that teachers need to improve their fluency in the target language. Last but not least, the findings suggest that the role of teachers should shift from “controller of the classroom” and “provider of knowledge” to “facilitator” and “guide.”

Student factors
Teacher-related factors are not the only ones either promoting or hindering the implementation of CLT, for learners, too, play an essential role in this issue. The interviewees indicated that lack of fluency and family constraints are two key student-related factors of CLT implementation. It is suggested that the lack of fluency on behalf of students undermines the efforts of teachers during CLT implementation. This finding is supported by those of Tsai (2007), Liao (2003), and Li (1998), which show that it is difficult, if not impossible, for teachers to employ CLT activities among students who are not fluent in English. The results of the interview data indicate that students should be familiar with the principles of CLT prior to its implementation. They also prove that it is essential to consider cultural differences between Western and Eastern contexts while implementing CLT.

CLT factors
The results of this study indicate a contextual inadequacy in the application of CLT. The findings suggest that it is necessary to differentiate between EFL environments in which CLT is implemented. Moreover, an Iraqi EFL context does not fit the needs of CLT because the target language is used solely in the classroom (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Tsai, 2007; Li, 1998). The interviewees also expressed that supplying necessary equipment for CLT activities is essential to successfully implement them. It is noteworthy to mention that, as suggested by interviewees, an
exam-based curriculum does not aid in CLT implementation; therefore, it needs to be adapted accordingly.

To conclude, the present study aimed at identifying encouraging factors related to CLT implementation in Iraqi ELF classrooms. The population also significantly differed from that of other studies conducted on this topic. Therefore, contradictory results indicate the contribution of the study.

Conclusion

The findings of the quantitative phase reveal that the participants held positive views towards the CLT in general. Moreover, teachers’ attitudes towards the subscales of CLT were determined as follows: teachers held a low attitudes towards “place/importance of grammar”, while they had a moderate attitudes towards “group/pair work”, the quality and quantity of error correction gained a low attitudes among the participants, the teachers’ attitudes towards “the role of the teacher in the classroom” found to be moderate. Lastly, “the role and contribution of learners during the learning process” among the participants found to be moderate.

The qualitative phase was conducted via semi-structured interviews with six participants who had already participated in the first phase of data collection. The researcher administered a guideline as a main tool for acquiring necessary information about the factors that influence the selection of CLT in an Iraqi context, especially in Soran district. Yet, the interviewer did not allow participants to provide additional views. According to Li (1998), the hindering factors of CLT implementation can be categorized into four main areas: educational system, teachers, learners, and CLT. Furthermore, each factor funnelled into a sub-factor, accordingly.

Based on the interviewee responses, it can be concluded that the educational system has a grave effect on the implementation of CLT. The participants reported that the large class size, underpayment, lack of courses, lack of necessary supplies and old-fashioned curriculum significantly hindered CTL implementation. Furthermore, they expressed concern regarding the fluency of some teachers because one of the core pillars of CLT is fluency. Despite teacher fluency, the students themselves were identified obstacles in terms of not being fluent. Finally, the interviewees reveal that CLT is inconsistent with an EFL context, and it was especially developed for an ESL context.

The interviewees suggested that reducing the number of students in each class, providing necessary equipment, changing test-based curriculum, and engaging in trainings and courses may lead to successful CLT implementation. In addition, the participants argued that the teachers should be fluent and familiar with the methods they teach in order to implement CLT.

The present study investigated the attitudes of Iraqi EFL teachers towards the principles of CLT as well as the essential factors influencing the implementation of CLT. Since most previous educational studies are not impeccable, this research recommends some suggestions for further studies. The participants of this study were from one context: Soran District; therefore, the findings could not be generalized to other contexts in the region. Further studies should also be implemented to cover various areas in Iraq. The participants of the study should also represent public and private schools alike. Their views and implementation of CLT might have led to inconsistency. Therefore, further research is required to deal with both public and private school
teachers independently. This study was also limited in its investigation of teachers’ attitudes toward CLT. Therefore, future studies are recommended to include educational systems and learners attitudes towards CLT.

Finally, since the findings of this study are based solely on what the participants reported, it is difficult to discover whether they apply what they preach. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct action research in future studies.

CLT aims at developing the communicative competence of students during the learning process. Despite the fact that teachers play an important role in leading students to improve their communication skills, no research has been conducted in an Iraqi context concerning this matter. The results of the present study reveal that the teachers possessed positive attitudes towards CLT principles. Based on the interview data, the participants suggested that there are some factors such as educational system, teachers, students, and CLT which influence CLT implementation.

Pedagogical Implications

The present study gives some practical and theoretical implications for stakeholders, curricula designers as well as learners to implement CLT in Iraqi secondary and high school settings. According to the findings of this study, the following implications can be observed: first, the obtained results of the present study propose that training and practical courses are needed for teachers to implement CLT in their classrooms. As it was noted by the participants, it is necessary for teachers who are qualified to realize the importance of the knowledge of CLT. The findings of this study also concluded that the teachers need to obtain teaching skills in order to make all the students participate in activities in various situations. Also, a number of participants suggested that the government should support them in facilitating the implementation of CLT. Therefore, Iraqi schools as well as its government must support the practitioners by providing courses and workshops consistent with their needs.

Another implication is, based on the views of the participants, that it is necessary to consider the Iraqi culture when implementing CLT. The teachers who participated in this study mentioned the obstacles they encounter when implementing CLT. Iraqi students, mostly, are not good enough to express their minds inside the classroom in English. Therefore, the results of this study suggest that teachers should make their classrooms student-oriented rather than teacher-oriented. Further, it is obvious that CLT was initially designed for ESL context and the Western environment, therefore, teachers should realize the differences.

The participants of this study also reported that large class size, mother language-based classes, low-level students combined with high level students, and the exam-oriented curricula are considered to be obstacles in applying CLT. Therefore, the educational authority should do the following: first, reduce the number of students in classrooms in order to make CLT feasible. Second, the administrators and educators are bound to create a student-centered environment. Third, it is necessary that the low-level students be separated from those who are better off in this respect. Fourth, modifying the exam-based curricula into a more comprehensive one that includes not only form and vocabulary but also writing, speaking, conversation and listening skills would also be beneficial.
Suggestions for Further Research

Since most previous educational studies are not impeccable, this research recommends some suggestions for further studies. The participants of this study were from one context: Soran District; therefore, the findings could not be generalized to other contexts in the region. Further studies should also be conducted to cover various areas in Iraq. The participants of the study should also represent public and private schools alike. Their views and implementation of CLT might have led to inconsistency. Therefore, further research is required to deal with both public and private school teachers independently. This study was also limited in its investigation of teachers’ attitudes toward CLT. Therefore, future studies are recommended to include educational systems and learners attitudes towards CLT. Finally, since the findings of this study are based solely on what the participants reported, it is difficult to discover whether they apply what they preach. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct action research in future studies.

Note: This article is extracted from a MA thesis written by the first and supervised by the second author.

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References


Appendix A
Interview guide
Dear teacher:

I would like to invite you to take part in a mixed method research study aimed to explore Iraqi EFL teachers’ attitudes toward CLT. It is necessary to ask for permission prior any attempts of the study. To participate in the study, the researcher needs to inform you that the study comprises two parts; responding to a questionnaire and a likely in-depth face-to-face interview which is prepared by the researcher accordingly.

The data of the study are utterly closed to the third party and will be remained confidential. I would like to assure you that no information concerning your background will be released without your consent. The interview takes about half an hour; your opinion will offer in-depth information about the research topic. The researcher also would like to inform you that your participation is entirely voluntary, you may withdraw your participation willingly. Therefore, you are asked to sign and provide your email address in case the researcher or the interviewee have further discussion.

Thanks for your kind assistance

I hereby provide my background information conditionally, as states by the researcher, keeping my anonymity as well as informing me while necessary to reveal some of my information.

Participant’s name: ____________________________________________

Signature and date: ____________________________________________

Phone number: ________________________________________________

Email address: ________________________________________________

Interview questions

1. To start with, please shortly tell me about how you become an English Teacher?
2. Can you tell me how do you feel about your profession?
3. What type of school do you work for? (Primary or Secondary)
4. Briefly tell me what methods are you using in your class? Why?
5. Do you believe that the methodology that you are using currently is applicable in your classroom context?
6. In your own words, how do you define communicative competence?
7. Would you name the method that you implement in your classroom communicative language teaching?
8. What is your view about Communicative Language Teaching?
9. In your view, what factors seem to hinder employing CLT in your teaching?
10. Then, how would you encourage CLT to be implemented inside the classrooms?
Jordanian Female Ninth-Grade Students' Attitudes towards Using Questioning Strategies in Critical Reading

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Abstract
Students’ attitudes towards questioning strategies play an important role for its implementation success or failure. This study aims to investigate the students’ attitudes towards questioning strategies of critical reading skills among Jordanian female ninth-grade students in Al Qaser Directorate of Education. A semi-structured interview instrument was used to assess students’ attitudes. Data were collected from students at three public schools located in Qaser, Karak, Jordan. A total of 85 students participated in this present study. The sample which includes interviewees was 15 students. Overall, students showed favorable attitudes towards questioning strategies. However, some students faced some challenges by using these strategies e.g. self-questioning strategy. In light of these results, several recommendations were suggested to the Ministry of Education, English teachers and other researchers. The researcher also suggested that further research should be carried out on other school levels for boys and girls in order to support or refute the results of this study.

Keywords: critical reading, Jordanian female students, questioning strategies, self questioning, students’ attitudes

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Introduction and Background

Questioning develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Hervey (2006) poses this question: "why don't students who are skilled at asking questions in general continue using this curiosity as a strategy for comprehending what they're reading?" (p. 68). Hervey (2006) replies by stating that the questions are presented most of the time by teachers. So, he assures the importance of guiding students to answer and generate questions so as to make students become critical readers. The reader should interact with the text to be a critical reader.

According to Toh (2011) some procedures should be taken into consideration to achieve that. First, reading texts should include topics that are related to the learners’ home and drive direct responses from learners. Second, learners should be prepared to read critically. This would be fulfilled by providing learners with open-ended questions. Eventually, learners should use various tools to evaluate themselves by checking a wide range of reactions in relation to the particular topic.

Alwaeli and Abu-Alruz (2011) assure that teachers' practices in the teaching critical reading skills have their impact on students' desire to learn. They recommend in their study that pre-service and in-service teachers should be trained to teach critical reading skills by using modern methods of teaching. Moreover, teachers should focus on developing basic school students' critical reading skills.

The questions teachers ask can be classified according to the Revised Bloom Taxonomy in Cognitive Field as “remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and creating (evaluating)”. Teachers are expected to ask higher-level questions for higher-level learning. However, most studies indicate that teachers generally ask lower level questions. It is obvious, based on the literature that critical reading is an essential part in shaping students' learning by using questioning strategies in the education field. Critical reading is also connected with higher levels of thinking according to Bloom's Taxonomy (Parker & Hurry, 2007; Seker & Komur, 2008; Zin, Eng & Rafil-Galea, 2014).

Wangru (2016) assures that there is little research in teachers’ questioning, especially in which teachers’ questioning and students’ expectations are combined. Hence, the main purpose of this study is to measure the students’ attitudes towards questioning strategies. In this study, questioning strategies include questioning, self-questioning and mixed of questioning and self-questioning.

Problem of the Study

Questioning is a powerful tool for prompting the teaching and learning process. Thinking is driven by question not by answers, this is why is it true that only students who are able to generate questions, are really thinking and reading critically (Elder & Paul 1998). Many students come to universities without prior schooling opportunities and experiences that encourage or require critical reading (Crismore, 2000). As an English teacher, the researcher has noticed that her students have difficulties in reading beyond the text and identify the author's purpose. Teaching English in the public Jordanian schools does not lead students to read critically (Khader, 2002). Based on the researcher's experience as an English teacher in public schools for nine years, she has noticed that English teachers teach reading traditionally by asking students to
read the text, give the meaning of new words, and then answer the comprehension questions without paying adequate attention to the students' skills and abilities to predict, question and evaluate texts.

Teachers tend to ask factual and comprehension questions which are located at low-level of thinking according to Bloom's Taxonomy which require recalling information and focus on rote memorization, but they do not raise the level of their questions to a high-level of thinking that lead students to improve their critical reading skills. Several studies indicate that there is a weakness among students in reading in general and critical reading in particular. This weakness is due to the rigidity of teaching methods and not using modern teaching aids in teaching/learning English language (Alwaeli & Abu-Alruz, 2011). Besides that, at least in the context where the researcher, teaches students are usually "trained" to answer, not to ask questions. For the improvement of critical reading, teachers should teach a variety of strategies that research has shown to be effective, like: generating questions and answering them.

**Purpose of the Study**

The present study aims to investigate the students’ attitudes towards questioning strategies of critical reading skills among Jordanian female ninth-grade students in Al Qaser Directorate of Education.

**Question of the Study**

The present study attempts to answer the following question:

1. What are the students' opinions concerning the effectiveness of questioning strategies in developing Jordanian female ninth-grade students' critical reading skills? and what are their suggestions to improve the treatment?

**Significance of the Study**

An extensive review of the literature on questioning strategies has produced research conducted in other areas (e.g., Keeley, Ali & Gebirg, 1998; Miciano, 2004; Akkaya & Demirel, 2012). And few studies has produced in Jordan (Al-Shiekh, 2010). So, few research on the students' attitudes towards using questioning and self questioning strategies in the Jordanian classroom has been done. To my best knowledge, this study may very well be the first to examine the mixed of using questioning and self questioning strategies on critical reading and its potential gains in the Jordanian classrooms. The study may be significant because it helps many teachers and the curriculum designers who are looking for more effective teaching methods which may fit in such information age. Besides that, most of English teachers’ use of questions is low-level, so, the study might help teachers develop the skill to design and use questions that engage students in higher-level instructional processes. Critical reading is a center of attention and an important part of the curriculum content in many countries. Thus, this study attempts to help Jordanian female ninth-grade students remedy the weakness in their critical reading skills by using questioning strategies in reading. The researcher hopes that these strategies can activate the students' role in the learning process so that students will be able to analyze, interpret, evaluate, enjoy, discuss what they read, answer and pose high-level thinking questions.
The present study may be significant to the researcher herself since it could present her a deeper understanding of the actual position of questioning strategies within the context of teaching in English As a foreign language (EFL) setting.

**Literature Review**

An extensive review of the literature has revealed a dearth of local and international empirical research on using questioning strategies in critical reading. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, this is one of the first attempts, in Jordan, to examine the students' opinions about using questioning strategies in critical reading.

Seker and Komur (2008) studied the relationship between critical thinking skills and in-class questioning behaviors of English Language Teaching students at Mugla University. Fifty three participants were examined using the Ennis-Weir Critical Thinking Essay Test after reading and other related courses in ELT program. The evaluation instruments of this study were E-Weir Critical Thinking Essay Test, the reading of a passage and structured interview. The participants generated questions based on the passage and then they are classified according to Bloom’s taxonomy. The findings showed that students should be provided with tasks that involve questioning and searching while reading. Beside this, it helps students to generate data by working in peer-group collaborations.

Yesil and Korkmaz (2009) examined the elementary teachers’ effectiveness based on using questioning strategies in their classrooms. The sample consists of 157 Teacher-Students who were asked to respond to a questionnaire. Their observations consisted of several categories related to teach challenge students’ thinking skills and to help improve students’ understanding. According to the observation of student-teachers, the majority of the teachers used mainly closed questions in their teaching experiences. Leading questions were rarely used. This result revealed that memory or fact questions were mainly used.

Shang and Chien (2010) evaluated the effect of self-questioning strategy on 118 EFL learners’ reading comprehension at I-Shou University. They used two evaluation instruments: a reading comprehension test and a semi-structured interview. It evaluated a training program which was designed as a reading course. The result indicated that students' reading comprehension was enhanced significantly by self-questioning strategy training, especially for low achieving students. Students also had positive attitudes toward using self-questioning strategies in their future reading activities.

Ghajar and Kafshgarsouteh (2011) highlighted the learners’ self-reflection on individual/community and word/world concerns through critical understanding of texts. The participants were 50 female undergraduate English literature students at Al-Zahra University. The analyzed data included 400 concept maps and personal journals, as well as oral and written interviews. The results showed an improvement in the students’ awareness and new perspectives towards the text and life. The students also gained the ability to deal with the text in new ways as which they started to convey the meaning, tread beyond the text, and to discover their personal meaning in the context.
Akkaya and Demirel (2012) found that 194 students who studied at Dokuz Eylül University were not at the desired level in asking questions at the higher cognitive levels during the process of using reading strategies. They identified the cognitive level of questions teacher candidates prepared while using reading strategies. The participants were also asked to prepare five questions related to two types of texts. They depended on frequency analysis to see the differences in terms of the levels of questions related to the texts among participants.

Davoudi and Sadeghi (2015) made a review of research on questioning as a high level cognitive strategy across different disciplines with a special focus on second or foreign language teaching and learning. It includes the questioning behavior of both teachers and learners. The researchers used Reviewing System which it is a comprehensive online software tool for research synthesis. Their methodology in conducting this study based on a review process which covered studies conducted on questioning from 1974 to 2015. The studies selected for the review were all in English language, used various research designs (quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method research), focused on student and teacher questioning, included both theoretical and empirical studies and covered all types of participants from elementary to advanced students. The findings of the in-depth review reveal the indispensable role of teacher and student questioning in facilitating critical thinking, writing ability, reading comprehension, subject matter learning, met-cognitive skills, and scaffolding learning process.

Dos, Bay, Aslansoy, Tiryaki, Çetin, and Duman, (2016) conducted a study to analyze teachers’ questioning strategies from various aspects. The participants of the study were 170 primary school teachers in Turkey. The study’s instrument was a semi-structured questionnaire, and were examined via content analysis. The findings of this study revealed that teachers asked divergent questions to draw attention and interest. They also have misunderstanding of divergent and convergent questions. Teachers mostly ask questions to entire class than individual. In addition, they asked most frequently questions aimed at uncovering operational knowledge and least frequently questions whose goal was to uncover metacognitive knowledge and they generally used probing questions, prolonged waiting time and did not ask vague questions.

Bulut (2017) carried out research to investigate reading comprehension skills when using the SQ3R reading comprehension strategy. The participants of this study were seven primary school 4th grade students. An action plan was prepared for three hours a day on three days a week for a period of 10 weeks. The researcher used the following methods to collect the data which are; “Teacher's Diaries” and three different written forms, namely the “Reading Comprehension Test”, “Student Interview Form” and “Student Observation Form”. The results indicated that that the SQ3R-based reading program increased students’ reading comprehension level. In light of data obtained from this study, student’s ability to analyze texts visually, and their predictive and note-taking skills were found to be improved.

Methodology

**Sampling, Instrumentation, Data collection and Data analysis**

The study utilized the case of Al-Qaser secondary schools, Jordan which enroll girls only and selected three classes in the ninth-grade from the schools to represent the sample population. The participants of this study are 85 female Jordanian ninth-grade students. The experimental group (n=67) was taught through questioning strategies, while the control group (n=17) was
taught conventionally per the guidelines of the Teacher's Book. The first experimental group was taught by questioning strategy. The second experimental group was taught by self-questioning strategy while the last experimental group was taught by using both self-questioning and questioning strategies. The researcher began collecting qualitative data using semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interview is a technique to collect qualitative data. This interview aims to explore students' opinions towards the questioning and self-questioning strategies targeted in the research. The researcher interviewed 15 students from three experimental groups. The interview was structured and the researcher held individual meetings with the subjects at the school after implementing the program; each interview lasted from 10 minutes. The researcher analyzed the students' responses by identifying the frequent themes. (See Appendix A)

Finding and Results
To answer the present study question, which addressed the students' opinions towards using questioning strategies on enhancing their critical reading skills. In order to answer the question, the researcher grouped the students' responses on each question of the interview and draw a figure to show their responses as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Sts Num</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is using questioning strategy improving your critical reading skills? How so?</td>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questioning and Self-Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Results of the First Interview Question

Figure 1. Results of the First Interview Question

Figure 1 shows that the results were classified within four categories, which are equal in their results. Three groups shows that the questioning strategies has improved their critical reading skills. Which means 15 students out of 15 (100%) has improved their critical reading skills. Some students has found that questioning strategies improved their abilities to engage with the text and understand beyond it. Besides this, some students stated that they summarize and write notes while reading which help them to be more active readers. Even though, some
students expressed that their self confidence increased by using questioning strategies that they are able to deal with different texts and they could analyze them properly.

The results of the second question that relates to the challenges that students face during reading. To answer the question, the researcher grouped the students' responses on each question of the interview and draw a figure to show their responses.

**Table 2. Results of the Second Interview Question**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Sts Num</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the challenges, if any, you face with respect to questioning during reading?</td>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questioning and Self-Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2. Results of the Second Interview Question**

Figure 2 shows that the results were classified within four categories, which are not equal in their results. In the first group, two students (40%) faced challenges, while in the second and the third group, three students (60%) faced challenges in these strategies out of five. In total, eight students had found difficulties out of fifteen (53%). However, the rest of the students seven out of fifteen (47%) have not found any challenges during the study.

The results of the third question that relates to what students would do differently if they participate in a similar study. To answer the question, the researcher grouped the students' responses on each question of the interview and draw a figure to show their responses.
Table 3. Results of the Third Interview Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Sts Num</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you were to participate in a similar study, what would you do differently? How so?</td>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questioning &amp; Self-Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ALL</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3 shows that the results were classified within four categories, which are not equal in their results. The results showed that 8 students (53%) would like to do the things differently if they participate in similar study. On the other hand, the rest of the students seven out of fifteen (47%) expressed that they would do the same.

The results of the fourth question that relates to effect of using questioning strategies on students' ability of asking/answering high-order questions. In order to answer the question, the researcher grouped the students’ responses on each question of the interview and draw a figure to show their responses.
Table 4. Results of the Fourth Interview Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 4</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Sts Num</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has participation in the study improved your ability to answer high-order questions? How so? Give examples.</td>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Questioning and Self-Questioning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ALL</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 shows that the results were classified within four categories, which are equal in their results. The results showed that (100%) of the students have improved their ability to answer and pose high-order questions. Students stated that they ask/answer high order question by asking about the causes, effects, opinions, and justifications of their answers. Moreover, they could now answer the teacher’s questions which require thinking about the text by explaining some points and justifying their answers accordingly. They feel now that they differentiate between low-level and high-level of thinking questions. The researcher thinks that this helps students to be prepared to answer critical thinking questions. Especially in second secondary grade, most students face challenges in answering the critical thinking question.

Discussion

The question of the study focuses on the opinions of students on the effectiveness of questioning strategies in developing Jordanian female ninth-grade students’ critical reading skills. The discussion in this case is based fully on the views of students. Most of students assured that they had got benefit of using questioning strategies in the three experimental groups. Student 4 said, “it improved my reading skills and it helps me to summarize the text very quickly by answering the teacher questions.” Summarizing of text quickly is an important part of critical reading. Joseph, Alber-Morgan, Cullen, and Rouse (2015) say that the most critical skill for academic success is the ability to comprehend reading material. Student 9 also confirms “it enhanced my level in thinking and it helps me to summarize the text by concluding the main ideas and gives my opinion.” Student 15 added that "I become more active reader who comprehend the text easily.” Nathan (2010) recommends teaching comprehension strategies and
critical thinking, such as analyzing, summarizing main ideas, and having students ask themselves questions about what they have read.

Student 5 in the same way said that "this strategy helps me in answering questions and deepen my understanding of the text. In addition, I learnt to write notes while reading which helps me to answer the teacher's questions." Howard (2016) shows that taking of notes aids in organizing of thoughts. Student 12 confirms, "using questioning strategies during reading helps me to read beyond the text and to add my own ideas. I become a good reader that I defend any idea that I suggest."

Eight students (53%) assured that questioning strategies need thinking and practicing. Student 2 asserted, "there is a challenge in answering questions which required deep thinking." And student 5 felt that "there are many challenges that I faced such as how to answer questions while reading the text. And, some reading passage are required high level of understanding. Anyway, by practice, I gained many skills which help me to summarize and understand the text." This may be because they are not used to ask high-order questions. Improving students' critical reading skills requires first; establishing a ground of critical reading in the class by encouraging and supporting students to read critically and express their opinions freely. Second, teachers should face students with real life situations by asking them open-ended questions. Third, teachers need to prepare students to think and read critically enabling them to comment and interact with various representations of knowledge and content (Toh, 2011).

There is need to focus on dialogue rather than debate in asking effective questions. Student 6 on the other hand said, "there is a challenge in new vocabulary that I did not know its meaning." This is a genuine concern in different kinds of questioning. Failure to understand the vocabulary can become a barrier. 47% of students prefer to have the same experience without any modification. However, (53%) prefer to have things done differently.

Student 1, for example, said "I would practice answering more and more question to improve my critical reading skills." Practice improves critical reading skills. Practice in this case is in the form of answering more and more questions. According to Rouse, Alber-Morgan, Cullen and Sawyer, (2014) generate questions during independent reading is an advanced skill that requires a synthesis of several sub-skills, such as identifying key information, making connections to background experiences, and phrasing ideas in the form of questions. Therefore students need to practice during independent reading to make sure that they develop critical reading skills. Student 5 in the same way said, "I need more examples on questioning from the teacher." Student 10 claims, "I think we need to take extra text to improve our reading skills not just Action Pack textbook." Rouse et al. (2014) emphasize that self-questioning requires readers to monitor their own comprehension by asking themselves a series of self-generated or teacher-provided questions before, during, and after reading a passage. Teacher generated questions have great influence on the development of critical reading skills by students.

All students (100%) have confirmed that their participation in the study improved their ability to pose/answer high-order questions. Student 11 said, "Now I can answer all high level questions. I could ask very good questions. I gained new critical reading skills." And student 12 asserted that "when I read any passage, I did not take care of taking notes or summarize the main
ideas. But now, I wrote my thoughts and feeling by using mind maps during reading." Student 14 said, "I ask my classmates good question about the passage such as is the author subjective or objective and how did you know that." Student 13 said, "I could read the text with a critical eye, giving opinions and defending them."

The opinion of these students therefore shows that exposure to the right questions and the right reading skills makes it easy for them to develop critical reading skills. Student 10 said, "This strategy requires from us to ask and then we answers our classmates questions which help me to justify my answers and give my opinion. All this help me in improving my reading skills and deepen my thinking". Student 8 said "I start to ask good questions instead of answering my teacher questions all the time." Student 7 said, "after I participated in this study I realized that I was using self-questioning without knowing that. I also improved the level of my questions which helped me to be a good reader."

In the study, the third experimental group which was taught by using questioning and self-questioning strategies was asked an extra question; that which questioning strategy did they find most beneficial. There were different responses by the students with regards to the three strategies. Two students out of five (40%) preferred self-questioning strategy. Student 11 said, "self-questioning because I have not posed high level questions before. It is a good technique that I gained many skills." And student 12 said, "I suppose that self-questioning which requires from students to understand and analyze the text. And then, students pose a question which shows their understanding of the text." Joseph et al. (2015) assured that there was sufficient evidence to support students’ use of self-questioning strategies to help them comprehend text.

From the opinions of the students in this case there is information to show that self-questioning improves the comprehension of students. Two students out of five (40%) preferred questioning strategy, student 13, for example said, "I preferred questioning strategy that my teacher asked us very good questions which helped me to summarize the text and think about it." Student 14 added, "Questioning strategy. I felt that I got it more than self-questioning and I could answer almost all the given questions from my teacher."

And one student out of five (20%) preferred both she asserted, "I think I prefer both. I gained new skills by practicing them." Those that prefer both think that they have similar benefits. For those that preferred questioning strategy they show that the teachers asked effective questions. Looking deeply on the results, one can notice that students' level of critical reading was improved. However, students need to master all the three higher skills to be critical readers and thinkers.

Conclusions
The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the present study:
1. Students showed positive attitude toward using questioning strategies in reading.
2. Using questioning strategies enhanced students' thinking according to Bloom's Taxonomy levels (analysis, synthesis and evolution).
3. Training teachers to ask high level questions is a requirement in teachers' Training (pre-service and in-service).
Pedagogical Implications

In the light of the findings of the present study, certain pedagogical implications may be put forth. For instance, questioning strategies should be taken into consideration so EFL teachers should focus on practicing various questioning strategies in the class such as asking high level questions, pose high level questions and summarize the text. Additionally, using questioning strategies should be taught to students from the early phases of teaching English as a foreign language since they help students to think and read critically. Teaching critical reading is vital in guiding students to use the modes of inquiry, kinds of evidence, hypotheses and assumption and showing them how to apply these directly to their reading by using questioning strategies. Teachers need to take a step in encouraging students ask high level questions to lead them read critically.

Recommendations

In light of the results of this study, the researcher feels that it is essential to submit a number of recommendations for textbook authors, English teachers, the Ministry of Education and other researchers who are interested on Critical reading and Questioning Strategies.

- Teachers have to make balance between the cognitive levels of the questions he/she uses while teaching critical reading. They should include close-ended questions that have one correct answer, and open-ended questions that accept more than one answer.
- Teacher training courses are essential for teachers' professional development. Teachers accordingly should enroll in in-service training courses that give more in sight on the changes of the curriculum and courses that work on developing the questioning skills.
- The in-service training courses designers should be aware of the importance of giving more time in the course syllabus for the How not the what. Teachers should apply what they learn and get feedback on their work during the course.
- In-service training course should be held to teach English teachers about the questioning techniques in which they practice how to ask genuine questions that require higher-order thinking skills, and make learners generate more complex answers and responses.
- A good textbook can be an important agent to implement the change in the curriculum, but it cannot work alone. The teacher should decide what to take from the textbook and what to add by using other sources. They should also prepare well in order to manipulate the textbook content to serve his/her goals and not vice versa.
- Having a small number of participants make it difficult to generalize the results. Thus, conduct similar studies, but on other classes at other educational levels and in other educational settings in different Jordanian basic and secondary schools for male and female students.

About the author:
Maysa’a Issa AlShabatat is a professor assistant at Ministry of Education. She studied M.A in Mu’tah University and B.A. in Jordan University. She lives in Karak, Jordan. She had taught in Saudi Arabia universities for two years and worked with different organizations. Now, she is working on teacher's education by designing teacher's training programs and train teachers. She believes that teaching is a noble mission just you need to believe in change to achieve your goals.
Alshabatat

Jordanian Female Ninth-Grade Students' Attitudes

References


Appendix A

Semi-Structured Interview

Group 1: Questioning Strategy
1. Is using questioning strategy improving your critical reading skills? How so?
2. What are the challenges, if any, you face with respect to questioning during reading?
3. If you were to participate in a similar study, what would you do differently? How so?
4. Has participation in the study improved your ability to answer high-order questions? How so? Give examples.

Group 2: Self Questioning Strategy
1. Is using self-questioning strategy improving your critical reading skills? How so?
2. What are the challenges, if any, you face with respect to self-questioning during reading?
3. If you were to participate in a similar study, what would you do differently? How so?
4. Has participation in the study improved your ability to pose high-order questions? How so? Give examples.

Group 3: Questioning & Self questioning Strategies
1- Is using questioning strategies improving your critical reading skills? How so?
2- What are the challenges, if any, you face with respect to questioning during reading?
3- If you were to participate in a similar study, what would you do differently? How so?
4- Has participation in the study improved your ability to pose/answer high-order questions? How so? Give examples.
5- Which questioning strategy did you find most beneficial? How so?
The Complexity of Textual Borrowing in Learning English As a Foreign Language

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Abstract
Exploring the notion of ownership of text and learning was potential to understand the question of textual borrowing. However, this relationship remained under-explored. This study would address two key research questions: (1) How did learners of English as a foreign language paraphrase texts and (2) How were their attitudes towards plagiarism. Data were drawn from texts produced by undergraduate students of English Department in reading comprehension classes. Two stages of analyses were carried out. Firstly description of quality of paraphrasing the texts by the learners were presented and distributed. Secondly, the learners’ attitudes towards plagiarism were described. These analyses were used as starting point to interpret the student plagiarism. Findings and discussion revealed that 20% of the learners’ works were 100% unique. They agreed to say that plagiarizing was as bad as stealing an exam and that plagiarism impoverished the investigative spirit. The rest were plagiarized ranging from 5% up to 24%. They said that sometimes they felt tempted to plagiarize because so many other students were doing it. They argued sometimes they copied a sentence or two just to become inspired for further writing. Pedagogically, it implies that since paraphrasing is using one’s own words to express someone else's ideas, students should be encouraged to cite a source accurately and define unfamiliar words instead of being punished. They need to change any words or phrases that match the original so closely. The ideas and meaning of the original source must be maintained and words must be their own.

Keywords: attitudes, language learning, paraphrase, textual borrowing

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Introduction
How do undergraduate students paraphrase a text? What are the attitudes of these students towards plagiarism? Why is it that many teachers seem to react to supposed acts of plagiarism with such moral outrage? Which one is more significant, suspecting the student’s borrowing or the intention behind the borrowing? Questions such as these prompted the impetus of this article to explore the ways students paraphrase a text and the ways they identify themselves in academic writing. In addition, this article demonstrates the value of adopting critical discourse analysis (CDA) to study student plagiarism.

Research-based writing in American institutions, both educational and corporate, is filled with rules that writers, particularly beginners, are not aware of or do not know how to follow. These rules deal mostly with research and citation. Gaining familiarity with these rules, however, is critically important, as inadvertent mistakes can lead to accusation of plagiarism.

Rules dealing with research and citation are of particular significant in American institutions when one is carrying out research-based writing. Negligence in complying with these rules could run the risk of being accused of plagiarism. However, many writers are unaware of these rules, especially learners who are just learning the ropes.

Dealing with textual borrowing, what is meant by ownership of text is as very complex as the notion of learning. It is important to understand the cultural and historical specificity of notions of ownership and authorship and to explore the implications of these concepts' being increasingly promoted as international norms.

Considering the complexity of textual borrowing, understanding the culture and the history of the notion of authorship and ownership is of significant when attempts to address this issue. Additionally, searching for implications of the concept of authorship and ownership is not less important for these concepts are being disseminated worldwide as international code of conduct.

Above all, plagiarism should be addressed in terms of cultural and educational issues in particular when one discusses the relationship between ‘text’, ‘knowledge’ and ‘learning’ in a certain context of culture. Creative thought could be either promoted or hindered not only by the language the learners supposed to function academically but also by the nature of the institution they are involved. Questioning these possibilities is of critical importance as well.

Literature Review
Sun & Yang (2015) conducted a research to uncover published authors' text-borrowing. The goal of the study is to investigate the paraphrasing strategies and self-plagiarism. Turnitin plagiarism detection software was employed to uncover the text-borrowing practices. The findings suggest there were 30 paraphrasing strategies found in the data. Overall, author’s previous publication was reused by more than two-thirds (67.28%) of the observed texts.

Casey, K. (2006) conducted a research on the use of paraphrase in summary writing. The study analyzed L1 (n = 79) and L2 (n = 74) writers’ use of paraphrase. The use the paraphrase types by the writers was then compared. The findings indicate that new copies are used more
significantly by L2 although L1 used the same number of paraphrases. It implies that students' textual borrowing strategies should be discussed with a particular focus on issues related to plagiarism.

Liao et.al (2010) conducted a research on students' views of textual borrowing in Academic Setting. This study examines the writers' performance of paraphrasing. The findings indicate behaviors and perceptions mismatch. They denied committing plagiarism and claimed they were aware of the significance of paraphrasing but they failed to produce acceptable texts.

The present study aims to describe how Indonesian undergraduate students of English as a foreign language paraphrase texts and what such attitude they demonstrate on the discourse of plagiarism.

The influence of forces of culture, social and politics on how student plagiarism is interpreted as a concept has been discussed. According to Scollon (1995) approach to plagiarism is constructed with great influence from “Utilitarian Discourse System”. Meanwhile, Pennycook (1996) points out that “possessive individualism” is highly influential to plagiarism conception found in Western academic institutions today. Scollon & Scollon (2008) suggests that there are four elements influencing each other in discourse system namely ideological norms, socialization practice, discourse forms, face relationships.

Utilitarianism believes that a good society is the one that provide the greatest happiness for most of the people (Bentham, 1962: 34). Within Utilitarian discourse one can find six discourse forms including “anti-rhetorical”, “positive-empirical”, “deductive”, “individualistic”, “egalitarian”, and “institutional sanctioned”. In this article, I mainly examine student plagiarism form from the aspect of “individualistic”. Possessive individualism in particular together with Utilitarian discourse system (UDS) have effectively influenced the conception of plagiarism in Western academic institutions at present.

How to approach plagiarism in the academy is of particular importance when we realize the difference of the nature of undergraduate, postgraduate, and academics. Bakhtin (1986:89) points out that one of the theoretical aspects of communication is the capability of individuals to generate their own words in making a text. In communication, an exchange of words could take place in varying degrees of “otherness” and “our-ownness”.

Barthes (1997: 160) claims that texts are to put facts, events, details together to make a closely connected whole in every way possible with words or lines taken from a book or a speech, words that show where you can find a piece of information, the fact of an idea being like another and reminding you of it, language connected with customs and beliefs, art, way of life of a particular society or group, and not taking any risk against exploring the original texts.

At present virtual texts mediated by computer are used to search for and describe information replacing the habit of reading books or printed material. It implies culturally and change the way you notice things and the ability to understand the true nature of something and the way in which two or more things are connected concerning textuality. The function or position
that the writer and reader has or expected to have will be a matter that needs to be discussed or even leads to doubt or uncertainty. In universities, the basic qualities of learning and teaching consequently stops having one state, position or direction and starts having another (Landow, 1992).

As writers and readers, the way we produce and connect to electronic texts changes in line with the changes of language we use to describe texts in accordance with the features of the new phenomenon. Access to a place in an electronic document on a computer that is linked to another electronic document (hyperlink) increases because some points at which writers and readers stop being possible or existing in print technology has been freed by electronic technology.

Such electronic linking creates hypertexts that have the potential to provide linkages to a limitless number of associated texts. Hypertext, argues Landow (1992, 1997), embodies poststructuralist conceptions of the open text: notions of center, margin, hierarchy and linearity are replaced by terms such as multilinearity, nodes, links and networks. The implications of textuality as open, with links to the works of several different writers, throw into question the notion of text as the univocal property of a single author. Hypertext by its very nature is multifocal, with its ownership belonging arguably therefore to multiple authors.

The idea of text as having only one meaning or interpretation and leading to only one conclusion (univocal) is thrown into question as a result of textuality as open to involving several different authors. Instead, hypertext is intrinsically having many different interpretations, meanings, or values, with its possession of property plausibly to be owned by many different authors.

Method
This is a critical discourse analysis (CDA) on investigation of how learners of English as a foreign language paraphrase texts and how are their attitudes towards plagiarism. Data are drawn from texts produced by ten undergraduate students of English Department in reading comprehension classes. This number of respondents is gained through random sampling machine out of 62 students. Two stages of analyses are carried out. Firstly, description of quality of the texts produced by the learners are presented and distributed. Smallseotools.com plagiarism detection software and human scrutiny were employed to uncover the text-borrowing practices. Secondly, the learners’ attitudes towards plagiarism are described by comparing between participants' behaviors and their perceptions. These analyses are used as starting point to interpret the student plagiarism.

CDA is selected for a number of reasons. CDA is a theoretical perspective on language that provides a way of analyzing language in a broader social process. It is argued that language can be used for both describing and constituting something. It can be useful in framing what is regarded to “be” and acceptable to carry out (Fairclough, 1992).

CDA is chosen due to the reasons that (i) discourse could shape the way a person functions in a particular situation either arguing as it is now or helping to show that a change is true; (ii) discourse can have an effect on the way that somebody behaves or thinks in making sense of something at individual level or societal level; (iii) the narrative of change is disseminated and
shaped by interaction; (iv) the effect and the interest of discourse is constructed by a dynamics of power on the basis of the kind and what is possible for a change; (v) for the sake of survival being open to alternatives is a condition for a dominant discourse to meet; (vi) continuous process of interactive and discursive constructs and makes discourse change gradually; (vii) the ability of the agent of change to understand a phenomenon improves when he is interested in knowing the discursive nature of their practice (Grant & Marshak, 2011 as cited in Dunford 2013).

In order to answer the two questions underpinning this study, i.e., how learners of English as a foreign language paraphrase texts is described and how their attitudes towards plagiarism are analyzed and interpreted. The former is a descriptive analysis of the learners’ works of paraphrasing texts and their attitudes towards plagiarism. It is used as a starting point for critical analysis. The latter is a critical interpretation of the paraphrased texts and the attitudes of the learners towards plagiarism.

Findings and Discussion
This section is intended to answer those two questions of this study, i.e. the learners’ pattern of paraphrasing texts and their attitudes towards the discourse of plagiarism

Pattern of paraphrasing texts
The pattern of students’ works of paraphrasing texts is shown in Table 1. It is categorized into accuracy of information, content clarity, original thought and sentence structure.

Table 1: The learners’ works of paraphrasing a text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Paraphrasing</th>
<th>Quality of Paraphrasing</th>
<th>Learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6 S7 S8 S9 S10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy of information</td>
<td>Some information was correct. There were places that it is evident the student did not fully understand what they had read.</td>
<td>0 0 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost all of the key pieces of information are correct.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All information is correct and represents what the original contained.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content clarity</td>
<td>It is difficult to understand the meaning of what is written. Many disjointed thoughts are found, and their flow and continuity is lacking.</td>
<td>0 0 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the data have shown, most students’ works of paraphrasing a text are nearing proficiency in nature. In terms of accuracy of information, it is found that some information was correct. There were places that it is evident the student did not fully understand what they had read. In terms of content clarity, it is difficult to understand the meaning of what is written. Many disjointed thoughts are found, and their flow and continuity is lacking. In terms of their original thought it is evident that some of the sentences are in the student's words and some are exactly as written in the original text. In terms of their sentence structure it is shown that only some sentences show correct grammar and structure. As the study conducted by Casey, K. (2006) suggests,
students' textual borrowing strategies should be discussed with a particular focus on issues related to plagiarism.

Only two students’ works are proficient. The data show, in terms of accuracy of information almost all the key pieces of information are correct. In terms of content clarity, the information is clearly written and is understandable. There is a flow to most of the thoughts and ideas. Some connections between ideas/sentences are evident. In terms of original thought, most of the sentences are in the student's words. In terms of sentence structure, most sentences show correct grammar and structure.

Only one student’s works prove advanced. In terms of accuracy of information, all information is correct and represents what the original contained. In terms of content clarity, all information is clear to understand. There is a connection between all ideas presented and the flow of thought makes it very understandable. In terms of original thought, all of the sentences are in the student's words. Some original thought is shown by elaborating on topic. In terms of sentence structure, all sentences are grammatically correct, show good sentence structure and correct spelling.

The data show, plagiarism check by smallseotools.com suggests that the student paraphrased texts ranges from five percent to 62 percent plagiarized and 25 percent to 38 percent unique. The data shown indicates the complexity of things going on behind the surface phenomenon of apparent plagiarism. Students come to our classes with different cultural and educational backgrounds, with different understandings of texts and language, with different approaches to learning. As the study conducted by Sun & Yang (2015) suggests, more explicit operational standards among disciplines toward factors that may contribute to unintentional self-plagiarism are required.

Attitudes towards Plagiarism
The attitude of the learners towards plagiarism is shown in Table 2. They include positive attitude, negative attitude and normative attitudes towards student plagiarism.

Table 2: The learners’ attitude towards plagiarism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
<th>S3</th>
<th>S4</th>
<th>S5</th>
<th>S6</th>
<th>S7</th>
<th>S8</th>
<th>S9</th>
<th>S10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Plagiarism impoverishes the investigative spirit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The names of the authors who plagiarize should be disclosed to the scientific community</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Plagiarizing is as bad as stealing an exam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Sometimes I feel tempted to plagiarize because so many other students are doing it</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the data show, the students' attitudes towards plagiarism are diverse. However, they are mostly in common in the cluster of positive attitudes i.e. ‘sometimes I copy a sentence or two just to become inspired for further writing’ and ‘the punishment for plagiarism in college should be light because we are young people just learning the ropes’. Ironically, the learners express their negative attitudes towards plagiarism of which they mostly say that ‘plagiarizing is as bad as stealing an exam.’ It is similar to the findings of the research conducted by Liao et.al (2010) which show mismatch between the participants' behaviors and perceptions.

In terms of other negative attitudes towards plagiarism, only two respondents agree to say that ‘plagiarism impoverishes the investigative spirit’. Similarly, only one respondent says that ‘the names of the authors who plagiarize should be disclosed to the scientific community.’

There are four respondents say that when they do not know what to write, they translate a part of a paper from a foreign language. Meanwhile, it includes two respondents who say that if their roommates give them permission to use their papers for one of my classes, they don't think there is anything wrong with doing that.
Nine respondents say that plagiarism is justified if the lecturer assigns too much work in the course. Meanwhile, three respondents agree to say that you could not write a scientific paper without plagiarizing.

Five respondents say that if one cannot write well in a foreign language (e.g., English), it is justified to copy parts of a similar paper already published in that language. Six respondents say that because plagiarism involves taking another person's words and not his or her material goods, plagiarism is no big deal.

Seven respondents say that it is okay to use something you have written in the past to fulfill a new assignment because you cannot plagiarize yourself.

**Postmodern philosophical abstraction**

Postmodernism is a concept in criticism that departs from modernism which distrusts grand theories and ideologies. The critiques put forward by postmodernism can be at a certain level of philosophical abstraction and another side which tends to deal in more material changes.

What is believed to be plagiarism, as Pennycook (1996) argues, has been dealt with in the ways that we cannot pedagogically rely on, and intellectually showing little thought for other people. Instead of viewing this issue as a matter of copying and learning how to practice academic writing, it is necessary to consider discussing how and why this belief or understanding has been shaped, how authority, authenticity, and authorship have been connected to each other, and how these actions continuously move and change.

As Scollon (as cited in Pennycook, 1995) points out that in understanding plagiarism, authorship and authenticity, we need to find their exact position in social power and privilege distribution rather than in the system of relational texts.

Since borrowing words from others is basically the nature of learning language, the way of being certain that your beliefs are right and others should accept them should be avoided. In other words, we should be flexible on drawing an imagined line between approved of and disapproved of textual borrowings Pennycook (1996, p. 227).

The idea of the fact of owning texts and learning starts to be something very complex when we begin to examine carefully the whole issue of textual borrowing. It is significant to learn the quality of being specific of the idea of ownership and authorship and to examine carefully the possible effect of these principles’ being more and more all the time as international pattern of behavior.

It is necessary to treat plagiarism in particular ways, too. In the area of culture and education we need to examine the connection between text, knowledge and learning in a definite cultural situation. Additionally, we need to examine the way the things happen in the institution and the language in which it is perceived. The question is whether an educational institute helps learners to develop or prevents them from doing what they want to do?
It is certainly that we need to let the criticism works on the practice of borrowing that you cannot approve. However, accusations of plagiarism that is done by one member of an organization without the agreement of the other members is not confident enough and feeling that they are more important than other people, so that they are rude to them or do not consider them. It is necessary, as part of our duties as teachers, to start to have a quality that becomes better in knowing and realizing how and why the issues of textual borrowings and language learning are complex.

It is not sufficient to focus only on Western writing practices as a list of cultural topics that students should study in a particular subject at college. An effort is also needed to do better in knowing and realizing how are the worlds of students’ language learning and textual borrowings including things that limit and restrict their lives and their belief on how academic norms work in particular way, and may be not obeyed.

Cultural Difference

Concerning with plagiarism, a warning to students about their behavior, a statement telling them that bad and unpleasant things may happen in the future so that they can try to avoid it; a statement telling them that you will punish or harm them, especially if they do not do what you want; are typically acts used to stop bad things from happening. Such prevention is presenting plagiarism as a simple black-and-white issue and ignoring the way in which text, memory and learning are connected and is difficult to understand. It also neglects distinct connection between cultural difference, literacy, and learning.

For those undergraduate students in writing in a second language, a generally accepted rule, standard or principle of knowledge by which something is judged and the set of technical words or expressions used in a particular senses, are required to be new and interesting in a way that is different from anything that has existed before. They are supposed to involve making fair, careful judgments about the good and bad qualities of something. In addition it is done or produced by and for them-selves.

Domination of electronic media over societies has resulted in the end of the author. It is line with the death of the author to texts as deconstructionist approach to texts suggests.

Thus, if the view of textuality discussed in the previous section is postmodern to the extent that it follows the epistemological shifts brought about by postmodern philosophical changes, there is also a postmodern approach grounded in the notion that postmodernism is a real condition of late capitalist society. That is to say, whereas on the one hand we may point to the death of the author brought about by deconstructionist approaches to texts, on the other we may see the death or the demise of the author as a product of changes in communication in societies dominated by electronic media.

As Scollon (1994) suggests, writing practices are changing, and it is now common to find multiple layering effects in academic texts, where the supposed origin of a quote becomes ever murkier. It would seem, then, that both the postmodern skepticism about the myth of originality and the more material considerations about changing writing practices point toward the need to reevaluate beliefs in originality and textual ownership. There is therefore a degree of hypocrisy in
the defense of the culture of originality because postmodern understandings of language and meaning, by contrast, point to the possibility of little more than a circulation of meanings.

This is a postmodern approach based on the idea that postmodernism is an actual situation in which people live near the end of capitalist society. A way of writing in a particular situation is becoming different. It is more frequent at present to find a change of something caused by something else arranged in layers in academic texts. The supposed point from which something starts is not clearly known and suspected of not being honest.

The strong feeling that originality and textual ownership exist or are true is likely necessary to be reevaluated considering more material changing of writing practices and postmodern skepticism that originality is something that many people believe but that does not exist or is false. Defending the culture of originality is, therefore, indicating a degree of hypocrisy since postmodern particular way in which it understands language and meaning, on the contrary, leads to a particular development or logical argument that they are not simply a circulation of meanings.

It makes it difficult to understand the creating who or what someone is in intercultural discourse as the way of understanding or thinking that have not changed for a long time about plagiarism has been considered to be an ideology that gives special rights or advantages to a principle of an individual held for long enough within the European knowledge about and understanding of plagiarism. Such tradition disagrees strongly with the notion of ownership and memorization in ESL classes and many writing programs. There is a discourse that you can get for teachers having been to university in the Western belief which emphasizes having power or control over others in terms of originality and creativity.

Conclusion
Findings and discussion reveal that some information was correctly presented. However, there are places that it is evident the student does not fully understand what they have read. Some of the sentences are in the student's words. Some are exactly as written in the original text. Only some sentences show correct grammar and structure. Through empowerment, almost all of the key pieces of information are correct. Most of the sentences are in the student's words. Most sentences show correct grammar and structure. To avoid plagiarism the learners’ work should meet such quality including that all information is correct and represents what the original contained. All of the sentences are in the student's words. Some original thought is shown by elaborating on topic. All sentences are grammatically correct, show good sentence structure and correct spelling.

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The Use and Evaluation of Vocabulary Learning Strategies among Sudanese EFL Learners

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Abstract
The learning of new vocabulary as a part of English for Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning has not been investigated thoroughly because its effectiveness has been questioned by various researchers in the past. However, in recent years, various studies have shown that proper strategies in acquiring new words could be one of the keys to effective language learning among EFL learners. This study investigates how Sudanese EFL learners at Khartoum University, Sudan use and evaluate vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs). The three selected categories of vocabulary learning strategies - metacognitive, discovery, and consolidation - were chosen according to taxonomies proposed by Al-Fuhaid (2004), Schmitt (1997) and Nation (2001). These VLSs were then evaluated using Han’s Information Processing Theory and Craik and Lockhart’s Depth of Processing Theory (1972) to meet the two objectives of this study. The first objective was to examine the most frequently used VLSs employing a set questionnaire designed to elicit the necessary data. The second objective was to evaluate the usefulness of each of these VLSs by conducting in-depth interviews with the respondents. The results showed that metacognitive strategies were the most frequently used VLS among the three. In-depth interview data revealed that respondents evaluated all three VLS positively and considered them very useful in acquiring as well as understanding words. These findings suggest that language learners in Sudan should be taught vocabulary enhancing techniques while language instructors should use and teach these VLS to learners explicitly.

Key words: English as a foreign language, vocabulary learning, vocabulary learning strategies

1. Introduction

Vocabulary has a very significant role in learning a language and has been considered as an integral component of a language. Without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, learners cannot achieve the goal of learning a language satisfactorily. The learning of vocabulary is one of the most significant challenges that FL learners encounter in the process of acquiring a foreign language (Ahmadi et al., 2012). Ironically, despite its importance, vocabulary has been a neglected variable for a long time. Recently, some researchers have been creating greater awareness of vocabulary. For example, Alfaki (2015) states that the new orientation towards vocabulary learning is due to the expansion of the audio-lingual method and the communicative approaches. As a result, the field of applied linguists has minimised the findings on syntax and paid more attention to the lexicon. A flourishing of vocabulary has created and increased the number of publications on vocabulary aimed at assisting language instructors and curriculum designers. Researchers such as Laufer and Sim (1985), Read (2000), Decarrico (2001), Nation (2001) and others have confirmed that learning vocabulary is central to the development of language proficiency and essential for acquiring the four language skills.

On the other hand, the majority of learners consider vocabulary learning as their greatest source of difficulties (Meara, 1980). Nation (1990) points out that students believe many of their problems faced in using language receptively and productively are due to lack of vocabulary. Alqahtani (2015) discusses two reasons that may cause the difficulty of vocabulary learning by learners: firstly, the open-end of a vocabulary is observed to be a source of difficulty, and secondly, there are no vocabulary rules that learners can use to enhance their knowledge of vocabulary like other systems such as syntax and phonology. Sarani and Kafipour (2008) discover that EFL learners have poor vocabulary knowledge and the use of strategy in vocabulary learning.

Learners of English as a foreign/second language need to be introduced to the strategies which can help them to acquire vocabulary. These strategies are called ‘vocabulary learning strategies’ (VLSs) (Gu, 1994, as cited in Saengpakdeejit, 2014). Dócz (2011) emphasises that VLSs are essential since acquiring vocabulary is a never-ending process and can solve the vocabulary issues for language learners. Hence, it is correct to say that in utilising VLSs, students can achieve the goal of vocabulary learning efficiently and successfully (Saengpakdeejit, 2014). Learners need to engage themselves in learning vocabulary strategies because it is a difficult task for teachers to introduce all vocabulary items for their learners in the class. Students have to learn to become independent learners by organising their vocabulary learning strategies in vocabulary learning. As such, the primary aim of this study is to improve the position of vocabulary learning at the tertiary level by exploring and evaluating the use of VLSs among Sudanese learners of English as a foreign language. This study also tries to eliminate the difficulties in vocabulary learning among EFL learners in general and Sudanese learners in particular by introducing a taxonomy of VLSs which includes three major types of vocabulary learning strategies; namely; metacognitive, discovery, and consolidation strategies. These three VLSs play an important part in vocabulary learning, with regard to building up the vocabulary store, discovering the meanings of new words effectively as well as retaining the meanings of these words for a long time.

Sudanese learners at tertiary level are known to encounter many difficulties when they learn EFL, and one of the main problems is the lack of vocabulary knowledge (Ahmed, 1989; Nur,
Vocabulary learning is not precisely defined in the curriculum in Sudanese universities despite the obvious limitations of vocabulary knowledge. The curriculum of English language at tertiary level in Sudanese universities has been affected by the notion of ‘Arabicisation’ and the standard of the English language has declined. This deteriorated situation compounds the other factors that have contributed to the problem of lack of vocabulary learning in Sudan such as the absence of an adequate syllabus (Mohamed, 2014). Ali and Ahmed (2015) claim that Sudanese learners’ inability to acquire vocabulary may be due to the fact that teaching vocabulary has been relegated to a minor position in contrast to the teaching of syntax. Thus, the English language curriculum in Sudan suffers from a lack of the knowledge of basic vocabulary learning and this has resulted in Sudanese learners having to face some difficulties in acquiring English vocabulary.

Vocabulary learning in Sudan relies on teachers as the primary source. However, the method of teaching the English language in Sudan has gone beyond traditional teaching since the focus is on learning grammar rules rather than vocabulary. Also, the method of assessment is based on testing of knowledge about the language in a final examination rather than the use of the language (O’Brien & Nur, 2014). The result is the absence of independent vocabulary learning in Sudan, even though it is an important aspect of second language (L2). Independent vocabulary learning is often the sole option left for L2 learners for two reasons: first, the needs of L2 vocabulary learning go beyond a standard teacher-led course; second, the contact between teachers and students is often weak and inadequate (Tudor, 1993). As a result, independent vocabulary learning needs to be achieved by Sudanese EFL learners to become self-directed generally in vocabulary learning and particularly in vocabulary learning strategies.

On the other hand, Sudanese EFL learners realise the importance of vocabulary knowledge, but they do not know the best ways to learn and expand their vocabulary store. They may encounter difficulty in detecting the meaning of new words accurately while they are reading texts in the English language, which involves a number of new words. They face difficulties in remembering new words; as a result, they prefer to avoid using them (e.g., Ahmed, 1989; Nur, 2012).

In language learning, there are no clear theories on vocabulary acquisition because vocabulary is perceived as a neglected aspect (Meara, 1980). However, the theoretical foundations of language learning strategies emerge from two learning perspectives: cognitive perspective and socio-cultural perspective (Han, 2014). This study connects vocabulary learning with the cognitive perspective in which L2 learning is a complex cognitive skill. It concentrates on the cognitive perspective as a baseline which mainly focuses on information-processing theory and the depth of processing hypothesis developed by Craik and Lockhart (1972).

Both theories characterise the construction of memory. The information processing theory investigates the features of VLSs through the process of vocabulary learning while the depth of processing hypothesis clarifies the effectiveness of these strategies from the levels of influence (e.g. how the information is processed in the memory, either at a superficial level or at a deeper level). The information processing theory explores the idea of “chunking” and the ability of short-term memory. It discusses the notion that the short-term memory has limited mental capacity. Craik and Lockhart (1972) discuss that memory is merely an outcome of the depth of processing. Perception occurs as a continuous sequence from shallow processing to deep.
processing and this is known as “depth of processing” or “levels of processing” (Craik & Lockhart, 1972, p. 675).

This study utilises the taxonomy of VLSs which is adopted from Al-Fuhaid (2004) and based on the analysis of Schmitt’s (1997) and Nation’s (2001) VLSs taxonomies. However, Al-Fuhaid (2004) has modified, deleted, added, and reclassified the major strategies of Schmitt's (1997) VLSs taxonomy into three VLSs: metacognitive, discovery, and consolidation. The metacognitive strategies are expressed as a deliberate overview of the learning process and decision making about planning, monitoring or evaluating the best way to study. The discovery strategies are the actions adopted by learners to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words, while the consolidation strategies refer to how the learner consolidates the information of new words after having gained and having kept them in long term memory. Schmitt’s (1997) VLSs taxonomy involves two main groups: the first group called discovery, and containing determination and social strategies, while the second group called consolidation comprises cognitive, metacognitive and memory strategies (Schmitt, 1997). The VLSs taxonomy uses in this study differs from Schmitt's (1997) VLSs taxonomy in that the metacognitive strategies are viewed as an independent type of strategy from the consolidation strategies. Al-Fuhaid (2004) indicates that metacognitive strategies can serve the same purposes of consolidation strategies. Metacognitive, discovery, and consolidation strategies are significant for learners because these strategies assist students to cope with the limited capacity of short-term memory and also to transfer information from short-term memory to long-term memory.

2. Review of Literature

Various researchers have proposed several definitions of VLSs based on their respective views. For example, Oxford (1990, p.1) describes VLSs as “actions utilised by language learners to promote their learning process and these strategies are essential for self-directed learning”. Cameron (2001, p. 92) states that VLSs are the processes that language learners employ to help them in comprehending and recalling vocabulary items. In addition, Takač (2008) describes VLSs as:

Activities, behaviours, steps, or techniques used by learners (often deliberately) to facilitate vocabulary learning. Vocabulary learning strategies can help learners to discover lexical items (both their meanings and forms), and to internalise, store, retrieve, and actively use these in language production. (p.106)

Many researchers have conducted studies on the use of VLSs among second and foreign language learners. For example, in the Malaysian context, Asgari and Mustapha (2011) investigate the type of VLSs used by Malaysian students majoring in teaching English as a second language TESL. Data were collected via open-ended interviews. Respondents were eight students studying at the Faculty of Educational Studies in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). The results show that favourable strategies used by learners were acquiring new words while reading, using monolingual dictionary, using media, and utilising new English words in their daily speaking, determination and metacognitive strategies. However, strategies which required deep cognitive processing including using English labels, repeated listening to a tape of word lists, and using cards were not used by the respondents of this study.

Kalajahi et.al (2014) examines the VLSs among Malaysian students majoring in TESL at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). Data were collected by using a questionnaire adopted form
Schmitt (1997). Respondents were 50 undergraduate students. The results suggest that metacognitive strategies were utilised very often by UPM undergraduate learners. The results also show that social strategies were the least used strategies because most of the curriculum design did not encourage collaborative and social learning.

Rabadi’s study (2016) explores the use of VLSs by undergraduate Jordanian students who were English language majors. Data were collected via a questionnaire of VLSs adopted from Schmitt (1997). Respondents were 110 Jordanian students majoring in English language and literature selected from eight Jordanian universities. The results indicate that memory strategies were used most frequently while metacognitive strategies were utilised least frequently.

In the Sudanese context, a few studies are carried out on VLSs by Sudanese students. Ahmed (1989) is the pioneer in studying VLSs in Sudan. He investigates the use of VLSs by 300 Sudanese learners of English to determine the micro-strategies and strategy patterns adopted by good and poor learners. Data were collected using think-aloud protocol, observations, and interviews for learning 14 new words. The results indicate that 38 micro-strategies were grouped into six macro-strategies; information sources, dictionary use, memorisation, practice, preferred source of information, and note-taking. The results also show that both good and poor learners show various manners of strategies usage, while, poor learners use a small number of vocabulary learning strategies.

The results of past work show that students utilised different types of VLSs in the process of their vocabulary learning. Previous literatures also indicate that students used the strategies of vocabulary learning in different way. The different uses of VLSs resulted in different investigations in terms of samples and contexts. In fact, there is a gap in the literature in the Sudanese context regarding the use and evaluation of VLSs among Sudanese university students taking English language as a major course. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap in order to encourage students to utilise self-directed learning by employing vocabulary learning strategies.

3. Methodology
Participants
The sample of this study was 60 Sudanese EFL learners in their fourth year of study, in the Department of English, Faculty of Education, Khartoum University. They were male and female students and their ages ranged from 18 to 35 years old.

Instruments
This study used two instruments in the process of data collection. These were; questionnaire and in-depth interviews. An adopted version of VLSs questionnaire proposed by Al-Fuhaid (2004) based on the VLSs taxonomies of Schmitt (1997) and Nation (2001) was utilized in this study. It consisted of two parts; the first part elicited details about students' demographic background such as gender, age, and the time when they started learning English. The second part consisted of 53 items, which were grouped into three strategies, metacognitive strategies (20 items), discovery strategies (12 items), and consolidation strategies consisting of memory strategies (12 items) and cognitive strategies (9 items). In-depth interviews were conducted to evaluate the usefulness of each of the three VLSs by respondents. Interviews were utilised to add comments that supplemented the information obtained from the questionnaire results. Respondents were
interviewed individually by the researcher who used the same questionnaire items as a tool for the interview.

**Procedure**
The questionnaire was administered in one session, for 60 students in the fourth year taking English language as a major. The data from the questionnaire were statistically analysed and the analysis was done through frequency counts, descriptive statistics, as well as correlational analysis for all three strategies. The collected data via the interviews were applied to interpret the results and findings of the questionnaire. Interviews were conducted over four days and they were held for respondents in order to obtain more specific data relating to students’ evaluation of VLSs.

**Results and Discussion**
The research questions attempt to examine the most frequently used VLSs (metacognitive, discovery and consolidation) by Sudanese EFL learners. They are also used to evaluate the usefulness of each of the three VLSs by Sudanese EFL learners. Tables 1 to 7 summarise the use and evaluation of the three VLSs (metacognitive, discovery and consolidation) by respondents.

**Findings on Metacognitive Strategies**
The first part of the questionnaire includes metacognitive strategies which refer to a conscious overview of the learning process and making decisions about planning monitoring or evaluating the best way to study. Metacognitive strategies involve 20 sub-strategies. The highest use of individual metacognitive strategies registered 91.6%. The lowest frequency use of the individual metacognitive strategies was recorded at 31.6%. The following table shows the individual use of metacognitive strategies employed by the respondents.

**Table 1. The Use of Metacognitive Strategies by Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metacognitive Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning words from a published word list</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning words from published word cards</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to learn directly from a dictionary</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV channels</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to radio programmes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading newspapers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing the Internet</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making use of on-screen English-Arabic translation</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning vocabulary through graded reading</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning vocabulary through controlled reading</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning vocabulary through free reading</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 shows that four metacognitive strategies registered high frequency use by respondents and ranged from 80.0% to 91.6%. These include strategies of (a) learning words from a published word list (90.0%), (b) trying to learn directly from a dictionary (91.6%), (c) learning vocabulary through free reading (90.0%), and (d) watching TV channels (80.0%). This finding is consistent with Al-Fuhaid’s (2004) and Schmitt’s (1997) studies in which Saudi learners and Japanese learners asserted that they used these strategies frequently to build up their vocabulary store. Nine metacognitive strategies scored moderate range of frequency use among respondents and ranged from 65.0% to 78.3%. These involve the strategies of (a) learning vocabulary through graded reading (65.0%), (b) learning vocabulary through controlled reading (65.0%), (c) evaluating L2 vocabulary (65.0%), (d) continuing to learn vocabulary over time (66.6%), (e) planning vocabulary revision (68.3%), (f) making use of on-screen English-Arabic translation (76.6%), (g) surfing the Internet (76.6%), (h) interacting with native speakers of English (78.3%), and (i) cooperating with classmate to improve L2 vocabulary (78.3%).

However, five metacognitive strategies registered less frequency use by respondents, which ranged between 31.6% and 50.0%. These comprise the strategies; (a) ignoring new words (31.6%), (b) discussing vocabulary learning problems and requirements with a teacher (40.0%), (c) reading newspapers (41.6%), (d) learning words from published word cards (46.6%), and (e) listening to radio programmes (50.0%). Respondents’ comments from the interview indicated that, the low frequency use of these strategies is due to several reasons. The strategies such as learning words from published cards take time and are suitable for beginners and also, both strategies of learning vocabulary from radio and newspapers were less utilised due to the lack of English programmes through radio and newspapers in Sudan. Respondents’ comments from the interview also revealed that asking teachers regarding vocabulary problems and requirements is not efficient because teachers may help regarding course requirements but not for learning vocabulary.

Table 2 shows respondents’ evaluation of metacognitive strategies.

**Table 2. The Evaluation of Metacognitive Strategies by Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metacognitive Strategies</th>
<th>Evaluation Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning words from a published word list</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning words from published word cards</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to learn directly from a dictionary</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>98.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV channels</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 shows that the positive evaluation responses of metacognitive strategies are obviously higher than their frequency use. Seven metacognitive strategies obtained the highest percentages of the evaluation by respondents, and ranged from 90.0% to 98.3%. These strategies are; (a) learning about VLSs and nature of L2 vocabulary learning (90.0%), (b) cooperating with classmates to improve vocabulary (90.0%), (c) interacting with native speakers of English (90.0%), (d) watching TV channels (91.6%), (e) learning vocabulary through free reading (96.6%), (f) learning words from a published word list (96.6%), and (g) trying to learn directly from a dictionary (98.3%). The findings also show that most of the metacognitive strategies which obtained high percentages of frequency use also obtained high percentages of evaluation by respondents. For example, the strategies of (a) trying to learn directly from a dictionary (91.6% on use and 98.3% on evaluation), (b) learning vocabulary through free reading (90.0% on use and 96.6% on evaluation) and (c) interacting with native speakers of English (78.3% on use and 90.0% on evaluation). The data from the interviews support the data from the questionnaire in which most of respondents reported higher positive evaluation of metacognitive strategies. Examples from respondents' comments during interviews are provided below:

SR 11: “Learning from a dictionary is very useful strategy for enhancing my vocabulary store”.

SR 10: “It’s a very useful strategy, from my opinion; free reading is the best way for developing vocabulary knowledge”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening to radio programmes</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading newspapers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing the Internet</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making use of on-screen English-Arabic translation</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning vocabulary through graded reading</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning vocabulary through controlled reading</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning vocabulary through free reading</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignoring new words</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning vocabulary revision</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating vocabulary knowledge</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing to learn vocabulary over time</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with native speakers of English</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing vocabulary learning problems and requirements with a teacher</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating with classmates to improve vocabulary</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about VLSs and about the nature of L2 vocabulary</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying the English Affixation system</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings on Discovery Strategies

This second part of the questionnaire presents results of the discovery strategies, which are defined as the steps taken by learners to discover the meaning of unknown words. Discovery strategies involve 12 sub-strategies. The highest frequency use of the discovery strategies employed by respondents registered 88.3%. The lowest frequency use of the discovery strategies received 30.0% from respondents. Table 3 shows the individual use of discovery strategies by the respondents.

Table 3. The Use of Discovery Strategies by Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discovery Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using English-Arabic dictionaries</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using English/English dictionaries</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Arabic/English dictionaries</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using electronic dictionaries</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using vocabulary section or glossaries</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using instant on-screen computer translation programmes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the Microsoft Word Thesaurus icon</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual guessing</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysing words units</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking help from a teacher</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking classmates about the meaning of new words</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovering the meaning of new words through group work</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that three discovery strategies registered high frequency use by respondents and they range from 80.0% to 85.0%. These are the strategies of (a) using contextual guessing (80.0%), (b) asking classmates about the meaning of new words (85.0%), and (c) using English-Arabic dictionaries (88.3%). This finding is in line with Schmitt’s (1997), Al-Fuhaid’s (2004) and Rabadi’s (2016) studies, which reported that using bilingual dictionary strategy was the most frequently used by respondents. In addition, this finding is consistent with Schmitt’s (1997), Fan’s (2003), Al-Fuhaid’s (2004), Kulikova’s (2015) and Hashemi and Hadavi’s (2015) studies, in which, guessing strategy was the most frequently used by their respondents. Both strategies of using instant on-screen computer translation programmes and using the Microsoft Word Thesaurus icon registered lower frequency use by respondents. This is because Sudanese EFL learners are not aware of using computer-related strategies as well as the scarcity of computer laps and Internet connectivity in Sudanese universities. However, the comments of the respondents from interviews revealed that respondents have an interest to use such strategies but
the cost and unavailability of computers and Internet connectivity are the main reasons for low use of these strategies.

The following table shows respondents’ evaluation of discovery strategies

**Table 4. The Evaluation of Discovery Strategies by Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discovery Strategies</th>
<th>Evaluation Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using English-Arabic dictionaries</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using English-English dictionaries</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Arabic-English dictionaries</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using electronic dictionaries</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using vocabulary section or glossaries</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using instant on-screen computer translation programmes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the Microsoft Word Thesaurus icon</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual guessing</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysing words units</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking help from a teacher</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>86.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking classmates about the meaning of new words</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovering the meaning of new words through group work</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that the positive evaluation responses of discovery strategies are obviously higher than their frequency use. Most discovery strategies which obtained high percentages of frequency use also obtained high percentages of evaluation by respondents. The results also show that the strategy of using English-Arabic dictionary received the highest percentage of evaluation response by respondents. This finding is consistent with Schmitt’s (1997) study of Japanese EFL learners. Also, it was found that this strategy is the only discovery strategy that received the same percentage of 88.3% on frequency use and evaluation. A possible explanation for this could be that respondents felt it was important and necessary to use bilingual dictionaries more than other types of dictionaries. They admitted the importance and usefulness of such dictionaries, which might facilitate the learning of L2 words. Furthermore, these dictionaries provided meaning in L1, which was the easiest way for them to understand the definitions of new words more than other dictionaries. Besides, respondents realised they could use such dictionaries beneficially. Examples from respondents' comments during interviews include the following:
SR 10: “bilingual dictionary is very useful. I like using such a dictionary because I am familiar with it and also I have experience regarding using it”.

SR 12: “In my opinion, English-Arabic dictionary is very useful because it provides the meanings of new English words in the Arabic language”.

Findings on Consolidation Strategies

The third part of the questionnaire involves consolidation strategies, which refer to how learners consolidate the information of new words after having gained and kept them in long term memory. Consolidation strategies encompass memory and cognitive strategies. Memory strategies include 12 sub-strategies and cognitive strategies comprise 9 sub-strategies. The highest frequency use of the consolidation strategies employed by respondents registered 90.0%. The lowest frequency use of the consolidation strategies received 28.3% from respondents. Table 5 presents the individual use of consolidation strategies by respondents.

Table 5. The Use of Consolidation Strategies by Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consolidation Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using pictures/imagery</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the keyword method</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using semantic feature grids</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using semantic maps</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using scales for gradable words</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning multi-word units</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noting a new word into a sentence or a phrase</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying the spelling of new words</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying the pronunciation of new words</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting a word to a personal experience</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting a new word to its synonyms or antonyms</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associating a new word with its coordinates</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal repetition</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written repetition</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated listening to a tape-recorded story</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated listening to a tape-recorded word list</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated listening to other materials</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking vocabulary notes</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing a word list</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing flash cards</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using revision materials</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 shows that four consolidation strategies are found to be most frequently used by respondents and they ranged from 80.0% to 90.0%. These include the strategies of (a) connecting a new word to its synonyms or antonyms (80.0%), (b) connecting a word to a personal experience (80.0%), (c) written repetition (88.3%), and (d) verbal repetition (90.0%). The study supports the depth of processing hypothesis proposed by Craik and Lockhart (1972). Both strategies of connecting a new word to its synonyms or antonyms and connecting a word to a personal experience refer to deeper level of processing. According to the depth of processing hypothesis, these strategies are elaborated to a greater level and require greater cognitive analysis. Conversely, repetition strategies (verbal repetition and written repetition) belong to the shallow processing strategy and are not desirable strategies for the long-term memory; however, they are frequently used by learners. The results are found to be in line with Ahmed’s (1989), Gu and Johnson’s, (1996), Lawson and Hogben’s (1996), Schmitt’s (1997), Al-Fuahid’s (2004) and Ta'amneh’s (2014) studies, which showed that repetition strategies were the most frequently-used strategies by L2 learners.

The findings also indicate that five consolidation strategies were the least frequently used by respondents and ranged from 28.3% to 43.3%. These were; (a) using semantic maps (28.3%), (b) using scales for gradable words (28.3%), (c) using semantic feature grids (31.6%), (d) designing flash cards (35.0%), and (e) using the keyword method (43.3%). The lowest percentages of frequency use of these strategies are because these strategies require deep mental processing and take time. However, respondents of this study did not prefer complex strategies and they favoured strategies that were easy to understand and easy to apply. In addition, the strategy of designing flash cards was least frequently used by respondents because they remarked that this strategy was suitable for beginners and also it requires time. In line with Schmitt’s (1997) and Al-Fuahid’s (2004) studies, designing flash cards strategy was also least frequently used by Japanese and Saudi EFL learners.

Table 6 shows respondents’ evaluation of consolidation strategies.

**Table 6. The Evaluation of Consolidation Strategies by Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consolidation Strategies</th>
<th>Evaluation Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using pictures/imagery</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the keyword method</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using semantic feature grids</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using semantic maps</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using scales for gradable words</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning multi-word units</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noting a new word into a sentence or a phrase</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying the spelling of new words</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying the pronunciation of new words</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Use and Evaluation of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Hamza, Yasin & Aladdin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecting a word to a personal experience</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting a new word to its synonyms or antonyms</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associating a new word with its coordinates</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal repetition</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written repetition</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated listening to a tape recorded story</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated listening to a tape-recorded word list</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated listening to other material</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking vocabulary notes</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing a word list</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing flash cards</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using revision materials</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 indicates that all consolidation strategies obtained higher percentages of evaluation than frequency use with the exception of three strategies (connecting a word to a personal experience, verbal repetition, and written repetition). The possible reason for the less positive evaluation of connecting a word to a personal experience strategy may be attributed to the claim by respondents that it is a useful strategy but the association of new words with personal experience comes naturally and this is considered a main problem for them. With regard to repetition strategies, the possible reason could be that the majority of respondents were convinced about the usefulness of both strategies with the exception of a few respondents who were inclined to give more evaluation response to the verbal repetition than the written repetition and vice versa.

Nevertheless, three consolidation strategies registered the highest percentages of evaluation than the percentages of their frequency use. These are; (a) using pictures/imagery (71.6% on use and 85.0% on evaluation), (b) noting a new word into a sentence or a phrase (78.3% on use and 85.0% on evaluation), and (c) studying the spelling of new words (75.0% on use and 83.3% on evaluation). This result indicated that respondents realised the usefulness of these strategies and they were willing to use such strategies. Noting a new word into a sentence strategy registered 85.0%, as a high percentage of evaluation by respondents. This result supports the idea of the information processing theory in which grouping words into meaningful chunks is very helpful in both storage and retrieval of words. In addition, the strategy of using pictures/imagery also received 85.0% as a high evaluation response by respondents. This result supports the depth of processing hypothesis; information can be encoded based on the nature of stimulus, such as visual, phonemic, semantic associations, or related images. The data of the interviews also support the findings of the questionnaire in which respondents reported that consolidation strategies as useful strategies. Examples from respondents’ comments during interviews are as follows:

SR 3: “The strategy of using pictures/imagery is useful for remembering words for a long time”.

SR 4: “The strategy of noting a new word into a sentence is very useful. It helps me to recall new words for a long time”.

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With regard to the means for frequency use and evaluation of metacognitive, discovery and consolidation strategies; Table 7 shows means for frequency use and evaluation of the three strategies.

Table 7. Means for Frequency Use and Evaluation of the Three Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency mean</th>
<th>Evaluation mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>40.05</td>
<td>48.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Strategies</td>
<td>36.50</td>
<td>42.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>36.71</td>
<td>41.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows that metacognitive strategies registered the highest means for use and evaluation among other strategies; registering a mean of 40.5 on use and receiving a mean of 48.05 on evaluation. On the other hand, discovery strategies registered the second highest mean on evaluation with a score of 42.08% and received the third mean index of frequency use among other strategies with 36.50%. Consolidation strategies registered the third mean on evaluation with a score of 41.47% and received the second mean index of frequency use compared to other categories and received 36.71.

The findings on the questionnaire indicate that the mean index for all categories was very low. In line with the study of Kalajahi et.al (2014) and Asgari (2011), metacognitive strategies were utilised very frequently by UPM undergraduate learners. Metacognitive strategies received the higher index of the frequency mean among other strategies because university students are high order in planning, monitoring in their own learning process. In addition, correlational analysis was done by using Pearson correlation to determine the relationship between the percentages of use and evaluation of metacognitive, discovery and consolidation strategies. The findings on Pearson correlation indicate that there was a significant relationship between use and evaluation in terms of metacognitive strategies ($r=0.748$, $p<0.05$), discovery strategies ($r=0.936$, $p<0.05$) and consolidation strategies ($r=0.959$, $p<0.05$). This revealed that Sudanese EFL learners realised the importance and benefits of the three strategies.

In sum, findings from the questionnaire and interviews show that there were some reasons that affected the use of VLSs by Sudanese EFL learners. These were; (a) course requirements: the use of VLSs by respondents was governed by their course requirements in which respondents most frequently used the strategies that assisted them in learning their courses more than other strategies; (b) lack of knowledge of VLSs among respondents: the results indicated that the low frequency use of several strategies was because respondents did not have any idea about such strategies; (c) lack of facilities in Sudanese universities: such as shortage of computer labs and poor Internet access are the main reasons associated with the least frequency use of some strategies; and also, (d) inappropriate teaching methods in Sudanese universities: teaching methods in Sudan based on curriculum and by teachers without adequate training and with no workshops involving vocabulary learning and requirements. Therefore, it can be concluded that all these factors influenced the use of VLSs by Sudanese EFL learners.
On the other hand, the evaluation of the three categories is higher than their frequency use. This finding implies that learners are prepared to try new strategies if they are introduced to and trained in them (Schmitt, 1997). This sense of an autonomous vocabulary learning approach needs to be formulated in a proper way by introducing VLSs that registered lower percentages of use by respondents and explaining how they can apply each strategy and benefit from each one.

Conclusion
The findings of this study seem to suggest some implications for EFL settings. This study suggests that the language teachers should create awareness among the students of the significance of VLSs in promoting their learning by applying strategy training. Teachers and lecturers can motivate their learners to employ VLSs appropriately with the aid of more training regarding the least frequently used strategies such as English language media strategies, long-term strategies, and computer strategies. In turn, students would be able to experience successful learning in their academic studies. Future studies on VLSs can be conducted among other learners in different contexts, using other techniques in the process of data collection and also identifying the restrictions that may prevent students from employing various types of VLSs in their learning process.

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References


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Examining Text Coherence in Graduate Students of English Argumentative Writing: Case Study

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Abstract
This study aims at examining the writing skills of a group of Indonesian graduate students of English. A particular attention has been focused on the coherence of their production of argumentative texts. Employing a discourse analytical case study, three texts written by three Master’s degree students of the English language education at a local university in Central Java, Indonesia, were analyzed. Coherence and cohesion is inextricable in which both are crucial in academic writing as to achieve a makes-sense text. Therefore, it is an urgent need to look at the writing competency of students as they are at graduate level, majoring in the English language education. The texts produced by the students were scrutinized through the lens of micro- and macro-level coherence (Thornburry, 2005). From this theory, cohesion is involved in micro level coherence. The findings indicate that the students show a bit weakness on achieving coherent texts due to lack of optimization of cohesive devices especially conjunctions to create interconnectedness of the whole sentences in the texts.

Keywords: argumentative text, coherence, cohesion, graduate students, written discourse analysis

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Introduction
It is common that writing skills positioned as the last skill to acquire by foreign language learners, including in the teaching and learning of English language. This is probably because of the complexity of writing process. Without disregarding the three other skills, writing may always be the most difficult for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). This may be so because in this skill the student writers need to verbalize their abstract ideas in their brain into a written form by paying attention to many things (idea, concept, vocabulary, and grammar) (Khunaifi, 2015). Due to its complexity and high-conscious-language-knowledge-needed, writing can be used as the parameter of a result of students’ linguistic knowledge longitudinal development. The ability in writing then is seen in writing product; that is a text.

Creating a text is not simply about expressing ideas by writing them in a bundle of words. Theoretically, a text has to be built from adequate structural and grammatical resources for written form. Beyond its form and structure, in writing a text it is further about contemplating the purpose of the text as a way of communication between the writer and the reader. Therefore, the reader’s side also needs to be considered. The relationship between text and communication has been asserted by Widdowson (2007) who explains that a text, in general, may be defined as a piece of language as distinct from a sentence and it has a communicative purpose.

To make sure the readers easily grasp writers’ intended meaning, the texts have to meet requirements of a meaningful text. Thornbury (2005) states that a good text has elements within bounded together and need to make sense to readers. These elements of writing are also known as cohesion and coherence of the text. He further explains that the cohesion is how a text hangs together to make a ‘text’ and the coherence is about the sense-making quality of a text.

Cohesion and coherence are inextricable, in which both of these features were examined in the present study. The cohesion of a text may be derived from cohesive devices or cohesive ties. These devices are prominent linguistic markers in which the function is to relate each idea into a core principle of the text. The connective properties stick the elements of the text or the whole sentences in order to make the interpretation of the text easier (Shirazi and Nadoushani, 2017). Therefore, the text is not only composed of a bundle of sentences just hanging together but also it has to be semantically united in the whole sentences through cohesive devices.

Cohesion itself is the prerequisite of coherence. This idea is based on Hasan (1976) as cited in Li and Wu (2017) who state that “cohesion is the foundation on which the edifice of coherence is built”, and “the basis for textual coherence lies in cohesion” (p. 210). In this study, the main focus is on coherence and the analysis of cohesion is included directly as it is one of the requirements to make a coherent text. The presence of cohesion is then assumed to construct internal coherence of text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Egging, 2004; Widdowson, 2007).

Coherence, moreover, is an attempt to make the entire text understandable. As stated before that a written text is aimed to be a medium of communication, not only interconnectedness among sentences has to be linked with cohesive devices, but it needs coherence of the whole text as a means of sense-making sentences (Rahman, 2013). In making sense of a text, the writers need to build the context of the text in order to build schema for
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readers understanding the whole text (Thornbury, 2005). It means that in discussing a certain topic, for instance the scope of the topic is new for the readers, the writers are responsible for describing the situation explicitly. By doing this, it will lead the readers to connect information from the text to their mental background knowledge. This is also supported by Fitriati (2016) who argues that contextualizing the text is one of the ways to accomplish the communicative purpose. Thus, a coherent text is one of the requirements in creating communicative written text.

However, a text which is cohesive does not necessarily mean it is coherent. The text may be well connected with cohesive devices but the reader also may not be able to understand what the text is about (Yule, 2009). Widdowson (2007) states that a text can be cohesive but a lack of coherence in that it does not bring the reader into any familiar schema of an interpersonal kind. Therefore, in reaching coherence, it depends on how far the readers can relate the text contextually with their particular socio-cultural knowledge they have. In academic perspective, understanding a text is also affected by the readers’ level of knowledge.

Several studies related to text coherence analysis have been carried out, particularly in the context of English language teaching. Karadeniz (2017) carried out a study of the analysis of cohesion and coherence of students’ written texts in Turkey. By employing qualitative research design, specifically, document review technique, he revealed that the ability to optimize cohesive devices is in relation to coherent text–making. In the other words, cohesion and coherence influence students writing quality. Suwandi (2015) conducted a research about cohesion and coherence in four final project abstracts of undergraduate English language department students. The result of this research shows that the abstracts are still lack of coherence though some cohesive ties are used to link each sentence. Further, a fundamental mistake such grammatical errors is also found.

Triggered by these previous studies, especially research done by Suwandi (2015) about the situation in the Indonesian EFL learner context, a concern comes up on the ability of EFL learners in producing a coherent text. The ability to create a text coherently is highly demanded from EFL learners, especially graduate (or, Master’s degree) students majoring in English. Students of the graduate program in this present study are teachers of English at a primary school and a junior high school, and the other one runs his own English language course in a town. Therefore, as teachers themselves, their ability in creating good quality text is needed. They are expected not only to able to write coherent texts to provide a good model for their students, but also to teach them how to write a coherent text by making use of cohesive devices.

The students’ texts which were examined in this current study belong to an argumentative text or analytical exposition text. In this article, the two terms ‘argumentative text’ and ‘analytical exposition text’ are used interchangeably. This type of text demands the writers to express their arguments to persuade the readers that something is the case. The generic structure of this text type consists of thesis which introduces the topic and indicates writer’s position, arguments which are developed to support each point of arguments, and reiteration which restates writer’s position (Gerot & Wignell, 1995, p. 197). Writers are required to state not only their opinions on a certain case, but also support their focused propositions by giving supporting evidence, examples, or illustration to make the readers convinced with the writers’ arguments, as
Khunaiﬁ (2015) suggests that argumentative text requires students to get empirical data in order to understand what position they will be regarding the topic being discussed.

The current study is aimed to reveal the text coherence of argumentative texts written by students of English Education Graduate School. The main reason of choosing this level of students is that, as advanced EFL students, they are expected to have adequate writing skills since they have already obtained a Bachelor’s degree on English language education. As English learners as well as English teachers in the same time, this analysis is needed in order to reveal the current condition of their ability in communicating their arguments in written form meaningfully. As English language learners, they need to be able to express their ideas coherently in written form in terms of articles or academic papers. As supported by Boardman and Frydenberg (2008) that cohesion and coherence aspects must be considered as pivotal characteristics while writing an academic text. In another role, as professional English teachers, they need to prepare their students to be able to communicate through written text meaningfully. Moreover, as in the four-level of literacy taxonomy proposed by Wells (1987), graduate students are in the level of epistemic literacy in which they are expected to be able to act upon and transform knowledge and experience to whom who has never learned it before.

The novelty of the current study then is in involving graduate students as the subject of the study. As far as we have concerned, little is known about the writing ability of Master’s degree students in terms of their skills in making a coherent text. One of the current studies was conducted by Bakaa (2014) who investigated the ability of non-native speakers Iraqi and native speakers Australian Postgraduate students in writing argumentative text. The result showed a failure of non-native-speaker students in constructing voice and authority appropriately through the thematic organization. Inspiring from this study, the current study is going to explore not only thematic progression but also the influence of cohesive devices in organization of the texts produced by Indonesian students of English at graduate level.

Thornbury (2005) suggests an approach to the analysis of cohesiveness and coherence of a text. He suggests that the cohesiveness of a text may be measured through lexical cohesion, grammatical cohesion, and rhetorical cohesion. In lexical cohesion, the cohesiveness may be made through directly repeated words, word families, synonyms, and antonyms; words from the same semantic field, lexical chains and list; substitution with one/ones. In terms of grammatical cohesion, the cohesiveness may be made from reference (pronouns and articles); substitution of clause elements using so, not, do/does/did; ellipsis of clause elements; conjuncts (also linkers); and tense. The last element is rhetorical cohesion that can be made from question-answer form and parallelism.

In regards to coherency, Thornbury (2005) explains two perspectives, namely the micro-level and the macro level of coherence. In micro level, coherence is achieved when the entire text answers readers’ expectation. It can be achieved through theme-rheme pattern and logical relation in each sentence within the text. In macro-level coherence, the text is obviously about something since the topic is identifiable and delivered in a certain known genre. The readers then interact with the text and get complete the communication purpose of the text through schemas and scripts that have already built in readers’ mind. The schema is the mental representation of
knowledge based on readers’ experience of the world and it will be used to interpret the text. The script can be defined as readers’ expectation about things to happen in the text; it is sometimes realized through the generic structure and register (Thornburry, 2005; Wang & Guo, 2014).

The present study focuses on the analysis of coherence, by employing Thornburry’s micro and macro level of coherence (2005), to reveal to what extent the graduate students in a local university achieve coherence in their argumentative texts, especially analytical exposition texts. Therefore, the objectives of this study can be formulated as follows: (1) what are the cohesive devices used in the students’ argumentative texts, and how do these cohesive devices contribute to the organizational pattern or thematic development of the texts? (2) How is the quality of the graduate students’ argumentative texts in terms of text coherence?

**Method**

This is a qualitative case study seeking an answer as to how, and to what extent Indonesian graduate students majoring in the English language education achieve coherence in their argumentative texts, employing written discourse analysis. Specifically, this study analyzed naturally occurring written data as the students, in this case, the writers of the texts, in the beginning, were not told that their writings would be used as the object of the research.

The source of the data was taken from argumentative texts written by graduate students at a local university in a city in the Central Java Province, Indonesia. The texts were written in about one and a half hours in one session of Academic Writing class. The students were given a piece of paper containing a mind mapping image of a certain topic, that is, saving energy for climate change.

As this is a case study, the researchers took three texts purposively. After choosing the texts, the researchers asked a permission from the three students – the writers of the three texts whether or not they allowed their texts to be used as the object of this study. Although the findings of this study can not be generalized in other settings or research site, it is hoped that the present study will shed some light on the issue of coherence.

The analysis of the data started with identifying clauses and clause complexes. Then, each clause complex was investigated in terms of their cohesive devices and in the whole text. The findings of the use of cohesive devices were presented in tables which then were interpreted. In analyzing the text coherence, the texts were analyzed in terms of thematic pattern and logical relationship across the sentences. Further, the analysis was done in terms of schema established within the texts by identifying lexical chains and generic structure. In short, the task of data analysis required elaborative complex processing by the researchers following the theoretical framework of cohesion and coherence suggested by Thornburry (2005).

**Findings**

The findings reveal a bundle of linguistic evidence related to cohesion and coherence of the texts. This section will start with the findings on cohesive devices mostly found in each text. Then, it will be followed by the findings on the text coherence with regard to micro- and macro-level analysis of coherence.
Cohesion

Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion is achieved through the choice of lexical items. It is realized in terms of “word repetition and lexical chaining of words that share similar meaning” (Thornburry, 2005). Based on the analysis, the frequent words appeared in the texts were identified and ordered from the most to the less. The findings show that several words come up as the most repeated words. In text 1, the frequent word is energy (9x), followed by saving (5x) and school (5x). The words or set of words mostly appeared in text 2 are school (14x), global warming (8x), and stop (7x). Meanwhile, in the text 3, the frequent words are energy (12x), school (11), and action (8x). Moreover, in accordance with lexical cohesion, the use of words from same semantic field and words sharing common roots is found in the texts. For example in a sentence It is actually caused by climate change, this condition is a result of global warming, the term climate change and global warming are words from same semantic field which talks about natural phenomenon.

Unfortunately, there were less lexical variations in terms of using synonym, antonym, hyponym, and meronym. Only in text 2 contains six synonymous words and text 3 has 4 synonymous words. Moreover, only one Antonym word is found in each text. Then, one pair of hyponym words is found in text 1 and text 3 and two pairs in text 2. In regards to meronym, no word is identified in all texts. From these findings, it may describe that the writers produce limited lexical variations in the texts.

Grammatical cohesion

The second type of analysis is grammatical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion is simply related to pronouns, linkers, and tense (Thornburry, 2005). The first part of grammatical cohesion is the presence of reference. The first kind is the anaphoric reference which occurs when the writer refers back to someone or something that has been previously identified, to avoid repetition. The second one is the cataphoric reference which is the opposite of anaphora: a reference forward as opposed to backward in the discourse. The last one is the exophoric reference which is used to describe generics or abstracts found within the text or in the context of the situation. There is an additional reference called as the homophoric reference. It is used to refer to something known in the context of culture. Based on the analysis, it is found the great number of anaphoric references used in the texts. The number of references found in text 1 is eleven anaphoric, one cataphoric, and two homophoric while Text 2 has eight anaphoric, two cataphoric, and one homophoric references. Further, in text 3, there are 14 anaphoric with no cataphoric and two homophoric references. The pronoun it in the sentence below is denoted from getting hotter from day to day which is stated in the previous sentence. The piece of evidence can be seen as follow: It is actually caused by climate change; this condition is a result of global warming.

The second part is to find substitution of clause elements using so, not, do/does/did. However, there is no one evidence found in all the texts about substitution. Another part related to clause elements is ellipsis. This such grammatical form is found once in text 1 and text 2 whereas it is absence in text 3 as can be seen in the following sample:

You can also set the temperature for your heater into normal degree (18°C - 20°C in winter and 26°C in summer), even students can do it themselves. By doing this,
In this finding, *doing this* substitute *set the temperature for your heater into normal degree.* This occurred to avoid repetition of phrase from the previous sentence in the next sentence. The use of substitution further is to facilitate connection from one sentence to others in readers’ cognition. In short, the reason to apply this such aspect of grammatical cohesion is to prevent from repetition of phrases and further to get out of reader’s boredom.

Further, another part related to grammar issue of cohesion is conjunctions and linkers. Text 1 employs *after* and *at the end* as temporal conjunction; *if, because,* and *because of* as causal conjunction; *as well as* and *however* as adversative conjunction; and *or* and *and* as additive conjunction. In text 2, temporal conjunctions are *the first, the second, the last* and *finally*; causal conjunction is *or,* adversative conjunctions are *however* and *at least;* and additive conjunction are *and* and *so.* Meanwhile, in text 3, conjunctions used are *the first, meanwhile, the second, in lunch time, finally,* and *the next* related to temporal relation; *because, since, so, so that* and *because* related to causal relation; *and, therefore, at least, then, or,* and *beside* related to additive relation. There is no adversative conjunction used in this text.

The last part of cohesion regarding grammar is Tense used in the text. All of the texts were written in varied present forms. As in text 1, the identified Tenses are Present Tense as in: *One way to solve this problem is by doing environmentally friendly activities;* Present Future as in: *Doing this regularly will help your environment a lot;* Present Continuous as in: *If more people (are) doing this together, climate change can be solved in the near future.* Meanwhile, Present Tense and Present Future were the only kind of Tenses used in text 2 and 3.

**Rhetorical cohesion**

Rhetorical cohesion is related to the discourse of the text. Thornbury (2005) argues that this is realized through question-answer form and parallelism (p.23). In a case of parallelism, there is no evidence found in all texts. There is only one evidence embedded in text 1 of question-answer form as can be seen in the following sentence: *Do you feel that it is getting hotter from day to day? It is actually caused by climate change; this condition is a result of global warming.*

**Coherence**

Coherence analysis involved the analysis of thematic progression along with its logical relations within the text. In term of thematic pattern, as Eggins (2004) argues there are three main patterns of thematic development can be observed namely Theme reiteration, zig-zag pattern, and multiple-Rheme pattern. According to the analysis of text 1, it was only found Theme reiteration and zig-zag pattern fold within the text. It can be seen as an example of reiteration in the table below. In the column of Theme slot, two Themes represents same information. The referent ‘there’ in the clause 21 is referred to the previous Theme ‘canteen’. Though the two Themes are related, the new information brought in Rheme slots are different each other.
Further, zig-zag pattern is also employed in the text as it can be seen in the table below. This pattern is called as so because the Theme in a clause is carried from Rheme in the preceding clause. From the table, Theme ‘this condition’ in clause 4 is used to refer to Rheme ‘climate change’ in the previous clause. The noun phrase ‘global warming’ is also restated in next clause as Theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Rheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Going to canteen</td>
<td>is also a good choice for your recess.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There</td>
<td>you can also do energy saving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These such kind of Thematic patterns also occurs in text 2 and text 3. Moreover, in those texts are also identified multiple-Rheme, as a couple of the evidence can be seen as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Rheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It</td>
<td>is actually caused by climate change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this condition</td>
<td>is a result of global warming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>happens because of human activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Rheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There</td>
<td>are at least three ways to stop the global warming from school canteen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first one</td>
<td>is to use only locally grown product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally grown products</td>
<td>do not need to travel very far from the farm to the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that it</td>
<td>will not consume a great amount of fuel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The second one</td>
<td>is to have a day in a week that all the students and teacher only eat vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>take less time to cook,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so it</td>
<td>will not need to use much fuel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The last one</td>
<td>is to use low energy fridge to decrease the use of the electric energy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4
The example of multiple-Rheme in text 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Rheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>There are several things</td>
<td>that we can do as the tips of energy saving climate change for our school, such as things related to transportation, waste, and electricity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The first way</td>
<td>is by taking consideration is the use of models of transportation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Then, the second way to save energy for our</td>
<td>is by paying attention to the waste organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>The next tips that we can do in saving energy</td>
<td>is by using office equipment properly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another aspect in micro-level coherence is the logical relationship. However, not all of sentences arranged answered reader’s expectation. The ideas seemed to come from elsewhere and had no relation with information in preceding sentences or it is called as a rogue sentence. In text 1, it was found two rogue sentences. One of the evidence is as in sentence 26 *If you cannot avoid vehicle, try to use public transportation* in which even vehicle was introduced in the previous sentence but reader’s expectation is this sentence would provide about vehicle. Further, two rogue sentences were also found in text 2, as one of evidence is *There are so many aspects in the school that can be modified to stop the global warming*. This sentence is a rogue sentence by virtue of coming from nowhere since the reader would come to expect relationship *the largest community in society* with climate change issue as introduced in previous sentence but the writer carried forward new information (*aspect in the school*). It can be seen as in the table 5:

Table 5
The example of rogue sentence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>At the end when you go home, use environmentally friendly vehicle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td><strong>If you cannot avoid vehicle, try to use public transportation.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>It can still decrease the pollution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In sentence 25, the theme (*at the end*) indicates the last sequence that has been stated in previous sentences. The comment (*environmentally friendly vehicle*) demands example in the next sentence to give an illustration to the readers. Unfortunately, sentence 26 does not give example as reader’s expectation. This sentence is then categorized as a rogue sentence. However, this mistake does not significantly affect the whole text. The sentence actually is not completely composed yet since the string of the sentences needs more elaboration or contextualization and they seem jumping from one issue to others quickly without any adequate explanation left.

Further, in regarding macro-level-coherence, the aspect being analyzed is a clue to show obviously what the text is about. This is more likely to be said as a topic of the text in which it may be also topic of some of individual sentences in the texts. From the texts, each topic has been identified through repeated words in which it signals keywords of the text (Thornburry,
2005). Further, it can be concluded the three texts have similar topic; it is about *saving energy at school*. Moreover, the analysis moved toward internal patterning of the text through thematic pattern analysis. By doing this, it would be revealed whether or not the whole sentences were interrelated. The last aspect regarding macro-level coherence is schema or reader’s mind. Prediction of what following sentence is about after preceding sentence leads to acknowledging genre. The obvious characteristics of the text bring to some assumption about kind of genre applied in the texts; the genre is analytical exposition. The supporting information regarding this such judgment is in the last paragraph of these texts providing conclusion or thesis reiteration for the readers. Overall the texts have fulfilled characteristics of analytical exposition texts in terms of its generic structure and language features.

**Discussion**

This discussion section is started from the answer of the first research question about kinds of cohesive devices used in the graduate students’ argumentative texts. The overall results, which are seen from the cohesion analysis which covers lexical, grammatical and rhetorical cohesion, emerges less optimization of cohesive devices used by the writers in their texts.

Started from the variation of lexical items used in the texts, the writers generate repetition and words from semantic field frequently to keep the readers on the track. This conforms the findings of Kafes (2012) in Rahman (2013) who emphasized that repetition was predominantly used by non-native students in their English written essay. As the graduate students, they may be aware of needs to stick the main topic to the whole texts. The repeated words used also indicate the intention of the writer to emphasize what the topic is and they are presented adequately. The expected condition is caused by graduate students’ extended knowledge of writing which overuse of similar repeated words leads boredom to the readers. However, sense relation of certain lexical items such as using synonym antonym, hyponym, and meronym are unexpectedly underrepresented. Only a small of number synonym is used in all the texts. These findings actually confirm Rahman’s study (2013) that non-native students frequently use repetition and scarcely vary the words with synonyms and antonyms. Since the writers were assigned to create a text only in a limited time, as non-native English students, perhaps optimizing words in vocabulary storage may be difficult.

Moving toward grammatical cohesion, the analysis showed the massive use of references, specifically tremendous use of anaphoric references. This fact may be good since this indicates the text is accessible for public readers. It is supported by Eggins (2004) says such type of retrieval reference facilitates readers whenever they want to trace the referent in a sentence, it is already stated in the previous sentences. Thus, in the other words, the elements in the text intertwine each other. She also adds anaphoric reference creates the internal texture of the text in which the text will be the context-independent use of language. By this, the texts can be used every when and everywhere since they possibly across space and time. By having no context-dependent the texts then have achieved cohesion aspect.

Regarding conjunctions used in the text, the result shows that the number of conjuncts was still low quantity. This may influence the smoothness of understanding the text to the readers. However, the writers cannot be judged as less competent only due to this situation.
because time limitation is one of the factors to be taken account. Longer time duration is needed for them to explore more connective ties. This is also similar to Karahan (2015) who found that limited time may cause foreign language learners not use a large variety of connectives in their essay.

The other aspects of grammatical cohesion are ellipsis and substitution. The previous studies also reveal that these two aspects are underused by the students in writing (Rahman, 2013; Suwandi, 2015). Under-practice of these aspects in writing is usually the reason why the students hardly optimize these in their writing in order to get more text cohesiveness. Moreover, this situation is assumed as normal in written text as stated by de Beaugrande and Dressier (1981) as cited in Karadeniz (2017) that reference, conjunction, and lexical cohesion are common in written expressions, while ellipsis and substitution are used in oral expressions. Regarding rhetorical cohesion, only text 1 employed question-answer form to raise reader’s expectation to find an answer within the text after reading the question. The answer is expectedly met, the text then is assigned as cohesive regarding fulfillment of rhetorical cohesion. Moreover, parallelism is absent in all texts which later indicate the texts have not succeeded in exploring readers’ willing to act toward the texts curiously. Actually, question-answer and parallelism are two kinds that are not well known by the non-native speaker writers. These two aspects demand high critical thinking and also habit in implementing them in writing. Question-answer form may be assumed as the way to gain readers’ interests especially the questions that are controversial.

Overall, the discussion covers about cohesion of the texts made by Graduate students. From the analysis, the frequent aspect of cohesion used is lexical and grammatical cohesion. This may arise the following-up question about the relation of these cohesion findings toward organizational of the text. Therefore, further analysis of the texts is about revealing the quality of Graduate students’ argumentative texts in terms of text coherence or to know whether the texts make sense or not. Sense-making quality and text internal cohesion create a coherent text.

The first aspect of sense making quality is micro-level coherence while it is realized through sentence-by-sentence analysis. The beginning issue is about Theme-Rheme pattern or thematic organization of the text which discovers about how the topic of a sentence or the message is placed in a sentence. As stated in findings, there were several patterns may be adopted in sentence flow structure namely reiteration, zig-zag, and multiple patterns (Eggins, 2004). Reiteration means the clauses retain the same Theme or referent and all of the Themes are linked up with each other. Zig-zag means the Theme in the second clause is the Rheme in the first clause. So, the new information in the second sentence is derived from the old information in the previous clause or it can be coded as Rh1-Th2, Rh2-Th3 (Rh denotes Rheme and Th denotes Theme). Multiple pattern, or also called as derived progression by Danes (1974) in Hawes (2015), is the themes connect to an implicit ‘hyperthme’ of the whole text. Based on the analysis, the most frequent Theme progression is zig-zag pattern and followed by Theme-reiteration. The use of zig-zag pattern is in line with the end-weight principle by placing the newsworthy or new information in Rheme slot (Thornburry, 2005). Ordering the new and old information properly and adequately have shown that in terms of Theme-progression the texts are coherent already. The status as advanced tertiary students may be assumed as the reason why the Graduate students have served information flow to the readers in such a way.
Despite the progression of Theme and Rheme, the analysis goes to the detail information in sentence-by-sentence. It was found that there were some rogue clauses in which the Theme or the topic could not be retrieved from somewhere else in previous clauses. These such clauses may affect the logical relationships between sentences. As evidence in text 1, the noun phrase *friendly vehicle* in the first sentence actually predicts examples in the following sentence, but unexpectedly new topic of sentence is introduced without using conjunctive relation. In this case, reader’s expectation is not taken into account. Moreover, though there is no grammar mistake found in the texts, but there are some misspelling of some words.

Moreover, the text should be in reader’s schema to make sense of it. The schema or mental construction of a text is the idea of the world outside the text. In constructing the schema about energy saving, it can be seen from introduction paragraph in which in drives readers from general issue to the narrower one. The development of introductory part may vary. One form was in text 1 is initiated by question-answer form as rhetorical cohesion. The topic is expanded starting from the closest readers’ environment about *getting hotter from day to day* to the general shared scientific knowledge about global warming and climate change. Another various way is analyzed in text 3 which declarative sentences used to explain the current situation of *climate change* before coming to the main topic about *climate change action at school*.

From the schema built in introduction paragraph, readers may come to the consensus about genre of the texts. Since it is obviously recognized that the genre of the text is argumentative text, reader’s expectation is about how this kind of genre delivered properly in the text. It is taken into account to be a requirement of coherent text as supported by Eggins (2004) who says that a text is considered as generically coherent when the clauses in the text can be recognized as belonging to the same type of genre. The genre itself drives to identify the generic structure of the text in which it is used to distinguish between complete and incomplete text (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). As seen in the text, the genre of the text is argumentative text, specifically analytical exposition. By considering this such genre, the readers will expect the text contains paragraph about thesis, argument, and reiteration. The findings show that the texts already employ the proper generic structure of analytical exposition text should be. They may be seen in the first paragraph that each text introduces the topic from the general issue and come to specific one. In the last sentence of the opening paragraph, there is a topic sentence in which outlines the thesis of the text. The rest paragraphs but last one is about the argument to reason the concerns and lead to the recommendation. Finally, in the last paragraph, it is the recommendation of what should happen; in this case is energy saving at school. In short, overall, despite some rogue sentences in which came from nowhere outside from readers’ expectation, the texts are mostly logically interconnected as the whole.

From this text coherence analysis, the assessment can be made that all of the three texts are coherent. The use of cohesive devices contributes to achieve internal coherence or connectedness of inter-sentence. The current results show in regard to lexical cohesion that only a small number of lexical variation employed in the text while repetition is still a favor for non-native speaker writers. Through repetition words, the writers actually have helped the readers to follow the meaning of the text from the beginning to the end of the paragraph. Regarding
grammatical cohesion, the attention needs to be put on conjunctions or conjunctive markers. Though there is no error in applying them, the number of their presence needs to be increased. Overall the grammar applied in the whole texts showed that all the writers are competence in grammar but it does not necessarily means they are automatically able to deal with cohesive devices in written discourse (Aldera, 2016). However, the most important thing is not about using cohesive items massively but appropriate, adequate, and effective use of these devices in the texts is the key to create coherent text.

**Conclusion**

The prominent finding of the study shows that the Graduate students still have a bit weakness on composing coherent texts. Though cohesive devices may build cohesion in the whole text, but bridging new ideas among sentences is still a problem since there is a gap in connecting a sentence to other sentences which result in rogue sentences in several cases. Such kind of weaknesses may be caused by the less optimization of various conjunctions and passive form sentence to enhance end-weight principle on each sentence.

The implication for English language learners is that they need to know the common weaknesses in composing texts, especially in terms of cohesion and coherence. The study shows less optimization of conjunction as part of grammatical cohesion in students’ writing. This situation is expected to be a reminder whenever students are assigned to create a text; that is to use conjunctions appropriately and effectively. The result of this study is also addressed to English teachers. Providing students with related materials to the topic of discussion on current worldwide issues is highly recommended to give them background knowledge for their writing. By this, they can enrich their knowledge and, of course, can posit themselves in what side they will be when they create argumentative texts. Further, time allotment is also crucial in creating high-quality texts. Short-time writing is only one of the factors of students’ writing imperfections. Teachers need to be aware that writing is a process and students also need to be taught explicitly about the use of cohesive devices and thematic development of a text. Eventually, this research have shed some lights that though Master degree students of English language education are advanced learners, a wide range of writing practices is always needed to improve their text coherence.

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**References**


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The Effect of L2 Exposure Environment on NNESTs’ Teaching Skills and Beliefs about EFL Learning Beyond the Class

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Abstract
The study aims at investigating the effect of second language (L2) exposure environment on NNESTs’ teaching skills and beliefs about EFL learning beyond the classroom. This is a survey for non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) of Indonesian Senior High Schools (or in Indonesian terms ‘SMA’) from different L2 environments, namely: 1) urban-region exposure environment schools (n=40), and 2) rural-region exposure environment schools (n=40). There were two instruments used in the present study, i.e. 1) observation scaling checklist, and 2) questionnaire. The observation scaling checklist was used for assessing the respondents’ performance when they were teaching in class. Meanwhile, the questionnaire using a four-point Likert scale was used to elicit data. The researchers used a series of independent t-test to analyze the data. The result reveals that: 1) there is a significant difference between teaching skills of NNESTs from the urban region schools and those of NNESTs from rural region schools, t (78)= 19.499, p=0.000; and 2) there is a significant difference between beliefs about English as a foreign language (EFL learning beyond the classroom) of the NNESTs from urban region schools and those of NNESTs from rural region schools, t (78)= - 4.925, p=0.000

Key Words: Beliefs about EFL learning beyond the classroom, NNEST, L2 exposure environment, and teaching skills

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Introduction

Second language acquisition’s (SLA) variability has been partly dependent on a number of factors, such as modes of L2 acquisition - immersion vs. Classroom (e.g., Carroll, 1967), length of second language (L2) immersion (e.g., Flege, Frieda, & Nozawa, 1997), or extent of daily L2 vs first language (L1) usage (e.g., Jia et al., 2002). This indicates the importance of the relationship between L2 exposure and the attainment of L2 proficiency, which has been proved by many studies, for instance, the relationship between the age at which a learner is exposed to L2 and the ultimate L2 attainment level (e.g., Birdsong, 2005; Birdsong & Molis, 2001; Johnson & Newport, 1989); the benefits of the degree to which a learner is immersed in L2 (e.g., Carroll, 1967; Flege et al., 1999), the extent of L2 exposure (e.g., Birdsong, 2005; Genesee, 1985; Kohnert, Bates, & Hernandez, 1999; Weber-Fox & Neville, 1999), and extent of on-going L2 use (e.g., Flege, MacKay, & Piske, 2002; Jia et al., 2002) to L2 proficiency. L2 exposure has been assumed efficient for English as a second language learners to increase their L2 proficiency. In the context of inner circle or outer circle environment (Kachru’s concept of world Englishes), L2 exposure has been easy to gain for improving the L2 learning; however, in the context of the expanding circle, getting enough L2 exposure is not that easy. It is due to the fact that in the expanding circle context, EFL learners are not mingling with real experience environment such as living in English-speaking community as their rich exposure in the target language; thus, the only way to get the target language exposure for them is to gain more access to authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines, movies, films, or broadcasting programs which were provided in the target language.

The attainment of L2 proficiency in the context of inner circle or outer circle environment has been dependent to certain extent on learners’ attitudes to the L2 which according to many research findings can also be contrained by socio-economic factors; for instance, students from rural regions or lower social classes have lower international orientation, thus show less favour in the attitude toward learning foreign language (see Dörnyei, Z., et al, 2006; Carr & Pauwels, 2006; Lamb, 2012). Moreover, failure and success of learning foreign language, thus level of L2 acquisition, is empirically influenced by learners’ attitudes, speakers’ cultures or context of foreign language learning (Gholami, 2012; Matsumoto, 2012). These researchers tell the importance of teacher’s role and L2 environment. Teacher’s role can represent how to create good atmosphere in class and generate a help to bridge out-class learning and in-class learning. The learning beyond the class in fact cannot be apart from L2 environment. In other words, it is teachers’ teaching skills that can create a hub link between classroom learning and out-of-class learning, and how learners utilize learning beyond the classroom for learners’ L2 exposure, which presumably plays a determining role. This study proposes two general research questions each of which entails three specific research questions, as follows.

1) Is any there effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ teaching skills?
   a. Is any there effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ teaching preparation?
   b. Is any there effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ teaching action?
   c. Is any there effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ teaching action?
2) Is any there effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ beliefs about EFL learning beyond the classroom?
   a. Is there any there effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ beliefs about the settings of L2 learning beyond the classroom?
   b. Is there any effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ beliefs about process of the out-class learning?
   c. Is there any effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ beliefs about atmosphere of the out-class learning?

**Literature review**

The definitions of teaching skill have been broadly explained by several L2 teaching experts or researchers. Some of them classified teaching skill into three different elements of teaching skills, i.e., knowledge, decision-making, and action (Kyriacou, 2007); knowledge how, which includes pedagogical knowledge (teaching itself—teaching methods, classroom management, and evaluation) and practical knowledge (to the one that is generated from L2 teachers who get more experiences in the real practices in L2 teaching and learning), in the terms of teachers education (Burns & Richards, 2009); teaching skill including: explaining and presenting new materials, providing practices, and testing (Ur, 1996); teaching skill including: 1) the nature of input, 2) the process of intake, and classroom interaction (Hedge, 2000); and three basic elements of the reflective decision-making model are to plan, to implement, and to evaluate Cooper (2011). In addition, various studies on teaching have been conducted, e.g. giving typical focus on how such skills are developed and displayed by beginning teachers and how beginning teachers differ from experienced teachers (Wragg, 2005) and what experienced teachers think about the skills they use in teaching (Day, 2004; Pollard et al., 2005).

The discussion on learning beyond the classroom includes the extended explanation of learner’s autonomous use of any opportunities related to their self-directed learning outside the class. Obviously, learning beyond the classroom refers to the mode of learning which some experts mentioned in a number of alternative terms, such as: out-of-class learning, out-of-school learning, after-school learning, extracurricular and extramural learning, non-formal and informal learning, self-instructed learning, non-instructed and naturalistic learning, independent learning, or self-directed learning (Benson, 2011). In relation to L2 acquisition, this mode of learning is apparently beneficial as Ellis (2008) asserts that L2 acquisition can happen most rapidly via a combination of formal instruction and exposure to the target language. Since this mode of learning meets the learner’s needs and preferences, it is believed very helpful to for learners to achieve better outcomes (Victori & Lockhart, 1995). There is a great amount of researches, supporting the effectiveness of out-class learning, i.e. some findings revealing that learners with better proficiency often admit their success to out-of-class learning (Benson 2011; Lamb & Reinders 2008; Ushioda 2001, Yorozu 2001, Wenden 2001, Lamb 2002; Victori & Lockhart, 1995; Pickard 1995); others show the important role of teachers’ advice on motivating students’
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Attempts to do out-of-class learning (Deepwell & Malik, 2008; Fagerlund, 2012; Inozu, Sahinkarakas, & Yumru, 2010). In terms of learners’ outside-of-class activities, other researchers find that after joining their teachers to use technological resources in class, students tend to use them for any activities of learning beyond the class (Lai, 2014; Lai & Gu, 2011). However, sometimes because of a lack of technological resources or ability to use them, some learners do not feel confident in engaging out-of-class learning (Gamble et al., 2012; McKinney, Vacca, Medvedeva, & Malak, 2004); that is why, some teachers still need knowledge or skills to help their students design or use effective technological resources, which finally can drive them for the out-of-class use (Carson & Mynard, 2012; Kop & Fournier, 2011; Reinders, 2010).

In the context of improving outcomes of L2 learning, the role of learning beyond the classroom has been very significant since it is closely related to utilizing exposure of target language. Exposure to target language is helpful for learners to achieve language tasks (Bialystok, 1981), as supported by many research findings such as Scarcella and Oxford (1992: 183) who shows that target language community provides information about on L2 registers and helps the development of proficiency for learners; and likewise, Rubin and Thompson (1994: 22 ) shows that target language discourse beyond the classroom offers learners appropriate use of language and the nature of conversation.

Non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) are not as strong as Native English speaking teachers (NESTs) in terms of linguistic knowledge, proficiency as well as teaching competence (Stern, 1983; McNeill, 1993; Milambiling, 1999; Samimy & Britt-Griffler, 1999). Besides, some researches show that NESTs are strong cultural resources, therefore they can efficiently teach L2 for learners of other language (e.g. Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Carless, 2006; Tajino & Tajino, 2000). However, as English learners in the world now has been dominated by multilingual speakers of English (Alptekein, 2002; Jenkins, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2006), the role of NNEST is getting very crucial in EFL teaching. Internet, technology and media have been widely creating different circumstances of English learning in anywhere regardless the countries where accessing authentic as well as meaningful exposure is difficult since English is used as a foreign language. Using English virtually in social media is now becoming a need for everybody across the state borders. This possibly gives changing faces of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in expanding circle contexts. What goes beyond the class really becomes potential opportunities for learners to enrich their learning environments as Richard (2015) predicts that nowadays there is a ‘growing range of opportunities and resources available to support out-of-class learning’. Further he says that out-of-class activities are beneficial for teachers since it they enable teachers to create learning opportunities that are difficult in the classroom; this consequently generate challenges as well as opportunities for teachers and learners, which may bring about different class situation. This different situation of learning unavoidably intrigues teachers to treat their students differently in the classroom in order that
they can put more effort in maximizing beyond-the-class learning to help improve the in-class achievements.

For the last 20 years, interest in investigating teacher’s cognition (teachers think, know, and believe) and its connection to classroom activities have been flourishing among the world of L2 teaching (Woods, 1996; Almarza, 1996; Borg, 2006). Those researches take the insights from the science of psychology arguing that understanding teacher’s cognition is central to the process of understanding teaching. Teacher’s belief which is latent has often been unconsciously used to make assumptions about learning activities (Farrell, 1999). Moreover, more researches on beliefs in relation to effective learning have has been previously done. Those researches show significance of belief about learning for teachers in-class activities to the success of language learners both inside and outside class (see Feiman-Nemser & Floden 1986; Richards, et al. 1991; Freeman 1992; Johnson 1992; Yang, 1999; Farrell, Thomas S.C. & Bennis, K., 2013; Zare-ee, A & Salami, M. 2014; Lamb, 2008; Lai, Wang, & Lei, 2012).

Method

Participants

The participants were non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) from Indonesian Senior High Schools (or in Indonesian terms ‘SMA’) from different L2 environments, namely: 1) urban-region exposure environment schools (n=40), and 2) rural-region exposure environment schools (n=40). The consideration of labeling ‘rural-region exposure’ environment and ‘urban-region exposure’ environment was based on the availability of internet access in the surrounding schools, facilities and infrastructure in schools or the neighboring society, and human resources of the schools (i.e. teacher qualification). The sampling technique used in the current study was census sampling.

Instruments

There were two instruments used in the present study, i.e. 1) observation scaling checklist, and 2) questionnaire. The observation scaling checklist was used for assessing the respondents’ performance when they were teaching in class. Each respondent was assessed by the researchers’ team using the checklist in which four scales (1 - 4) were used as the options of performance in each aspect of teaching. It was designed by firstly developing concept of teaching skills (Cooper, 2011; Burns & Richards, 2009; Hedge, 2008; Ur, 1996); then divide the concept into three aspects, i.e. teaching preparation, teaching action and teaching evaluation (see table 1). Each aspect was translated into items which were the statements for assessing the respondents’ teaching performance (see appendix 2). Meanwhile, the questionnaire was designed by developing concepts of EFL learning beyond the classroom (Benson & Reinders, 2011; Ellis, 2008; Victori & Lockhart, 1995; Nunan & Richards, 2015). The concept was then broken down into three aspects, i.e. the setting, process and atmosphere (see table 1). Based on the aspects, items of statements were constructed. The questionnaire was set up by using four-point Likert scales (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree).

The questionnaire was piloted to other 20 pre-service teachers in the faculty of teacher
training and education, Mulawarman University. The purpose of the piloting was to have comments on the unclear or ambiguous items from the participants of the pilot groups. On the basis of the results of the piloting, the revisions were done for the betterment of the questionnaire before it was used in the real field.

In addition, internal consistency of each concept in the questionnaire and observation scaling checklist were examined by using Cronbach Alpha (see Cronbach Alpha indices per concept in table 1).

Table 1 Concepts of variables of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching skills</th>
<th>EFL learning beyond the classroom</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aspects</td>
<td>Cronbach Alpha for internal consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>0.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>0.964</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Action</td>
<td>0.928</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>0.761</td>
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</table>

Data Collection

The data were collected by distributing questionnaires to the respondents. The process of fulfilling the questionnaire was tightly done under the supervision of enumerators to ensure the respondents’ seriousness in answering the questions and to avoid misinterpretation.

Data Analysis

Quantitative analysis was used in this study. Descriptive statistical procedure (i.e. to know the minimum and maximum score and the mean of the items answered in the questionnaire and
observational scaling checklist) and a series of independent sample t-test was then used.

**Results**

*Descriptive Data Analysis*

Before running the t-test, the data were checked for the normality by defining their skewness. As shown in table 2 and 3, the skewness of the data for urban NNESTs’ teaching skills is 0.171, while the standard error of skewness is 0.374; thus the skewness ratio should be 0.171/0.374 = 0.457 (the data were normal); in the mean time, the skewness of the data for rural one is -0.029, the standard error of skewness is 0.374; thus the skewness ratio should be –0.029/0.374 = 0.077 (the data were normal).

**Table 2 The skewness of urban NNESTs’ teaching skills**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std var</th>
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<td>statistic</td>
<td>Std error</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching skills_Urban NNESTs</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>42.00</td>
<td>35.5500</td>
<td>4.24838</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>.374</td>
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<td>Valid N listwise</td>
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**Table 3 The skewness of urban NNESTs’ teaching skills**

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<th>Minimum</th>
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<td>statistic</td>
<td>Std error</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching skills_Rural NNESTs</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>24.9500</td>
<td>2.42794</td>
<td>-.029</td>
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As seen in table 4 and 5, the skewness of the data for urban NNESTs’ beliefs about learning beyond the class is 0.272, while the standard error of skewness is 0.374; thus the skewness ratio should be 0.272/0.374 = 0.727 (the data were normal); in the mean time, the skewness of the data for rural one is 0.159, the standard error of skewness is 0.374; thus the skewness ratio should be 0.159/0.374 = 0.425 (the data were normal).

**Table 4 The skewness of urban NNESTs’ teaching skills**

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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 The skewness of urban NNESTs’ teaching skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief about outclass learning Urban NNESTs</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief about outclass learning Rural NNESTs</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std Deviation</td>
<td>Std Error</td>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows descriptive statistics for both NNESTs’ teaching skills and beliefs about EFL learning beyond the class. According to the table, on average means of all aspects in teaching skills of NNESTs in urban region schools was higher than those in rural region schools. Similarly, NNESTs’ beliefs about EFL learning beyond the class in urban region schools was higher than those in the rural region schools.

Table 6 Results of descriptive statistics on both NNESTs’ teaching skills and beliefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching skills</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>4.15000</td>
<td>2.8500</td>
<td>0.76962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>22.3750</td>
<td>16.4250</td>
<td>3.97871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>7.1750</td>
<td>5.6750</td>
<td>1.37538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34.5500</td>
<td>24.9500</td>
<td>4.24838</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Effect of L2 Exposure Environment  
Susilo, Suhatmady, Sunggingwati, Farisa & Ilmi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs about learners’ out-class learning</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>7.9750</td>
<td>5.1500</td>
<td>1.20868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere</td>
<td>7.3000</td>
<td>4.9250</td>
<td>1.32433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36.9250</td>
<td>29.4250</td>
<td>6.17434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The effect of L2 exposure environment on NNESTs’ teaching skills and beliefs about L2 learning beyond the class

Table 7 reveals the summary of independent t-test conducted to see whether teaching skills and beliefs about L2 learning beyond the class were influenced by the L2 exposure environment.

**Table 7 Summary of independent t-test results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables: L2 exposure environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs about learners’ out-class learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent t-test was conducted to explore the effect of L2 exposure environment on each aspect of teaching skills performed by the NNESTs.

**Table 8 Descriptive statistics of NNESTs’ teaching preparation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex_En</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result shows as follows. As shown in figure 8 and 9, the urban school NNESTs’ teaching preparation ($M = 4.1500, SD = .76962$) and the rural school NNESTs’ teaching preparation ($M = 2.8500, SD = 0.89299$) differ significantly, $t (78)= 6.974$, $p=0.000$

Table 9 The result of independent-samples t-test of the effect of L2 exposure environment on NNESTs’ teaching preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex_En</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.1500</td>
<td>.76962</td>
<td>.12169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.8500</td>
<td>.89299</td>
<td>.14119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in figure 10 and 11, the urban school NNESTs’ teaching action ($M = 22.3750, SD = 3.97871$) and the rural school NNESTs’ teaching action ($M = 16.4250, SD = 1.43021$) differ significantly, $t (78)= 8.901$, $p=0.000$

Table 10 Descriptive statistics of NNESTs’ teaching action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex_En</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22.3750</td>
<td>3.97871</td>
<td>1.67109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16.4250</td>
<td>1.43021</td>
<td>1.67121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in figure 12 and 13, the urban school NNESTs’ teaching evaluation \((M = 7.1750, SD = 1.37538)\) and the rural school NNESTs’ teaching evaluation \((M = 5.6750, SD = 01.85897)\) differ significantly, \(t\) (78)= 4.102, \(p=0.000\)

Table 8 *Descriptive statistics of NNESTs’ teaching evaluation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex_En</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T_eva</td>
<td>Urban School</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.1750</td>
<td>1.37538</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly, independent t-test was conducted to explore the effect of L2 exposure environment on each aspect of beliefs about EFL learning beyond the classroom possessed by the NNESTs.

The result shows as follows. As shown in figure 14 and 15, the urban school NNESTs’ beliefs on setting aspect \( (M = 4.15000, SD = .76962) \) and the rural school NNESTs’ beliefs on setting aspect \( (M = 2.8500, SD = 0.89299) \) differ significantly, \( t (78) = 9.428, p=0.000 \)

### Table 9 The result of independent-samples t-test of the effect of L2 exposure environment on NNESTs’ teaching evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene’s test for Equality of variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T_eva</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>2.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>4.102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 14 Descriptive statistics of NNESTs’ beliefs about setting of EFL Learning Beyond the classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex_En</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be_set</td>
<td>Urban School</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.9750</td>
<td>1.20868</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15 The result of independent-samples t-test of the effect of L2 exposure environment on NNESTs’ Beliefs about setting of EFL learning beyond the classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Be_set</th>
<th>Equal variances assumed</th>
<th>Equal variances not assumed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Levene’s test for Equality of variances</td>
<td>t-test for Equality of Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be_set</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>4.468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be_set</td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>9.428</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in figure 16 and 17, the urban school NNESTs’ beliefs on process of EFL Learning Beyond the classroom \((M = 22.3750, SD = 3.97871)\) and the rural school NNESTs’ beliefs on process of EFL Learning Beyond the classroom \((M = 16.4250, SD = 1.43021)\) differ significantly, \(t(78) = 2.618, p = 0.000\)

Table 15 Descriptive statistics of NNESTs’ beliefs about process of EFL Learning Beyond the classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex_En</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be_pro</td>
<td>Urban School</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>21.6500</td>
<td>4.09221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17 The result of independent-samples t-test of the effect of L2 exposure environment on NNESTs’ Beliefs about process of EFL learning beyond the classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Equal variances assumed</th>
<th>Equal variances not assumed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene’s test for Equality of variances</td>
<td>F: 2.664, Sig: .107</td>
<td>F: 2.618, Sig: .107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.618, 77.444, .011, 2.30000, .87859, .55066, 4.04934</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in figure 18 and 19, the urban school NNESTs’ beliefs on atmosphere of EFL Learning Beyond the classroom ($M = 7.1750$, $SD = 1.37538$) and the rural school NNESTs’ beliefs on atmosphere of EFL Learning Beyond the classroom ($M = 5.6750$, $SD = 01.85897$) differ significantly, $t (78)= 8.384$, $p=0.000$

Table 18 Descriptive statistics of NNESTs’ beliefs about atmosphere of EFL Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex_En</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be_at</td>
<td>Urban School</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.3000</td>
<td>1.32433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural School</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.9250</td>
<td>1.20655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In terms of all aspect of teaching skills, the result of all aspect shows that there is a significant difference between all aspects of teaching skills of NNESTs from the urban region schools ($M = 34.55$, $SD = 4.24$) and those of NNESTs from rural region schools, ($M = 24.95$, $SD = 2.42$), $t (78) = 12.408$, $p=0.000$. In other words, there was a significant effect of L2 exposure environments on NNESTs’ teaching skills (see figure 20 and 21).
Table 21 The result of independent-samples t-test of the effect of L2 exposure environment on NNESTs’ teaching preparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ex_En</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief</td>
<td>Urban School</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36.9250</td>
<td>6.17434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural School</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29.4250</td>
<td>4.56793</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Effect of L2 Exposure Environment  

Susilo, Suhatmady, Sunggingwati, Farisa & Ilmi

Table 23 The result of independent-samples t-test of the effect of L2 exposure environment on NNESTs’ Beliefs about EFL learning beyond the classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief</th>
<th>Equal variance assumed</th>
<th>Equal variance not assumed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene’s test for Equality of variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.81</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>6.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.85</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>6.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>910</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

The present study investigates the effect of L2 exposure environments, i.e. how easy the NNESTs can get access on authentic materials, English TV Channels, magazine or social media internet access in the regions where the NNESTs under study are teaching, on their teaching skills and beliefs about EFL learning beyond the classroom. The findings of this study can help us indicate NNESTs’ all aspects of teaching, namely teaching preparation, teaching action and teaching evaluation, are affected by the regions where they are teaching, and so are their beliefs about all aspects of EFL learning beyond the classroom, i.e. the setting, process and atmosphere. In other words, there are significant effect of L2 exposure environment on NNESTs’ teaching.
skills and beliefs about EFL learning beyond the class. This finding implies the importance of out-class L2 exposure in helping L2 acquisition in teaching L2 for speakers of other language. This tenet has been in line with that argued by the results of some previous research studies (e.g. Flege, MacKay, & Piske, 2002; Jia et al., 2002; Benson 2011; Lamb & Reinders 2008; Ushioda 2001, Yorozu 2001, Wenden 2001, Lamb 2002; Victorri & Lockhart, 1995; Pickard 1995; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992; Rubin and Thompson, 1994) which highlight the help of both beyond the classroom and classroom exposure in the process of achieving better target language task.

Conclusion

Such findings draw a conclusion that different L2 exposure environments in the expanding circle context of EFL bring about significant difference of NNESTs’ teaching skills and beliefs about EFL learning beyond the classroom. This conclusion suggests critical information that being EFL teachers and learners in urban and rural schools in the era of globalization principally illustrates a different condition where the EFL exposure environment follows the consequence of the presence of technology and media which most rapidly happen in more developed regions. Making more developed regions then is becoming an urgent need for the rapid changing of the face of EFL teaching and learning in nowadays-schools. Learning beyond the class should get more spaces in the context of ELT in the expanding circle countries since using English in real life as it happens in the inner or outer circle countries is found limited or even not at all happens. Thus, it is not the face-to-face speaking but the virtual use of communication which can be done by nonnative English learners in everywhere of more developed region schools.

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355–372
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Report-23) (pp. 93-125). Honolulu: University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center

APPENDIX A
THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF NNESTs’ BELIEFS ABOUT EFL LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM
* Check (v) one of the columns after the statements under provided options (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree) as describing your real agreements!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about the settings of EFL learning beyond the classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My students should get more informal English lessons after school, e.g. extra-curricular activities, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My students should get an easy access of English informal lessons, e.g. English course, private course, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My students should be familiar with any social media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about Process of out-class learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The students should be optimistic in adapting their feelings to speak English outside the class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The students should dare to prefer speaking English rather than speaking local language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Speaking English outside the class gives my students opportunities to increase the achievements in class.

Speaking English outside the class gives my students habits so that it can stimulate their class participation in L2 speaking.

Having more access to speaking English outside the class gives my students’ modeling for L2 practices.

Students’ personal factors such as introversion, nervousness, etc., are factors which hinders them to be active in out-of-class L2 practices.

Uninteresting condition or situation are factors which hinders them to be active in out-of-class L2 practices.

Surrounding people’s negative perception about English are factor which hinders learners to start learning L2 outside the class.

Lack of media access to do English practices in class are factor which hinders learners to start learning L2 outside the class.

Beliefs about atmosphere of the out-class learning

Conversation club is the most possible alternative for out-of-class activities.

Additional class meeting hours is the most possible alternative for out-of-class activities.

Utilizing English social media is the most possible alternative for out-of-class activities.

APPENDIX B

OBSERVATION SCALING CHECKLIST FOR NNESTs’ TEACHING SKILLS

* Check (v) one of the columns after the statements under provided options (1–2–3–4) as describing your real assessment!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching preparation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Before teaching, the teacher designs a lesson plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Before teaching, the teacher prepares teaching media, such as interactive media, internet, or real objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching actions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying a good classroom management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>When the teacher teaches, she/he usually arrange the class chairs as: U-shaped arrangement or In-group arrangement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To enhance students’ social skills in their</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
classroom learning activities, the way the teacher usually takes are: by giving collective-answered questions, making a group discussion, and making a pair discussion

*The way the teacher motivated his/her students to make out-of-class English-speaking practices is by:*

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>giving the students English reading materials to read at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>giving the students assignments to do practice speaking with peers at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>establishing conversation clubs with peers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>giving the students assignments to do practice speaking with expatriates who are native English speakers at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The teacher attempted to make in-class L2 acquisition happens is by:*

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>using English all the time as the medium of instruction in class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>obligating the students to speak English when they interact with their peers or ask questions to the teacher in the classroom during the teaching and learning process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>giving simple commands in English during the teaching and learning process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teaching Evaluation*

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>For evaluation the teacher asked my student to work with open-ended problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
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The Effectiveness of Using Films in the EFL Classroom: A Case Study Conducted at an International University in Thailand

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Abstract
Films have always been seen as an entertainment and its power since birth has had strong impact on people’s lives. Today, films are no longer thought of as simple entertainment media but rather educational tools as well. Globalization has contributed greatly to the availability of English-language films and that enriches the source of English learning material dramatically. This research paper explores the effect of using English films in English as foreign language (EFL) classroom. It reveals the effect on developing students’ motivation, comprehension as well as communication skills. The study was carried out on a sample of two groups: an experimental group using films alongside their course book and a control group taught in a conventional way. The participants were classified as pre-intermediate level. The findings of this study have shown that those in the experimental group significantly outperformed their control group counterpart in terms of motivation and language production. Also, this study offers pedagogical implications for EFL teachers to use films in their classrooms to enhance students’ listening and speaking skills which as a result improved students’ learning.

Keywords: communication skills, EFL learners, films, motivation

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Introduction

According to Thanassoulas (2002) the teaching methods in EFL countries still follow the traditional one which causes so much passiveness and boredom among the students. That is part of the reason why students are weak in their use of the target language in conversation especially where English is taught as a second or foreign language. Textbooks and teachers’ talk are the only dominant sources of information and knowledge. This is the cause of reticence in most of the learners when they are in communication situations or in interaction with other students in lessons.

According to (Ismaili, 2013) movies are an enjoyable source of entertainment and language acquisition. As an authentically rich source, feature movies have been being mostly used for listening speaking comprehension courses. Vocabulary could also be taught and learned with the aid of sounds and images, which provides clear context for the students’ understanding.

Currently, due to available facilities, time limitation, and the impact of the traditional teaching method, films are rarely exploited in classrooms. In many universities, only some individual teachers use films in their classrooms. Other than the rather fixed and strict curriculum in various universities, the students seek for more entertainment while learning in language centers, where word games and music are often employed to create an enjoyable atmosphere in class. Besides, the use of films was not official in the curriculum but rather based on individual teacher’s interest (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996).

In the context where the researcher is teaching, Pearson Longman’s “Speakout” is being used as the main textbook. The textbook contains a CD with sample conversation. There are idioms and conversation exercises in for students. However, students are quite passive and they are just practicing rote learning by memorizing the pattern of conversation from the textbook for their role-play activities. From the researcher’s preliminary observation, they are not motivated to naturally involve in conversation activities as required by the course objectives. As Sherman (2003) states that authenticity brings excitement, and also films are considered as another kind of text, strengthened by its “visual dimension” (Voller & Widdows, 1993), films should be used as one of the needed materials for teaching English. Furthermore, the use of films was not implemented as a part of any courses’ syllabus nor a particular lesson at the context where the researcher is teaching. Instead, textbooks with drills were popularly employed for both lessons and self-studying (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996).

From the situation stated above, films are therefore being used to enhance students’ motivation in order to improve their oral production.

Research Questions the main question should be highlighted in the abstract

1. What are students’ attitudes towards using films in the conversation classroom?
2. What are teachers’ attitudes towards using films in the conversation classroom?
3. Does watching films enhance students’ motivation to improve oral production?

Literature Review

Learning would need motivation, especially in language teaching and learning. For decades, hundreds-or even thousands of linguists, researchers, and instructors have been
searching for the answer of how to motivate the language learners. There have been many books and articles presenting the findings of those scientists. As Wlodkowski (1978, p.12) states in his book, motivation is a process “that can arouse and instigate behavior, give direction and purpose to behavior”. Dornyei (2001, as cited in Thanasoulas, 2002) explains “teaching skills to motivating learners should be seen as central to teaching effectiveness”. (p.116) However motivating is not an easy task for any teacher to accomplish. Teacher’s books and other types of resources still cannot provide sufficient and efficient approaches to the teachers to motivate their students. Besides, Thanasoulas (2002) agree that even though there are a lot of education-oriented publications which provide taxonomies of classroom-specific motives, they do not completely offer an efficient guide to teachers or classroom researchers. He also believed that motivation is related to teacher-learner relation and group processes. For the teacher-learner relation, individuals or institutions appeal to the commitment and interest of others when group nprocesses focuses on a group of people and group activities.

Though the teacher can inspire the learner to study and practice the target language, many researchers believe that motivation ought to come from the learners themselves. Caroll (1981, as cited in Madrid et al. 1993) says that “language learning begins when the learner feels motivated to communicate something to someone”. (p.180). Bialystok (1978, cited in Madrid et al. 1993, p.18) supports this when he said, “learner will seek language exposure only if they feel motivated”. Lambert (1974, cited by Madrid et al. 1993, p.18) was even more explicit when he pointed out the link among the learners’ attitudes, orientation, motivation and proficiency in second language learning. With these findings and their own research, Madrid (1993, p.20) concluded that attitudes and motivation “are the most important determinant factors in the learning or acquisition of second language”.

Wlodkowski(1978) also believes that motivation should be a factor the learners possess themselves as “the teachers can’t directly motivate the students”. He even had a stronger statement as “no one motivates anyone” because “just as we are responsible for our own feelings, we are responsible for our motivation” (p.45)

Moreover, culture has long been part of English teaching and learning. Brown (1994) describe: “A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of language. The two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture”. (p.12) Movies, as a reflection of the Western world and developed by the westerners, contain numerous cultural features that the Asian learners should be aware of. Not only the behaviors, attitudes but also the language does show the cultural features. If the Asian learners, the Thais particularly, do not understand these differences in culture, they would find it difficult to catch the meanings in the movies they watch, or in conversations with the western foreigners in real life. Bada (2000) also adds that “the need for cultural literacy in ELT arises mainly from the fact that most language learners, not exposed to cultural elements of the society in question, seem to encounter significant hardship in communicating meaning to native speakers”. (p.12)

The awareness of culture would help the Thai students comprehend the meanings contained in the conversations in the feature films. This may result in their ability to use
the language properly when they communicate with foreigners in daily talks because now they may understand: The totality of a way of life shared by a group of people liked by common and distinctive characteristics, beliefs and circumstances as well asthe attitudes and behavior of a community of people who share inclination, interests and goals. (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2004, p. 12)

Films have been intensively studied for decades by researchers around the globe because of their high value of context and authenticity. Sherman (2003) highlighted the importance of authenticity as authenticity itself an inducement- there is a special thrill in being able to understand and enjoy real thing. They can bring the inspiration that no other types of learning materials can to the language learners.

According to Lonergan (1984) movies in particular and film presentations “will be intrinsically interesting to language learners. The learners will want to watch, even if comprehension is limited” because the language learners seem to always have a strong desire to watch films like “normal consumers” (Sherman, 2003). The design of movies, like literature, attracts much of the students’ attention because they contain a lot of cultural values and the students can also see the behaviors in those cultural contexts (Stemplkeski and Tomalin, 2001). These contexts might be similar to those of the students in their daily life and that might inspire the learners to discuss more as they understand the contexts better by the aid of sounds and images and their own knowledge as well. Also, Lonergan, (1984) pointes out the appeal of films:

The speakers in dialogues can be seen and heard; other participants in the situation can be seen. The language learner can readily see the ages of the participants; their sex; perhaps their relationships one to another; their dress, social status, and what they are doing; and perhaps their mood or feelings. Further, paralinguistic information, such as facial expressions or hand gestures, is available to accompany aural clues of intonation.
Similarly, the setting of the communication is clear, the language learner can see on the screen where the action is taking place. This information may help to clarify whether the situation is very formal, or perhaps informal. (p.4)

With these advantages of films, the learner will be motivated to communicate with their partners in debates, helping them to learn from each other. More importantly, they learn “non-verbal communication, the types of exclamation and filling expressions that are used, how people initiate and sustain a conversational exchange and how they negotiate meaning” (Rivers, 1994 as cited in Eken, 2003, p. 13).

The students often need textbooks when they learn language but it does not necessarily mean textbooks are their only choice. Films are also texts because they “tell stories. They have characters. They contain messages. They can be used in the classroom just like any other text, but their visual dimension makes them richer than most other text types” (Voller & Widdows 1993, p. 342). But not only do images work their magic, sounds are also
considered as the learners can listen to “all kinds of voices in all kinds of situations, with full contextual back-up”. In addition, the students will have chances to access “a vast up-to-date linguistic resource accent, vocabulary, grammar and syntax, and all kinds of disclosure, which shows us language in most of its uses and context- something neither course book nor classroom can do” (Sherman 2003, p.2).

Though films have many benefits to the learners many teachers so far have still approached films as a source of teaching materials with caution. Firstly, there is a part of the learners who used to be “textbook-oriented and test-driven” and they tend to “focus on form rather than meaning and accuracy rather than communication” (King, 2002, p. 14). Secondly, it is because using films is a “new experience” to some teachers and may cause potential problems. There may be so many worries for the teachers if any technical problems suddenly arise. For example, if the buttons do not show functions or the cables are broken somewhere. “This insecurity can lead teachers to doing nothing else with the film films than switching them on, letting the class watch them, and then turning them off” (Lonergan, 1984, p.6). Lonergan also cited other researchers’ warnings on professional terms such as unfocused viewing (Duncan 1987 cited in Voller & Widdows, 1993, p.342), the lack of knowledge of the language and culture concerned when watching (Blakely 1984, cited in Voller & Widdows) or too much emphasis on the verbal component (Visscher, 1990, as cited in Voller & Widdows 1993).

Feature films, with their content of stories are a kind of literature with the aid of visual dimension. Besides, feature movies “are more intrinsically motivating” as they carry “a story that wants to be told rather than a lesson that needs to be taught” (Ward & Lepeintre 1996 as cited in King 2002). Not like other types of films such as documentary, films for educational purposes and so on, feature movies embed “colloquial English in real life contexts rather than artificial situations, an opportunity of being exposed to different native speaker voices, slang, reduced speeches, stress, accents, and dialects” (King, 2002, p.19).

Films can “provide exposures to the real language uttered in authentic settings” (Stempleski 1992 cited in Kusmarasdyati, 2004). They are not designed for the purpose of second-language education and thus are authentically rich. Films then seem to be good choice of teaching material since they provide “stream of speeches, such as reduced sounds or phrases and stammering, which occur in spontaneous discourse common in everyday speech” (McCoy 2009, p.18).

Lee (1995) supported the above definition by saying “the text is usually regarded as textually authentic if it is not written for teaching purposes, but for real life communication purpose”. Van Lier (1996 as cited in Pietila, 2009, p112) even related the authenticity in the classroom to the process of “self-actualization, intrinsic motivation, respect and moral integrity in interpersonal relations”. Finally, Widdowson (1990 cited in Pietila, 2009) believed that language learners, if need to be able to have natural communication, should be “involved in natural communicative
language use in the classroom whereupon the classroom has to be authentic”. This is also
the nature and the top target of language learning (Kaikkonen, 1998 as cited in Pietila, 2009,
p.23 ).

Authentic materials also can lead to motivation in learning among the students, one of
the main factors to determine the quality of the students’ learning (Whitaker 1995, p. 160).
Melvin and Stout (1987, p.55) say that the lessons will hold much of the students’ interest
once the authentic materials are provided and the students know what they use that language
for in the future.

During conversation, each speaker would have to clarify the meanings his/her co-
speaker(s) want to imply. Through that process of clarification, the speaker would do his/her
best to overcome the difficulties of confusion or misunderstanding and learn the target
language. Each student has his/her own strategy to overcome those difficulties which Rubin
(2008), defined as communication strategies. According to her research, Rubin saw that
communication strategies is getting meaning across or clarifying what the speaker
intended. Communication strategies are used by speakers when faced with some
difficulties due to the fact that their communication ends outrun their communication
means or when confronted with misunderstanding by a co-speaker.

Stern (1992 as cited in Hismanoglu, 2000) adds to the term as he said:
“Communication strategies, such as circumlocution, gesturing, paraphrase, or asking for
repetition and explanation are techniques used by learners to keep a conversation going.
The purpose of using these techniques is to avoid interrupting the flow of communication”.

Supporting this view, Dornyei and Thurell (1994) found that the second-language
learners tend to use communication strategies which included message adjustment or
avoidance, paraphrasing, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for
clarification, interpretive summary, checking, use of fillers hesitation devices” for their
informal everyday conversation.

For turn signal, Duncan (1974) suggests a set of cues which includes: intonation,
drawl, body motion, socio-centric sequences such as but uh, or something, you know, pitch
or loudness accompanied with socio-centric sequences, and syntax. Other researchers added
in more clues of turn signals such as Jefferson (in Orestrom 1983 as cited in Kato, 2000) who
found that a silent pause after a grammatically complete utterance also works as a turn signal,
Orestrom (1983 as cited in Kato, 2000) with the finding of a question which is generally
followed by some responses and Cook (1989) when he found that eye contact also signal
turn-taking.

Feature movies or films contain numerous conversations and the actors and actresses
used conversation strategies to demonstrate their meaning at best. When the language
students watch films, they will not only learn the language but will also watch how the
language is performed in specific contexts. It will also motivate students to achieve the course’s objectives.
However, though turn-taking is one of the basic mechanisms in conversations to promote and maintain talk (Kato, 2000; Coulthard, 1985), the speakers would have turn-taking differently due to different rules in their own cultures. Like other Asian countries, the Thais are strongly aware of face-saving and take it as top priority in conversation, not conversation-saving as the Westerners do (Kato, 2000). That explains why the Asian second-language learners often fall silent when they should take turn to continue the conversation or to change the topic when it needs (Kato, 2000). Because of the particular and distinguished rules in cultures make the foreign learners, especially the Asian learners, feel hard to follow the procedures of turn-taking such as entering and leaving conversation, taking turn without being rude and changing the topic (Cook 1989).

Eryilmaz and Dam (2005) emphasize that the teachers should “raise the learner’ awareness of non-verbal communication in order to improve their use of natural language, increase confidence and fluency and help to avoid intercultural misunderstanding” because “non-verbal communication is a system consisting a range of features often used together to aid expression” (p.43). Therefore, “body-language (particularly facial expressions and gestures), eye contact, proximity and posture are probably those which learners most need to be aware of in terms of conveying meaning, avoiding misunderstandings and fitting in with the target culture.

Although students spend more than a quarter of each day engaged with various forms of media, and television in particular (Rideout, Roberts & Foehr, 2005), research indicates that mere exposure is not sufficient for students to acquire significant visual or media literacy (Messaris, 2001). Rather, explicit instruction is required to equip young people with the critical discrimination skills they need. Film is a form of visual media, and its optimal use can strengthen the visual material. This includes providing visual demonstrations or evidence, dramatizing events and concepts, and appealing to the emotions. Educational video with instructional strategies and cognitive modeling traits can engage students in better comprehension (Lin, 2003).

Hassen Kabooha(2016) has conducted a study on the use of film in the EFL classroom in Saudi Arabia. EFL teachers and their students were interviewed about their perceptions on using films and how they perceived films affected the language skills. The result showed that both teachers and students were positive about using films in language classroom. Besides, students reported that their vocabulary were widened considerably due to watching films. Contrastingly, the study’s findings showed that using films in classroom would not be beneficial for the students if the instructors did not give them the appropriate learning activities to go with the film (pp. 248-57).

**Participants**

The participants of the study were third year Thai undergraduate students, between the ages of 19 - 22. The total sample of participants consisted of 90 students. Their level of proficiency is pre-intermediate. This sample was divided into two groups: an experimental group exposed to films while the control group was taught in a conventional way. The study was carried out in the academic year 2015. Also, to get teachers’ attitudes in using films in the classroom, four ELT teachers participated in this study. For the purpose of this study 45
students were in the experiment group and another 45 in the control group. Moreover, 50 ESL teachers responded to the questionnaire.

**Methodology and Data Analysis**

In order to answer the research questions, two types of data were collected. The first is the 21 items questionnaire data for eliciting students and teachers’ attitudes on using films in the classroom and another is the conversation role play activities. Empirical evidence derived from Wilkins' (1976) research and theories proved that role-play is an effective technique to animate the teaching and learning atmosphere, arouse the interests of learners, and make the language acquisition impressive. The role-play activities were taken from the exercises provided in the textbook itself.

The teacher response questionnaire was carried out by contacting the teachers by email, which included a link to the Internet survey. The age and gender of the respondent were the two first background questions. 40 out of the total 50 respondents (96%) were female and 2 (4%) were male. 8 (16%) of the respondents were under 28 years old, 11 (22%) were aged 30-35, 18 (36%) were aged 36-40, 9 (18%) were aged 40-50 and 3 (6%) were aged 50 or older. The next background question was about the teachers’ experience as English teacher. 5 (10%) of the respondents had worked as English teachers for less than a year or one year. 7 (14%) of the respondents had worked as English teachers for 1-3 years. 6 (12%) had worked as teachers for 4-9 years. 9 (18%) had worked as teachers for 10-15 years. 11 (22%) had worked as teachers for 16-25 years and 12 (24%) had worked as teachers for over 25 years. Thus, the majority of the respondents were very experienced teachers in the field of EFL and ESL.

When asked whether the teacher has used some of the following materials on his or her EFL class: a full movie or vdo, parts of a movie or vdo, vdo clips or no audiovisual material. Only 10 of the 50 teachers had showed a complete movie in their class while less than had used some scenes of a movie and only five used clips of a movie. Finally, very few of the respondents answered that they had not used any audiovisual material concerning movies. There can be several of these reasons, for instance lack of knowledge, lack of ideas or lack of time. When asked about the effect of using vdo and films in their classroom, majority of the respondent answered that it motives the students and made it easy for them to teach this is in-line with Allan (1985) and Champoux (1999) who point out, movies diversify the curriculum and bring variety and entertainment into the classroom. Using movies also motivates the students and makes it easier for the teacher to handle even abstract themes and topics.

A Likert-type scale from 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=do not know, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree) was used for responding to their attitude of using films and Vdo in their classrooms. The respondents’ answers show that teachers’ attitudes towards using movies in teaching oral communication are rather positive. Majority of the respondents (38%) agreed that movies are a useful way of teaching oral communication. However, a majority (40%) gladly uses movies in teaching oral skills. These claims also showed that some teachers are unsure about using movies in teaching oral communication, since the amount of “do not know” answers was rather high. Perhaps the teachers feel that if they do not have much experience about using movies in teaching oral communication, they are not sure about their opinions either.
Students’ response using movies in the classroom was new and very pleasant experience for the students. They claim that they enjoyed the assigned activities in the classroom. Students were more motivated to see and hear real-life situations than to follow the activities in the graded book. Their impression is that movies also provide a relaxed atmosphere for students. Students claimed that using movie is a good way to improve English vocabulary and gives them more chances to practice English. Most of students said that they have learned new words (approximately 3-5) mainly because those words that have been repeated many times throughout the film.

Moreover, the post experimental questionnaires were designed using a 5-point Likert scale in order to elicit students’ motivation level from two experimental groups. An evaluation using the index of item-objective congruence (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977) by five experts were used, where content experts rate individual items on the degree to which they do or do not measure specific objectives listed by the test developer. The result of IOC from five experts is no less than 0.8. Also, Cronbach’s alpha was performed and the results of this questionnaire revealed very high reliability i.e. Cronbrach’s alpha =.87.

The data obtained from the post-experimental questionnaires were analyzed using the SPSS program. The data concerning students’ general background as well as their responses were calculated and presented in percentage. A five-point Likert-scale was used to measure the level of learning motivation. Such scale was used in the questionnaire to specify the level of the agreement or disagreement based on the following criteria: 3.68 – 5.00, High degree of Motivation, 2.34 – 3.67Moderate degree of Motivation, and 1.00 – 2.33 Low degree of Motivation. The students in experimental group had the high degree of motivation while those in the control group reported to be in the low degree of motivation.

Another research procedure is the use of the eight conversation quiz activities were given to both experimental and the controlled group at the end of each lesson according to the course syllabus which consisted of 16 weeks or one semester. The experimental group watched English films after reading the course book while the control group students were only using course book without any other input in a conventional way. After watching the film and classroom teaching activity, students were given quiz with vocabulary, speaking activities and role-play. Lastly, after each lesson both group had to perform a role play as required by the course.

The uses of colloquial expression while the students were performing role-plays were rated by three raters. The researcher and the two instructors examined and compared each other’s coding results and discussed the agreements as well as disagreements. The colloquial expressions were recorded and quantified. The percentage of the inter-rater was 89.93% which was quite high. Three native speakers at the university were consulted when certain language points were not able to be settled.

Findings and Discussion

The discussions of this study’s findings are presented according to the research questions. The findings of this study revealed that students in an experimental group were more motivated which helped to increase the efficiency of teaching and learning process.
1. What are students’ attitudes towards using films in the classroom?
Students, similar to the teachers, were equally positive about the use of films in the classroom when they answered a five-point Likert scales questions. Their impression was that films provided a relaxed atmosphere and motivated them to do the activities. 79% claim that films provided them with new vocabulary in context and give them more chance to be able to use them correctly. Majority preferred drama and action genre. When asked if movies enhanced their conversation skills, 82% answered positively with only 18% claiming that they do not see any positive effect of using films.

2. What are teachers’ attitudes towards using English films in classroom to enhance students’ conversation skills?
Overall, 97% of teachers participated in this study have a positive attitudes towards using films in the classroom to enhance students’ conversational skills according to the questionnaire data. They believed that using movies together with the course book material helped the students to actively participate more in the classroom speaking activities as compared to those in controlled group. However, around 3% found it time-consuming to let the students watch films in the class time. All teachers except one participated in this study wanted to include films as a part of syllabus designed to be used side by side with the course book. The reason one of the teachers didn’t want to include films is because of time constrain. Furthermore, most teachers claim that it is quite difficult to find suitable movies for ESL students and can rather be time consuming in the selection process.

3. Does watching films enhance students’ motivation to improve oral production?
From the researcher’s observation, together with other experts on both groups performance on their role play activities, the film-based experimental class was livelier and students produced more authentic speech which included wider range of colloquial expression. Their vocabulary was wider as compared to the students from controlled group. Moreover, their improvement of oral production can be seen in both role-plays and vocabulary activities. When asked about the development of their oral production skills, the questionnaire data revealed that more than 80% reported that films provided higher chance for learning real-life authentic language and as a result student get opportunity to practice real-life conversation. Questionnaire data also revealed that films helped improved their listening comprehension. Moreover, 95% mentioned that native speakers in the films made them more confident in speaking English. As supported by Eken (2003), an authentic and meaningful context creates effective EFL instruction and so the film’s rich context makes it a medium of enjoyment and engages students in real-life conversation pattern. Also, as compared to their controlled group counterpart, students in the experimental group used informal phrases and slang in their role play activities which mimics the real life situation. Besides, 92% of the students believed that their speaking was more spontaneous and films improved their vocabulary acquisition. This finding is in line with various scholars (Yuksel & Tanriverdi, 2009; Hsu, Hwang, Chang, & Chang, 2013) who state that incorporating films and movies in classroom can significantly enhance student’s vocabulary acquisition, retention, and recognition.
Pedagogical Implication and Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, some few pedagogical implications were emphasized. First and foremost, EFL teachers can use films in their classroom to enhance students’ listening and speaking comprehension. Secondly, students’ motivational level can be improved by incorporating films alongside their course book materials. Last but not the least, students’ vocabulary can be widened as well as they can learn to produce authentic language as used in context.

In conclusion, it is clear from the present study that using films in classroom can be one of the most powerful instructional media which help in developing students’ language skills. The participants, both students and teachers, have positive attitudes in incorporating films in their classrooms to improve English skills. Moreover, it is found that students are highly motivated which result in more in-class participation and teacher-student engagement. Also, colloquial expression provided students higher opportunity to learn vocabulary in context.

Limitation

First and foremost, limitation is the time implemented for this experiment was too short. Further implementation over a longer period of time may result in a different finding. Also, this study is limited to a particular international university in a Thai context. It should also be assessing to other context and other language levels to see the result.

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A Meta-synthesis of Qualitative Research about Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in Foreign Language Teaching

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Abstract
The previous research indicates that technology plays an important role and has a great potential in foreign language teaching. It is also obvious that mobile assisted language learning (MALL) considerably affects learning process among foreign language learners. Thus, this current study aims to present a meta-synthesis of qualitative research results on the MALL published in high stakes academic journals especially in the last decade. Through electronic databases, the results of studies about MALL were identified and included in the study. After collecting the studies about MALL, thematic analysis was used and some of the themes were identified and analyzed in accordance with the data, respectively. It is expected that this study will not only help the target groups such as learners, lecturers and language policy makers to broaden their knowledge about technology in Turkey, but also result in an increased awareness of MALL.

Keywords: Foreign language teaching, meta synthesis, mobile assisted language learning (MALL), qualitative research

Introduction
With the advancements and improvements in technology, internet use, computers and even mobile phones make English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching conducive to benefit from the available technologies. In other words, and in a broader scale, previous research results show that the implementation and adaptation of mobile phones into the foreign language classroom environment brings several opportunities for language learners and it makes the learning process more meaningful and by creating a platform to share and exchange the ideas among the language learners (Brown, 2001). The results of the recent studies on the subject illustrate that mobile assisted language learning gained more importance than ever before. Thus, this paper aims to focus on the meta-synthesis of the qualitative research about technology-based teaching in general, but more specifically on the mobile assisted language learning (MALL) and its effects on the foreign language learning process.

Another reason to carry out this study is that there is not so much research about this issue in Turkey to make conclusions and give suggestions and implications. Although there were many studies related to the use of technology in foreign language learning, its effects on the learning process and computer technology in EFL learning, available research about MALL and its effects on language learning is too limited to have a broader sense of understanding and insight. Therefore, the current study is also guided for presenting existing research about the subject and increasing awareness among the target groups such as learners, teachers and researchers in English language teaching (ELT).

Literature Review
As Kukulska-Hulme, Evans & Traxler (2005) point out, increasing use and availability of technology-based tools, mobile phones and extensive use of wireless devices make technology perspective change and using these technologies leads to enhanced student retention and thereby, success. As Gredds (2007) stated, mobile learning means learning anywhere and anytime, and there is not much research about this issue. Given that mobile learning is a key factor in foreign language learning process, this paper explores this issue and consists of the following sections: technology use among foreign language learners, mobile assisted language learning (MALL) and its effects on the foreign language learning process.

Technology in Second / Foreign Language Teaching
The use of technology for foreign language teaching and learning especially since the late 1960s has created new opportunities and possibilities and made teachers keep up with the latest technology in order to meet the expectations regarding classroom activities in the language learning process (Alsied & Pathan, 2013; Richards, 2014). Moreover, these new technological methods and tools have played a role in language learning and these can be outlined as computer-assisted, open and distance education and e-learning (Chen & Chung, 2008).

In relation to the reasons about technology integration into foreign language classrooms, another researcher named Lam (2000) states that technology gives a hint about the attitude of the students and makes them more alert and enthusiastic. Stepp-Greany (2012) in a study also mentioned that technology plays an important role for the instructional activities and enables learners to engage in language learning process. Technology integration is an inevitable part of education and should be put into use as for the continuing professional development of the
teachers (Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007). Many studies showed that the integration of technology into the classroom for instructional purposes is also based on the attitudes and beliefs of the teachers (Polly & Hannafin, 2010).

**Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and Its Effects on Foreign Language Teaching**

As for the definition of mobile learning, there is almost no consensus about whether it refers to either mobile technologies or the general concept of learner mobility (Kukulska-Hulme, 2009), but in general, MALL can be defined as the sub-area of m-learning, which refers to teaching and learning with the use of mobile devices. Many scholars identified and reviewed mobile learning, the use of mobile devices and its effective applications in a language learning environment (Chinnery, 2006; Godwin-Jones, 2011). However, Kukulska & Shield (2008) point out that “MALL differs from computer-assisted language learning in its use of personal, portable devices that enable new ways of learning, emphasizing continuity or spontaneity of access and interaction across different contexts of use” (p. 273). From that perspective, it can be said that MALL is different from computer assisted language learning (CALL) in that mobile learning is learner-led rather than teacher-led. Sharples (2006) provides an insight about mobile learning as a personalized activity which is flexible and compatible with the learner’s needs. There is a fact that videos or cassettes are already available in language learning classrooms, however MALL has a different and unique feature that is, mobility (Kukulska-Hulme & Bull, 2009). As mobile learning technologies become widespread, it is not surprising to see that the effectiveness of MALL and its developments are available in review of literature contributing to language learning process (e.g. Cheung & Hew, 2009; Hung & Zhang, 2012; Hwang & Tsai, 2011).

According to Thornton & Houser (2004), “mobile phones can help extend learner opportunities in meaningful ways” (p. 1). However, there is limited research about mobile technology and mobile learning in general. As the synthesis of mobile learning research demonstrates most of the studies reviewed related to MALL are experimental and small scale. This can create a sense about the validity issue in these papers over a period of time as the studies consists of just one concept or theory. In terms of literature, the primary attention is most probably on the learners’ vocabulary acquisition, listening and speaking skills and language learning in general.

The researchers, Ogata & Yano (2005) introduce the main features of mobile learning as permanency, accessibility, immediacy, interactivity, situating of instructional activities. In fact, it is not so easy to give just one definition of mobile learning, just as the definitions differ from each other, however it can be stated that the technology to assist mobility consists of any kind of mobile technological devices such as cell phones, smartphones, pads, pods, tablets and personal digital assistants (PDAs). This vagueness partly stems from the rapidly changing world and the new technologies and new mobile devices turning up quickly in the market, which makes it undefinable. However, taking the literature into account, some definitions are as follows:

Sharples, Milrad, Arnedillo-Sanchez & Vavoula (2009) define mobile learning as “the processes (both personal and public) of coming to know through exploration and conversation across multiple contexts among people and interactive technologies (p. 225). Similarly,
Kukulska, Sharples, Milrad, Arnedillo-Sanchez & Vavoula (2009) gave the definition of mobile learning as:

The mobile technology, while essential, is only one of the different types of technology and interaction employed. The learning experiences cross spatial, temporal and/or conceptual borders and involve interactions with fixed technologies as well as mobile devices. Weaving the interactions with mobile technology into the fabric of pedagogical interaction that develops around them becomes the focus of attention (p. 20).

For Hung & Zhang (2012), as mobile technologies provide numerous chances and opportunities such as flexibility and ubiquity, the researchers are trying to figure out how mobile learning affects the process of language learning. The first attempts to make sense of mobile learning effects on language date back to around 2009, in which mobile apps came to the fore for language learning developed by British Council closely followed by major ELT publishers producing stand-alone and course book related apps (Dudeney & Hockly, 2012). According to Thornton and Houser (2005), mobile devices can be effective for language learners and enable them to have rich, real-time, collaborative and conversational experiences. Kukulska-Hulme & Shield (2008) also offers that MALL supports collaborative practices in listening and speaking. Their study showed two kinds of approaches to MALL: content-related and design-related, which is still dominant in the literature.

Mobile learning does not mean just learning by mobile phones, it covers a wide range of devices thorough portable, Wi-Fi enabled and handheld ones such as smartphones, pads, pods, tablets and personal digital assistants (PDAs). Research in the literature generally focuses on the following aspects of mobile learning and MALL in the field of ELT.

- The effects of mobile technology use in foreign and second language learning/acquisition
- The perceptions/views of learners and teachers about the use of technology and mobile learning and MALL
- Mobile technology in language learning
- The impacts of technology use/mobile use on the acquisition of language skills (vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing)

A great number of studies show that learners have positive attitudes towards the use of mobile technologies about the language learning process, whether it be the second or foreign language. Hockly (2013), for instance, referred to a research study by the British Council about a larger scale of app-based mobile learning projects in developing countries such as Sudan and China. In relation to this, Chang and Hsu (2011) showed in their study the intentions and attitudes towards the use of mobile technologies for language learning which is not independent from CALL and seen as a part of MALL. Taj, Ali, Sipra & Ahmad (2017) studied the effect of technology enhanced language learning on vocabulary acquisition of EFL learners and found out that vocabulary learning activities presented through PCs in language labs and receiving vocabulary cards through mobile phones are effective in vocabulary acquisition.

Furthermore, Lu (2008) carried out a research study which aims to investigate the effectiveness of using the mobile phone in English vocabulary learning. The results show that...
students held positive attitudes towards learning vocabulary with the help of mobile phones. Xu, Dang and Jiang (2017) carried out a research about students’ perceptions of mobile assisted feedback on oral production. The study presented that learners who received mobile assisted feedback gained more confidence in speaking English and showed positive attitudes. Similarly, Estarki and Bazyar (2016) dealt with the effect of MALL on pre-intermediate EFL learners’ writing performance and the results of the study suggested that MALL had a significant effect on learners’ academic performance who received instruction in academic writing through technology. Another researcher, Noriega (2016), studied the use of mobile technology incorporation into the traditional English class by using genre approach in the writing skills. The results of the study revealed that genre approach towards improving writing skills and abilities can be realized with the support of mobile technology. In addition to the latest studies mentioned, the literature provides some research showing the positive effects of MALL on learners’ second and foreign language acquisition and language proficiency (see, for example, Cheng, Hwang, Wu, Shadiew & Xie, 2010; Hsu, 2012; Liu, Yu & Ran, 2008; Petersen & Markiewicz, 2008; Rosell-Aguilar, 2007).

Method
This study reports the results of a meta-synthesis of qualitative studies, which stays directly on the mobile learning, MALL in ELT, attitudes of learners towards MALL and qualitative studies published in academic journals especially in the last decade in order to provide a better understanding of MALL and mobile learning in foreign language teaching and attempt to improve its quality and insight. The following keywords were selected before carrying out the research and academic articles were found in accordance with them; qualitative, mobile learning, technology, MALL in ELT, attitudes towards MALL. The studies focusing on the mobile learning, technology, MALL in ELT, attitudes of the learners towards MALL were selected through multiple databases as the University of Rochester Library, Web of Science-Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), Academic Search Complete, ProQuest, Education Research Information Center (ERIC), EBSCO Host, and ULAKBIM Turkish National Databases. The number of studies included in the study was 17.

According to Finfgeld (2003), meta-synthesis can be described as “an umbrella term that refers to the synthesis of findings across studies to create a new interpretation” (p. 895). Similarly, Nye, Melendez-Torres & Bonell (2016) present new perspectives on the concept by the interpretation of the prior qualitative research and to reach a “third-level” finding(s) which is not intended to brief all available data (p. 57). In relation to the meta-synthesis of qualitative research, Sandelowski, Docherty & Emden (1997, p. 367) propose that there may be three different approaches to meta-synthesis and one of them is the synthesis of studies by different investigators in a related field, which is adapted for carrying out this study.

The following section gives information about data collection and data analysis.

Data Collection and Data Analysis
The studies which met the following criteria were considered suitable for inclusion in the study:

(1) focus on mobile assisted language learning (MALL), mobile learning, mobile phones,
(2) use of qualitative or mixed methods (only the qualitative results were included),
A Meta-synthesis of Qualitative Research about Mobile

(3) publication in a refereed journal (national and international)

In accordance with Braun and Clarke’s process of data analysis (2006), inductive thematic analysis was used to analyze and report themes within data. The data gathered from the selected studies were read at least twice by the researcher himself to strengthen the synthesis. Later, the researcher identified and analyzed the themes within the data. The themes were reviewed and discussed with a researcher outside the study until the applicability to the study was reached. The following table shows the articles with its authors, publication year, research methods and characteristics which are included in the study.

Table 1. Characteristics of the articles included in the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Articles included in the study (N=17)</th>
<th>Authors and publication year</th>
<th>Research methods</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understanding Hypertext in the context of Reading on the Web: Language Learners’ Experience</td>
<td>Altun, A. (2003).</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>This study explores second language readers' understanding of hypertext in the context of reading on the web from a qualitative research paradigm</td>
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<td>3. A Comparison of Undergraduate Students' English Vocabulary Learning: Using Mobile Phones and Flash Cards</td>
<td>Basoglu, E. B., &amp; Akdemir, Ö. (2010).</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
<td>In this study, the effects of using vocabulary learning programs in mobile phones on students’ English vocabulary learning were investigated using the mixed-method research design.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Effects of gloss type on text recall and incidental vocabulary learning in mobile-assisted L2 listening</td>
<td>Çakmak, F., &amp; Erçetin, G. (2017).</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Towards Understanding the Potential of E-Portfolios for Independent Learning: A Qualitative Study</td>
<td>Chau, J., &amp; Cheng, G. (2010).</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mobile learning: Two case studies of supporting inquiry learning in informal and semiformal settings</td>
<td>Jones, A. C., Scanlon, E., &amp; Clough, G. (2013).</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Exploring Smartphone Applications for Effective Mobile-Assisted Language Learning</td>
<td>Kim, H. &amp; Kwon, Y.</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Challenging Mobile Learning Discourse Through Research: Student Perceptions of Blackboard Mobile Learn and IPADs</td>
<td>Kinash, S., Brand, J., &amp; Mathew, T.</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>How effectively do good language learners use handheld electronic dictionaries: A qualitative approach.</td>
<td>Koyama, T., &amp; Takeuchi, O.</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Mobile-Assisted Grammar Exercises: Effects on Self-Editing in L2 Writing</td>
<td>Li, Z., &amp; Hegelheimer, V.</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

control and how technology can support learners' inquiries.
12. Effectiveness of vocabulary learning via mobile phone  
Mixed methods  
This paper examines the effectiveness of SMS vocabulary lessons of limited lexical information on the small screens of mobile phones.

13. An Investigation of Preservice English Teachers’ Perceptions of Mobile Assisted Language Learning  
Mixed methods  
This study dealt with teachers’ perceptions about mobile assisted language learning (MALL) and tried to find out whether their perceptions differed by gender, grade level and grade point average (GPA).

Mixed methods  
This paper investigates the potentials and effectiveness of using mobile phones in foreign language education, in particular, the effects of using multimedia messages via mobile phones for improving language learners’ pronunciation of words.

15. Exploring College Students’ Attitudes and Self-Efficacy of Mobile  
Mixed methods  
The purpose of this study is to investigate the
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<td>16.</td>
<td>An Inquiry-based Mobile Learning Approach to Enhancing Social Science Learning Effectiveness</td>
<td>Shih, J.-L., Chuang, C.-W., &amp; Hwang, G.-J. (2010).</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Introducing mobile technology for enhancing teaching and learning in Bangladesh: teacher perspectives</td>
<td>Shohel, M. M. C., &amp; Power, T. (2010).</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Findings
Taking the findings into consideration, overarching themes from the selected articles are given in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Overarching themes](image)

Main themes obtained from the selected academic articles of journals can be outlined as in Figure 2.

![Figure 2. Educational factors about MALL](image)
As shown in the figures, this meta-synthesis research indicates three main themes out of the reviewed studies together with some factors. The findings of the studies show mainly an overall picture of the mobile use on the acquisition of language and linguistic skills, which is parallel to the previous studies investigated before (Baran, 2014; Burston, 2015; Wu, Wu, Chen, Kao, Lin & Huang, 2012) with some new highlights such as using social media and networking, genre approach and mobile learning software. However, Kinash, Brand & Mathew (2012) carried out a study about mobile learning which is not demanded by the students and mobile learning did not contribute to learning environment. Out of the language skills, the most popular one seems vocabulary acquisition in the teaching process (Duman, Orhon & Gedik, 2015; Lu, 2008; Taj et al. (2017). However, Hu (2013) stated the vocabulary acquisition with the help of mobile devices should not be stressed upon so much.
It is also clear from the findings that MALL in EFL field has positive and beneficial effects on language skills, learners’ attitudes (Wong & Looi, 2010) and language learning. Based on the findings, it is also clear that there are some striking points and issues about MALL which come to the fore such as; the effectiveness of MALL and its developments and contributions to the second/foreign language teaching, its impact on the improving learners’ proficiency levels especially in language skills; listening-speaking, writing performance, vocabulary acquisition (Li & Hegelheimer, 2013; Noriega, 2016; Xu et al., 2017), thereby enabling them to have more confidence in foreign language learning and learners’ and teachers’ mostly positive attitudes towards mobile learning and MALL (Öz, 2015; Saran et al., 2009) which is quite clear from the studies and MALL practices fostered self-study and self-regulated learning (Kondo, Ishikawa, Smith, Sakamoto, Shimomura & Wada, 2012).

The findings also reveal that mobile assisted language learning (MALL) has some significant contributions to the foreign language teaching especially as a supplementary tool although there are some potential drawbacks and problems such as concrete theoretical and conceptual model about MALL, technological limitations, lack of proper network coverage and small size screen. The findings of the study may also guide the researchers, academics and educators to investigate MALL and mobile learning quantitatively and qualitatively with a more specialized conceptual and theoretical model.

Discussion

This present study aims to report a meta-synthesis of qualitative research results on MALL in foreign language teaching especially within the last decade. Considering the research results, some practical implications could be made. It is clear that the use of mobile devices, m-learning and MALL for educational purposes have mostly positive effects on language learning process for the learners. With regard to language and linguistic skills, vocabulary instruction had a variety of foci such as paramount effect of mobile devices on vocabulary learning (Agca & Özdemir, 2013; Basoglu & Akdemir, 2010). From this point of view and meta-synthesis of the studies, it can be said that MALL has contributed much to language skills such as listening-speaking, but especially for vocabulary learning and English pronunciation. Nonetheless, it should also be kept in mind that MALL, mobile technology is not always effective due to some drawbacks such as screen size and limited presentation of graphs (Albers & Kim, 2001). It was also concluded that some researchers claim that computer assisted language learning (CALL) is not independent from MALL, some are against this perspective, though. From Turkey’s perspective towards MALL, it can only be seen that there are some studies which are mostly based on vocabulary learning, English pronunciation, L2 listening and perceptions towards MALL, concluding that MALL environment helped learners improve their vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation and they had positive attitudes towards MALL (Agca & Özdemir, 2013; Basoglu & Akdemir, 2010; Çakmak & Erçetin, 2017; Öz, 2015; Saran et al., 2009, 2012). Because of the dearth of studies regarding MALL in Turkey, it is nearly impossible to say that MALL is more effective than other technological devices and contributions in view of teaching a foreign language.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as the results indicate, using mobile technology as a tool in foreign language teaching increases learners’ language proficiency levels and also enables them to raise...
their awareness in the language learning process. Another conclusion which is the most important conclusion from this meta-synthesis research is that there are not so many longitudinal and cross-sectional studies about MALL, mobile learning or any devices through mobile ones. This situation can be stemming from the quick cycle and transformation of mobile devices of technology itself. As Kukulska-Hulme, Lee & Norris (2017) put forth that “while mobile language learning may not yet be currently reflected in the curricula of English language teacher qualifications or professional development frameworks, there is evidence of interest in mobile language learning from educational technology developers, publishers and teachers (p. 220). Overall, much more research about mobile technology, mobile learning and MALL is required to distinguish the field from other kinds of technological tools and to construct new conceptual and theoretical models.

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References
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A Meta-synthesis of Qualitative Research about Mobile Learning


A Meta-synthesis of Qualitative Research about Mobile Learning


Arabic-English Parallel Corpus: A New Resource for Translation Training and Language Teaching

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Abstract
Parallel corpora can be defined as collections of aligned, translated texts of two or more languages. They play a major role in translation and contrastive studies, and are also becoming popular in translation training and language teaching, with the advent of the data-driven learning (DDL) approach. Despite their significance, however, Arabic seems to lack a satisfactory general-use parallel corpus resource. The literature describes few Arabic–English parallel corpora, and these few are usually inaccurate and/or expensive. Some are small in size, while others are restricted in terms of genre, failing to meet the requirements of many academics and researchers. This paper describes an ongoing project at the College of Languages and Translation, King Saud University, to compile a 10-million-word Arabic–English parallel corpus to be used as a resource for translation training and language teaching. The bidirectional corpus can be used to compare translated and source language and identify differences. The corpus has been manually verified at different stages, including translation, text segmentation, alignment, and file preparation; it is available as full-text in XML format and through a user-friendly web interface that provides a concordancer to support bilingual search queries and several filtering options.

Keywords: Arabic, data-driven learning, English, language teaching, parallel corpus, translation training

Introduction

According to Baker (1995), a parallel corpus is one that “consists of original, source language texts in language A and their translated versions in language B” (p. 230), while Sinclair (1995) described it as a “collection of texts, each of which is translated into one or more other languages” (p. 19).

Parallel corpora have been used widely in applied linguistics and have gained special attention in language teaching and learning (Botley, Glass, McEnery, & Wilson, 1996; Granger & Lefer, 2016; Wichmann & Fligelstone, 2014), translation studies and translator training (Baker, 1993, 1995; Olohan, 2004), machine translation (Rauf & Schwenk, 2011; Tian et al., 2014), comparative and contrastive linguistics (Johansson, 1999, 2007; Sharoff, Rapp, Zweigenbaum, & Fung, 2013), lexigraphy, and terminology studies (Kilgarriff, 2013; Teubert, 2002).

Many researchers believe that parallel corpora provide new insights into both source and translated languages that cannot be gained from exploring monolingual corpora, enabling researchers and students to compare languages and their semantic and cultural features, among other advantages.

According to Xie (2015) a parallel corpus:

provides a platform for researchers to conduct crosslinguistic research whereby the linguistic and cultural differences of the two languages and their effects on second language (L2) learning can be compared and analysed systematically. (p. 157)

Thus, parallel corpora enhance our knowledge of languages comparatively, contributing to many fields (aside from the studies cited above, see Aijmer, 2009; Baker, 1998, 1999; Barlow, 2000; Bennett, 2010; Bernardini, 2016; Boulton, 2011; Bowker, 2002; Cobb & Boulton, 2015; Perez et al., 2014; Sinclair, 1991, 2004; Tribble, 2015; Zanettin, 2014).

Data-driven learning

Data-driven learning, or DDL, is a term first introduced by Tim Johns (1993, 1997) to describe a teaching approach where language learners act as language researchers. This approach involves using corpus linguistics in teaching by exposing students to data and encouraging them to discover linguistic rules and patterns from concordance lines. According to Johns (1991, p. 2) “the language learner is also, essentially, a research worker whose learning needs to be driven by access to linguistic data.” Odlin (1994) describes DDL as:

an approach to language teaching that gives central importance to developing the learner’s ability to ‘puzzle out’ how the target language operates from examples of authentic usages. This approach is particularly associated with the use of computer concordances in the classroom but can be extended to other situations where the student has to work inductively from authentic data. (p. 320)

Johns (1997) suggests three steps for a DDL-based lesson:

- Identification: Learners are meant to explore from the data what language problem they are to address;
• **Classification:** Learners decide which category or categories of patterns a particular language form represents, and;

• **Generalization:** Learners try to establish patterns and formulate rules on the basis of the data provided to them. (p.101)

One of the greatest advantages of DDL is the exposure to authentic language it ensures (Clifton & Phillips, 2006; Römer, 2008). According to Flowerdew (2015b, 2015d), this approach provides teachers and learners the opportunity to explore naturally occurring language for grammatical patterns, word usage, semantic and pragmatic features, and textual discourse patterns. Römer (2008) suggests that the DDL approach offers authentic examples and encourages “noticing,” which helps students enhance their language skills.

Many researchers (Boulton, 2013; Dehghan & Darasawang, 2014; Hunston, 2002) believe that the DDL approach promotes autonomy, as students become less dependent on the instructor, and fosters a learner-centered education environment, in which the emphasis is put on students rather than the instructor or the textbook. In DDL, students are exposed to real language and are expected to discover patterns and rules on their own, while the instructor becomes more of a facilitator, providing assistance when needed. Talai and Fotovatnia (2012) argue that DDL improves learner independence and autonomy, enhances language awareness, and enhance learners’ confidence in coping with authentic language.

The literature describes many studies discussing the positive impact of DDL on most areas of language learning (see e.g. Flowerdew, 2015c; Karras, 2016; Lin & Lee, 2015; Luo, 2016; Mehl et al, 2016; Quan, 2016; Tekin, 2015; Vyatkina, 2016).

The following subsections describe the use of parallel corpora in translation training and language teaching and learning. Later, we move on to explore some current projects involving the development of Arabic–English parallel corpora before presenting our own project.

**Parallel corpora in language teaching**

Interest in using computerized corpora for language teaching and learning started in the mid-1980s and early 1990s, along with growing attention to corpus linguistics in general as a new field. The idea of using corpora in language teaching and learning appeared in many early studies, such as Johns (1986) and Stevens (1991). It has been receiving increasing attention in recent years (see Bennett, 2010; Bernardini, 2016; Boulton, 2010; Cobb & Boulton, 2015; Tribble, 2015).

According to Römer (2006), approaches to using corpora in language teaching and learning can be divided into two types: direct and indirect. The direct approach involves the use of corpora in classrooms to explore and investigate a language in DDL environment, that is, one in which the learners explore the data themselves. This approach is associated with Tim Johns, who introduced the idea of DDL over 20 years ago (see Johns, 1991, 2002). Davies et al. (2013) summarize the DDL approach as involving the following features:

• A focus on the exploitation of authentic materials even when dealing with tasks such as the acquisition of grammatical structures and lexical items.
• A focus on real, exploratory tasks and activities rather than traditional “drill and kill” exercises.
• A focus on learner-centered activities.
• A focus on the use and exploitation of tools rather than ready-made or off-the-shelf learnware (p. 26).

Several researchers have pointed out the positive impact of “corpus-aided discovery learning” on students’ language skills (Bernardini, 2002, 2016; Boulton & Tyne, 2013; Römer, 2006), especially its ability to enhance autonomy by allowing students to take charge over their own learning. Students can test a wide range of hypotheses using a concordancer, which is a tool designed to analyze corpus data and display words in an authentic context. According to Lee et al. (2015), students can develop strategies on this basis to correctly predict the meaning of new vocabulary and examine syntactic patterns in context in an inductive learning environment.

The indirect approach, on the other hand, uses corpora to help syllabus and course designers make decisions about what to teach and when to teach it. Corpora can be investigated with the aim of providing better descriptions of “used” language; other uses of corpora include exploring language students’ own corpora to investigate and compare spoken and written language patterns with those found in native-speaker production. Such an approach has pedagogical implications insofar as it helps identify students’ problem areas; this in turn allows teachers and course designers to improve teaching materials and strategies (Römer, 2006).

Many studies have explored the positive impact of using parallel corpora in language teaching and learning. In John (2001), a pilot study was conducted to investigate whether a parallel corpus and a concordancer could be used as tools to supplement a beginner-level German-language teaching program in an unsupervised environment. A beginner student of German was asked to find suitable answers for questions on new vocabulary and formulate appropriate grammar rules by himself, using only the parallel corpus and concordancer as tools. The study concluded that these tools can indeed be of great benefit for beginner-level language students.

In another study, Chujo, Anthony, and Oghigian (2009) used a parallel Japanese–English concordancer to examine specific grammar features in a newspaper corpus. The subsequent analysis of learning outcomes showed a positive impact of this approach on learning basic grammar, for instance the basic structures of noun phrases and verb phrases, in addition to answering more complex grammar questions, such as those found on the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication). Students also reported positive attitudes toward this approach, finding it both novel and appealing and believing it was useful for grammar and vocabulary learning.

Sangawa (2014) presents data on the use of dictionaries among students of Japanese at the University of Ljubljana. A number of resources and a variety of tasks were developed for the study, aimed at enhancing awareness of various aspects of Japanese vocabulary from both monolingual and contrastive perspectives. The researcher used corpora and lexical profiling systems designed to help intermediate and advanced students to obtain more detailed information.
about collocational and stylistic aspects of the learned vocabulary. Students used two parallel corpora: (a) jaslo, a Japanese–Slovene parallel corpus containing Japanese texts with Slovene translations; and (b) Linguee22, a freely available dictionary combined with a search engine that retrieves translated examples from internet-harvested bilingual texts.

In a similar study (but in a different context), Csató et al. (2010) investigated the use of the data-driven learning approach for teaching Turkish as a foreign language in Sweden. The researchers employed language corpora, concordance programs, and annotation tools developed in collaboration with computational linguists for research in teaching environments. The study used a Swedish–Turkish parallel corpus to help students formulate and test hypotheses concerning lexical, morphological, and syntactic aspects of the Turkish language. These tools were found to aid students in contrasting and translating between Swedish and Turkish.

Reynolds (2015) conducted a study on 25 Taiwanese medical students learning English, who were encouraged to investigate the utility of a web-based English–Chinese parallel corpus and collocations concordancer to self-edit their academic writing. Statistical analysis of students’ drafts revealed that the use of the concordancer resulted in increased verb–noun collocation accuracy with each draft for both of two essay types: descriptive and opinion. However, qualitative analysis of student feedback regarding their experience showed varied levels in acceptance and success.

In a more recent study, Wong and Lee (2016) used a parallel corpus to teach Cantonese to Mandarin-speaking undergraduate students at the beginner level. Students explored sentence and word alignment in the parallel corpus and independently looked for sentences to discover their translated equivalents. The study results revealed that this data-driven learning approach helped students enhance their knowledge of Cantonese vocabulary, suggesting the potential for applying parallel corpora at even the beginner level for other L1–L2 pairs of closely related languages.

In another study, Wang, Gao, and Hao (2016) describe the construction and application of a customized medical corpus for Chinese clinicians to aid their research article writing in English: CCUT (Customized Corpus for Urology Team). Their study showed that the parallel corpus was useful in assisting Chinese clinicians to choose words with appropriate semantic relations, finding grammatical patterns different from general English in specialized medical contexts, learning how to use unfamiliar medical terms, and revising unidiomatic expressions.

A review of the literature, however, demonstrates a lack of studies that explore the impact of using parallel corpora on Arabic learners or Arab EFL learners. It seems that this potentially useful tool has not yet been explored enough.

**Parallel corpora in translation training**

The idea of using parallel corpora in translation training emerged in the early 1990s among researchers including Mona Baker (1993, 1995), John Sinclair (1995), and Guy Aston (1999), alongside the increasing popularity of corpus-based studies. Interest in the topic has been increasing steadily over the last decade among translators and researchers (Bernardini, 2004,
Parallel corpora can be applied to theoretical questions including the study of the translation process and how to express an idea in two (or more) different languages, or to comparison of the characteristics of an original (source) text and a translated text. At the same time, the practical uses of parallel corpora in translation studies include different uses of corpora in the development of machine translation (that is, of computer-assisted translation tools such as translation memory systems and terminology management systems) as well as in translation training; the latter is the focus of this section.

According to Gouadec (2002, p. 32), translator training means “training people to perform clearly identified functions in clearly identified environments where they will be using clearly identified tools and ‘systems.’” He claims that professional translators should possess the following skills:

1. A full understanding of the material to be translated;
2. The ability to detect, interpret, and cope with cultural gaps;
3. The ability to transfer information, facts, and concepts;
4. The ability to write and rewrite;
5. The ability to proofread; and
6. The ability to control and assess quality.

In order to master these skills, translators should know how to obtain the required information and knowledge as well as the appropriate terminology and phraseology.

Parallel corpora are a valuable tool that can be incorporated into translation training programs so that students can employ them in translation projects (Singer, 2016). It has recently been observed that many translation instructors encourage their students to compile their own specialized corpora according to the types of translation projects they are working on (legal, medical, scientific, etc.). Instructors are also becoming keener to provide their students with necessary skills related to corpus design issues, corpus types, corpus analysis, and search tools. According to Molés-Cases and Oster (2015), “corpora are of crucial importance in translator education, because they promote autonomy, motivation and authenticity” (p. 3). Parallel corpora enhance students’ awareness of differences between original texts and their translations and of how to transfer an idea or expression across two (or more) languages. Students can also explore parallel corpora to investigate collocations, fixed expressions, and idiomatic or common structures in both source and translated languages. Examples obtained from parallel corpora can help with the verification of translation decisions derived from other sources (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, and lexicons) or from intuition and can assist in the selection of appropriate translations according to the context.

According to Pearson (2003), parallel corpora also provide the opportunity for students to compare their work with the work of professional translators and identify the various approaches and strategies those translators have adopted and implemented. Parallel corpora also increase students’ awareness of the distinctive nature of different specialized texts (legal, medical, etc.) as
well as their ability to examine the special terminology, syntax, and semantic features associated with those texts (see Kübler, 2011).

The literature includes many studies showing positive impacts of parallel corpora on translators’ skills and supporting the integration of such resources into students’ training programs (Pearson, 2003; Bernardini, 2016). In a study conducted by Frankenberg-Garcia and Santos (2003), a Portuguese–English parallel corpus (Compara) was used to design exercises to assist translation students in identifying and handling the contrastive features of the two languages, features which can lead to translation problems. The researchers highlighted the positive impact of this approach on the training of translators; they concluded their study by encouraging translation curriculum designers to integrate parallel corpora as a teaching resource.

Parallel corpora are often used to investigate the nature of translated texts by comparing them with the source texts. However, many researchers have also recently become interested in using parallel corpora to study the original (source) texts themselves. For instance, in a recent study by Salhi (2013), the English-Arabic Parallel Corpus of United Nations Texts (EAPCOUNT) was used to study complementary polysemy and Arabic translations of the English noun destruction. Salhi emphasized the benefits of using parallel corpora to help students detect the semantic and syntactic features of an original text as well as a translated text.

In another study, Rodríguez-Inés (2014) presented a number of exercises for use in the training of Spanish–English translators, based on the exploration of a Spanish–English parallel corpus. Rodríguez-Inés stressed the significance of this source in raising students’ awareness of collocations, contrastive features, fixed expressions, and specialized terminology. An end-of-study survey indicated an increase in students’ confidence in identifying collocations and specialized terminology after consulting the parallel corpus.

In a similar study, Li and Dai (2014) used an English–Chinese parallel corpus in the training of 90 translation students at a Chinese university. Students were divided into two groups: The first group was taught in a traditional way, while the second group used training exercises that required the exploration of the corpus. A pre- and post-test were conducted that showed a significant improvement in the second group’s translation skills, which the researcher attributed to the use of the parallel corpus.

Heylen and Verplaetse (2015) recently investigated the use of parallel corpora to train students in a medical translation course and analyzed its impact on their performance. Students were divided into two groups and asked to translate medical bulletins from English to German; only one group used the parallel corpus. The results showed that that group performed better than the other group.

The literature discussed above highlights the value of integrating parallel corpora into translator training and their positive impact on translators’ performance. However, there seems to be a lack of studies that investigate this matter in the Arab world and among Arabic translators. This may be attributable largely to a lack of such language resources (see Al-Sulaiti & Atwell, 2006; Al-Ajmi, 2011).
The next section attempts to shed light on some of the current projects involving the development of Arabic–English parallel corpora.

Arabic–English parallel corpora

The past few years have borne witness to a growing interest in parallel corpora among Arab researchers and to increased awareness of their significance. However, the literature describes relatively few Arabic–English parallel corpora, indicating a corresponding lack of such resources. According to Al-Ajmi (2004, p. 327), “this is partly due to the lack of the necessary programs to compile such resources and the funding authorities’ doubts and uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of parallel corpora.”

The English–Arabic Parallel Corpus of the United Nations Texts (EAPCOUNT) is one of the most well-known English–Arabic corpora projects, containing 341 texts aligned on a paragraph level. The 5,392,491-word corpus was compiled using two sub-corpora: The first contains the English originals, and the second contains their Arabic translations. The texts mainly include resolutions and annual reports issued by different UN organizations and institutions, along with some texts taken from publications of other international institutions (Salhi, 2013).

In a similar project, the European Commission funded the development of a multilingual parallel corpus, MultiUN, at the Language Technology Lab in Germany. The corpus includes 300 million words extracted from UN documents published between 2000 and 2009 on the official UN website (see Eisele & Chen, 2010).

Tiedemann (2012) developed the Open Parallel Corpus (OPUS): a free, multilingual parallel corpus containing translated texts collected from the web. OPUS also provides open-source tools for processing parallel and monolingual data as well as several interfaces for searching the data to help with various research activities. According to its website, all pre-processing was done automatically, suggesting that no manual corrections were made.

EuroMatrix is another multilingual parallel corpus, funded by the European Union. The corpus contains the proceedings of the European Parliament translated into Arabic and many other languages. The corpus includes 51 million words, 1.5 million of which are Arabic. The project’s aims involve developing and promoting machine translation systems.

A project carried out in the Arab world, at Kuwait University, has developed a parallel corpus that includes Arabic translations taken from the World of Knowledge book series published by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) in Kuwait. The corpus contains 3 million words and is only available to the university’s staff and students, mainly for lexicography and translation courses (Al-Ajmi, 2011).

The Linguistic Data Consortium (LDC) has been involved in many parallel corpora projects, including in Arabic. One such project is the GALE Phase 2 Arabic Broadcast News Parallel Text. This corpus contains modern standard Arabic source texts and corresponding English translations selected from broadcast news data collected by the LDC between 2005 and 2007 and transcribed by the LDC or under its direction. The corpus consists of 60 source–
translation document pairs, amounting to 42,089 words of Arabic source text and their English translations. (See LDC, 2013.)

The LDC also developed Arabic–English Automatically Extracted Parallel Text. These texts were extracted automatically from two monolingual corpora: Arabic Gigaword Second Edition (LDC2006T02) and English Gigaword Second Edition (LDC2005T12). The data consist of news articles published by the Xinhua News Agency (in Chinese) and Agence France-Presse (in French). The corpus consists of 1,124,609 sentence pairs; the word count on the English side is approximately 31 million words. (See LDC, 2013.)

In another project, Izwaini (2003) developed a multilingual corpus at UMIST. This specialized corpus involves information technology texts in English and two translational corpora: Arabic (1 million tokens) and Swedish (2.7 million tokens). The texts mainly consist of manuals and online help text for computer systems, hardware, and software, as well as material from multilingual IT-specialized websites. This corpus is not available for public use, and copyright permission is obtainable only for research investigations.

AMARA is a recent project implemented by the Qatar Computing Research Institute (Abdelali et al., 2014; Guzman et al., 2013). The corpus contains community-generated video subtitles from well-known educational platforms, such as Technology, Entertainment, and Design (TED) and the Khan Academy. It consists of 2.6 million Arabic words and 3.9 million English words. The researchers’ aim was to prepare data for machine translation tasks. The project also offers an editor tool for subtitling and captioning (see www.amara.org).

Also recently, Alkahtani and Teahan (2015) compiled a parallel corpus consisting of 27.8 million Arabic words and 30.8 million English words collected from two sources: the Al-Hayat newspaper and the OPUS corpus. The project aims to promote research in the field of machine translation.

Hassan and Atwell (2016) have recently designed a multilingual special corpus for the Hadith, the words of the Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him). The corpus consists of around 2 million words of Hadith in Arabic and their English, French, and Russian translations.

Table 1 provides a summary of Arabic–English parallel corpora.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The English–Arabic Parallel Corpus of United Nations Texts (EAPCOUNT)</td>
<td>Carthage University</td>
<td>5,392,491 words</td>
<td>A research tool for applied and theoretical linguistic research</td>
<td>Resolutions and annual reports issued by different UN organizations and institutions</td>
<td>Available through: <a href="http://conference.unite.un.org/UNCorpus">http://conference.unite.un.org/UNCorpus</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Open Parallel Corpus</td>
<td>Uppsala University</td>
<td>To support research in Web-collected texts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Available through:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Objective

Many of the Arabic–English parallel corpora discussed in the previous section are inaccurate and/or expensive. Some are small in size, while others are restricted in terms of genre, failing to meet the requirements of academics and researchers. Therefore, there is a great need for a large Arabic–English parallel corpus that takes into account the quality of source- and target-text materials and covers a wide range of text types.

The ongoing project described in this paper is underway at the College of Languages & Translation, King Saud University; it aims to compile a 10-million-word Arabic–English parallel corpus to be used as a resource for translation training and language teaching. The corpus, a work in progress, is bidirectional and can be used to compare the features of translated and source language and identify differences. To enhance its quality, the corpus has been manually verified at different stages, including translation, text segmentation, alignment, and file preparation. The corpus is available as full-text in XML format through a user-friendly web
interface, which includes a concordancer that supports bilingual search queries and several filtering options.

The following section describes the development of this bilingual Arabic–English parallel corpus (AEPC) and discusses the design criteria and design stages.

The Design of the AEPC

Reviewing the literature revealed the great need for an Arabic–English parallel corpus with high-quality source- and target-text materials and high accuracy of alignment. The aim of this project is to create a useful resource for language teaching and translation training. Therefore, the corpus needs to take into account the following factors (Biber, 2003).

Size

There seems to be some debate about how large a corpus should be (see Krishnamurthy, 2001; Leech, 1991). However, most or all agree that the size of the corpus depends on the purpose for which it is intended and on several practical factors, such as copyright permissions and availability.

Many of the previously discussed Arabic–English corpora are limited in size, several to around 1–3 million words, which restricts their effectiveness. Therefore, the first phase of this project involved collecting 10 million words; this number will increase in later stages of the project.

Representativeness

According to Biber (1993), representativeness indicates “the extent to which a sample includes the full range of variability in a population” (p. 243). Two main factors affect the representativeness of a corpus: balance, which refers to the variety of genres included in a corpus, and sampling, which refers to how the chunks of text for each genre are selected. Most of the Arabic–English corpora discussed in the literature tend to be restricted in terms of genre and text types, which negatively affects their usefulness as language teaching and/or translation training resources. They also tend to be static in nature, which decreases their representativeness increasingly over time; as Hunston (2002, p. 30) argues, “any corpus that is not regularly updated rapidly becomes unrepresentative.” Hence, the proposed corpus aims to cover a wide range of genres and text types and to remain open and conduct regular updates to maintain its dynamic and representative nature.

Quality

Since this corpus is intended for instructional purposes, quality is of central importance. Here, human-translated text samples have been compiled, cleaned, and aligned manually to ensure high levels of accuracy.

Availability

Many of the Arabic–English parallel corpora described in the previous section are expensive (e.g., LDC products) or have a non-user-friendly interface (e.g., OPUS), which makes them hard to use for non-experts. Our project aims to attract a wide range of users by providing a free, user-friendly website and easy-to-use search tools.
The project went through two phases: The first phase involved compiling, cleaning, and aligning high-quality human-translated text samples of various text types, as noted above. The second phase involved designing a web interface with a bilingual concordancer, where users can explore the content of the AEPC in both English and Arabic. Both phases will be detailed in the next sections.

- **Implementing the AEPC: Phase 1**

  The project began in 2015, by compiling, cleaning, and aligning the samples. The first phase involved preparing the files and segmenting, aligning, and verifying the texts.

**Preparing the files**

Texts were collected from several sources: printed material, such as books, magazines, and newspapers; websites; and translation graduation projects. OCR software (ABBYY FineReader and Readiris 15) was used to convert printed documents to machine-readable texts, as both programs support both Arabic and English. The texts were categorized into the following eight genres: Social, Biographical, Literary, Administrative, Medical, Legal, Religious, and Scientific. The texts were segmented on a sentence level, aligned manually, and then stored as MS Excel files. Each file includes the following metadata in both languages: Title, Author, Publisher, Year of Publication, Country, Author’s Gender, Medium, Domain, and Topic. The metadata will enable corpus users to select texts according to their specific requirements.

**Segmentation**

The next step in building the parallel corpus was segmentation. The texts were divided into short segments on a sentence level. There are applications available today that can carry out this process automatically, such as translation memory software (e.g., WinAlign, Memsource). Such applications are considered to be language independent, and can manage various types of text files. However, the results are not error-free; this is because, most of the time, it is difficult for such applications to determine what a sentence is. Punctuation signs, such as periods, exclamation marks, and question marks, are commonly used to indicate the end of a sentence, but might be challenging for applications to identify. The period, for example, might not necessarily indicate the end of a sentence but instead a decimal or an abbreviation such as Dr. or Ms. To address this issue, segmentation was done manually in order to ensure the accuracy and quality of the processed texts.

**Alignment**

Quah (2006, p. 100) defined alignment as “the process of binding a source-language segment to its corresponding target-language segment.” This process can be performed at various levels: word, sentence, paragraph, or text; however, most parallel corpora align texts at the sentence or paragraph level.

Aligning source texts and translations was a challenging process, as translators do not necessarily translate texts in a predictable or linear manner. Frankenberg-Garcia and Santos (2003) noticed that translators often split source-text sentences into two or more translated sentences; join two or more source-text sentences together, rendering them as a single translated sentence; leave things out; reorder sentences in different ways; and/or insert elements that were not present in the source text.
For this project, it was decided to carry out the alignment process manually. Manual alignment entails going through the text sequentially and linking the first sentence in the source text with the first sentence in the target text, and so forth. Automatic alignment manages completed translations by splitting source and target texts into segments and linking segments that belong together. There are some alignment tools available on the market that allow users to verify the accuracy of automatic alignment and manually edit and realign mismatched segments. Unfortunately, many of these tools cannot support languages (such as Arabic) that are not based on the Roman alphabet, and fail to produce accurate results in particular when the source and target language have different structures and text directions, like Arabic and English.

- **Implementing the AEPC: Phase 2**

The second phase involved allowing translators and language learners and instructors to freely explore the content of the corpus via a web interface designed to be user friendly. The web interface also offers a bilingual concordancer, a search tool for use with a parallel corpus (Bowker, 2002) that retrieves all occurrences of a specific search word within a given context in both source and target languages; users can also refine their search according to criteria like, in the present case, domain, year of publication, country, topic, medium, or author’s gender. The beta version of the website is currently available at http://aeparallelcorpus.net/.

![Screenshot of AEPC interface (beta version)](image-url)
Next Steps: Phase 3

The last phase of the project will begin in 2017 in collaboration with the College of Computer and Information at King Saud University. It will involve the development of more sophisticated tools for use with the data, such as a collocation search tool, graphical statistical analysis functions, and more filtering options to display more targeted results. This stage will also include examination of part-of-speech taggers to annotate corpus texts, which will contribute to improved corpus search results and enhance the corpus’s efficiency. For details about some well-known software taggers available today, see Khoja (2001) and Pasha et al. (2014).

Conclusion

This paper has described an ongoing project at the College of Languages & Translation, King Saud University, to compile a 10-million-word Arabic–English parallel corpus to be used as a resource for translation training and language teaching. The bidirectional corpus can be used to compare and study the differences between translated and source languages. The corpus has been manually verified at different stages, including translations, text segmentation, alignment, and file preparation, to enhance its quality. The corpus is available in XML format and through a user-friendly web interface. The web interface includes a concordancer which supports bilingual search queries and several filtering options. This parallel corpus is intended to be used as a teaching resource in language teaching and translator training classrooms.

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About the Author

Dr. Alotaibi is the former Vice-Dean of College of Languages & Translation, King Saud University. She has a PhD in Education in Computer-Assisted Language Learning from The University of Manchester. Her research interests include ICT in Education, distance learning, Mobile-Assisted Learning and Computer Applications in Translation. She is a member of iWAN and BCI in L2 research groups at KSU and currently working on developing several educational applications for language and translation students.

References


Towards a Zero Tolerance on Gender Bias in the Moroccan EFL Textbooks: Innovation or Deterioration?

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Abstract
Gender discriminatory discourses and practices have been a worldwide concern. The present paper addresses a major feature of gender depiction in the Moroccan English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks officially approved by the Ministry of Education and compulsory for high school students. Adopting a feminist theoretical approach, the study has quantitatively and qualitatively processed the gendered dialogues along with the related illustrations embedded in four EFL Moroccan textbooks, in addition to the gender roles assumed throughout different contexts (occupational/family roles, interests, activities). The textbooks were selected on the basis of their common themes and the different publication dates, starting from 1990 to 2005. The main aim is to see whether the English textbook designers adopt a gender-based approach as a preliminary initiative for pedagogical innovation, or they implicitly and explicitly use them to disseminate discriminatory discourses. The study reveals that women’s positive representation is persistently deteriorated in the Moroccan EFL textbooks. This stands against all steps towards pedagogical innovation and reinforces the traditional gender ideology. It suggests the urgent need for more pedagogical improvement at the level of gender representation in the Moroccan EFL textbooks. More importantly, is the need for all teacher training centres to prepare new teacher generations ready to use sexist texts constructively. The results’ implication is instrumental to the learning materials’ revision. It is also useful for all English language practitioners, textbook designers, and pedagogical experts addressing the challenge of adopting a gender-based approach as a way to open all avenues for pedagogical innovation.

Keywords: curriculum, deterioration, gender discriminatory discourses, Moroccan EFL textbooks, pedagogical innovation

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Introduction

1- Statement of the Problem
In many countries, today there is tremendous interest in gender approach inclusion within learning materials, yet there exists ambivalence towards the representation of gender in textbooks. Such an ambivalent position is the focal point for this investigation. To exemplify this situation, the study comprises the examination of four Common Core Moroccan English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks published between 1990 and 2005. In these textbooks, instructional designers have attempted to reject the inclusion of gender biased perceptions in the teaching of English. At the same time, many of these textbook designers, ironically, include gender discriminatory culture and stereotypes in these approved textbooks.

2- Objectives of the Study
The textbooks were selected on the basis of their common themes and the different dates of publication to answer the following questions:
- Do the English textbook designers adopt a gender-based approach as a preliminary initiative for pedagogical innovation at the micro-level of education curriculum and gender equity at the macro-level of society? Or
- Do they implicitly and explicitly use them as a medium for disseminating the gender biased discourse and deteriorating the positive image of women?

Review of the Literature

Gender Representation Areas in English Textbooks
Since the 1970's different researches in the area of language and gender studies have proliferated. The feminist movement and women’s studies provided a framework for these investigations. Gender representation in English textbooks provides on important aspect, among others, that has been vastly researched (Lakoff, 1973; Cincotta, 1978; Porreca, 1984; Spender, 1985; Sakita, 1995; Rifkin, 1998; Sunderland, 2000; Zhang & Yang, 2003; Jou, 2010; Zhu, 2011).

Vettorel and Lopriore claim that in the 1990s: “studies on EFL textbooks saw a shift from content to linguistic analysis (2013, p. 140). Gharbavi (2012) and Hameed (2014) targeted vocabulary and structure as language aspects in their linguistic analyses. i.e. how gender bias is exposed through the language itself (sexist language).

Other studies of gender discrimination in textbooks included a critical discourse analysis of dialogues and visual illustrations. (e.g. Giaschi, 2000, Sano Lida & Hardy, 2001, Mustedanagic, 2010). Sano, Lida and Hardy assert that some EFL textbooks published in the late 1990s “contain gender biased implicit messages, even though no explicit linguistic features are articulated on the surface level” (2001, p. 905). This, indeed, accounts for the fact that students are more easily influenced by the messages and discourses that are implicitly or explicitly transmitted through the linguistic as well as the pedagogical illustrations within the textbooks (Lee & Collins, 2008). Such stereotypical representations of gender shape students’ perceptions of their present identities and future situation. As a matter of fact, textbooks represent one of the most widely used instructional materials in the classroom. According to Sadker and Zittlman (2007) books represent the basis of most teachers’ instructional decisions. Since teachers spend
between 70% and 90% of their classroom time in textbooks (Baldwin & Baldwin, 1992), students constantly absorb textbooks’ ideas and accord them great authority.

These studies targeted different English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks to report gender biased representation in terms of different areas:

1- Visibility
Female invisibility as an aspect of gender discrimination in textbooks brings about negative repercussions on female students’ understanding and attitudes towards the foreign language and its culture (Rifkin, 1988). It also implies that women are less important than men (Porreca, 1984). In a study conducted by Porreca (1984) on 15 most widely used textbooks in America, the average ratio of females to males was 1:2.06. In another study of two sets of primary English textbooks published in 1985 in Singapore, females were found to occupy 29% and 30% respectively in the two sets. In his study of 1214 illustrations in 12 primary English textbooks published in 2005 and 2006 in Taiwan, Jou (2010) found that the number of men exceeded the number of women (Main character: F:M=442:522; All characters: F:M=1246:1539).

Sunderland (2000) identifies women’s invisibility in textbooks as one of the three main tendencies of gender discrimination (exclusion, subordination, and distortion/degradation). It is described as exclusion through which males are over-represented (Hellinger, 1980).

2- Occupational Roles
Discrimination in terms of occupational roles in textbooks is identified as another dimension of bias against women. Sunderland (2000) describes this tendency as subordination. Men tend to take a greater range of more powerful jobs and occupational roles than do women (Porreca, 1984) and different stereotypical activities are performed by both males and females at the workplace (Cincotta, 1978). These occupational roles put them in a superior-inferior position, thus, allowing men to control women’s lives within both the private (home) and public spheres (workplace). Consequently, students’ aspirations and expectations are directly influenced by the occupational roles that serve as models in the textbooks.

Scott, Foresman and Company (1972), as cited in Sakita (1995), argue that:

Textbooks are sexist if they omit the actions and achievements of women, if they demean women by using patronizing language, or if they show women and men only in stereotyped roles with less than the full range of human interest, traits and capabilities” (p. 5).

Hellinger (1980) contends that while men were presented as performing a broad range of occupational roles, women were found to be rarely engaged in any demanding or interesting activities. This implies that women were mostly engaged in low social status occupations (Zhang and Yang 2003). According to Porecca (1984), for women, the most frequently mentioned occupations were: secretary (13), teacher (28), doctor (16), and actress (22). Men, on the other hand, were presented in other more interesting and demanding occupations: explorer (41), writer (59, policeman (41), teacher (43), and president (111). In another a study conducted by Tian (2008), females were presented as being involved in jobs with low social and economic status
(service workers, housewives) while their male counterparts mainly took jobs with high social and economic rank. With the view of this point, Barot contends that males are perceived as being “more socially and economically valuable than females” (2012, p. 18).

In the two last decades, some recent researches reveal a slow improvement at the level of gender representation in textbooks. In this respect, the findings of Jones et al. (1997) seem to be more optimistic. In an analysis of dialogues taken from textbooks published in the late 1980s and mid 1990s, no significant gender bias was found. This, according to the authors, could be justified by a fair distribution of gender occupational as well as social roles. Such an egalitarian perception of males and females’ occupational roles reflects real social and economic facts. Indeed, according to the Pew Research Centre report in 2013, within approximately 40% of the United States couples, women were found to earn more than their partners and were increasingly the main breadwinners in their households (Wang, Parker & Taylor, 2013).

3- Domestic Roles
Traditional perception of gendered social and domestic roles connects women with household tasks and men with career. In most textbooks, women are shunted towards more traditional stereotyped roles such as cooking, doing the dishes, setting the dinner table (Ansary & Babit 2003). Similarly, different fixed tasks are usually allotted to women in the private space, such as preparing meals, shopping, washing, sewing, mending, taking care of the children, etc. while males are in charge of other apparently settled domestic tasks, such as gardening, repairing, taking out the garbage, painting, etc. (Hartman & Judd, 1978). Doing domestic chores or tending children are rarely undertaken by men (Zhu, 2011); rather, they are depicted as nearly doing no housework and only reading newspapers in sofa (Zhang & Yang, 2003). In an analysis of feminine and masculine noun forms, Schärer (2000) found that masculine and feminine forms were used equally only when referring to both genders as family members. In all other areas, and more particularly with profession names, masculine forms tended to prevail as they were five times more used than feminine ones.

In sum, all the values people adhere to are reflected through the language used by individuals and groups of people (Lakoff, 1973). Just as the mass media and other authoritative resources, English textbooks prove to be an authoritative medium for transmitting and, thus, preserving preconceived ideas and inherited gender bias. According to Sunderland: “TV, films, videos, computer games, newspapers, and children’s books can have an unconscious influence on audiences as agents of socialization, so presumably, can EFL materials” (1992, p. 86). Sapir (1949) claims, as cited in Montgomery (1995), that language plays a vital role in the socialization process since “the language habits of our community predisposes certain choices of interpretation” (p. 223). In the scope of the present study, it can be argued that this stands as the main reason that gender discriminatory representation at the micro level of Moroccan EFL textbooks has persistently led to a deterioration of women’ image at the macro level of society.

Methodology of the study
1- Materials
The present study examines four English textbooks which have been widely used in the Moroccan high school for Common Core English language learners namely: “English in Life” (1990), “Quick Way” (2002), “Visa to the World” (2005), and “Window on the World” (2005).
The textbooks were selected on the basis of their common themes and the different dates of publication starting from 1990 to 2005.

2- Procedure
Based on the criteria advanced by Oliver (1974) and Porreca (1984) for the analysis of sexism in language and rather than a single-way method of textbook analysis, the current study adopts a combination of quantifying data analysis and context-sensitive approach as a mixed-method of investigation to scrutinize the underlying gendered discourse embedded in the textbooks’ components.

In fact, Oliver (1974) adopts the following criteria for sexism analysis in language:
1) Frequency of occurrence
2) Personality or characteristics
3) Interests and activities
4) Professions or career options
5) Physical appearance
6) Role in the family.

In the same vein, Porreca (1984) highlights the following criteria as an attempt to deconstruct sexist language:
1) Omission in text and illustrations
2) Firstness
3) Occupational visibility in text illustrations
4) Nouns used to describe women and men
5) Masculine generic constructions
6) Adjectives

Some of these criteria will be used throughout the present paper as main benchmarks to uncover gender ideology underlying all textbook dialogues as a corpus of linguistic data along with their concomitant pedagogical illustrations.

Findings: Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis and Discussion
The following discussion and analysis of gender discrimination in the Moroccan ELT textbooks will be mainly based on some criteria adopted by Oliver and Porecca in the analysis of sexism in language.

1- Professions or Career Options/Occupational Visibility in Text Illustrations/Frequency of Occurrence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational roles</th>
<th>English in Life</th>
<th>Quick Way</th>
<th>Visa to the World</th>
<th>Window on the World</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Gender representation in occupational roles
As it is revealed in Table 1, more visibility is given to the males than females, fifty-two against thirty-six respectively. In fact, gender discrimination in the Moroccan EFL textbooks is crystal clear in different spheres.

The quantitative inquiry into the frequency of women’s visibility in some high-social ranked jobs reveals the fact that the discriminatory distribution of gender roles provides male learners with ample opportunities to identify with socially high-ranked jobs, while their female counterparts are channeled towards traditional female occupations that relegate them to a secondary position in society.

In “English in Life”, “Quick Way” and “Visa to the World”, there is a clear absence of female doctors. Most protagonists and secondary characters are presented as secretaries, librarians, shop assistants or teachers. Men mainly take high social and economic status jobs while women are mainly presented as service workers or housewives.

In “English in Life”, men tend to occupy both more powerful and a greater range of occupational roles than women. Mr. Rich is presented as a self-assertive and boastful film director and producer who all the time speaks about his successful films and future plans. Also there is more emphasis on Mr. Lynch professional profile in the field of engineering. Many dialogues depict him as a hardworking, ambitious and successful engineer.
Male characters playing the role of doctors are described as being intellectual, active and intelligent. As the main source of information and in a superior-inferior position with women, they examine their patients, prescribe treatments and perform surgeries. By contrast, female doctors are almost absent in all exchanges and interactions. They are presented as secondary characters or referred to with titles and piece of information that focus on their personal and private life.

In “Window on the World”, Diana’s female doctor, as an exception, represents a typical example of a female doctor who provides her patient with valuable information about her infected eye and advises her to consult an ophthalmologist. Mrs. Itry, another female protagonist, is introduced to the learner in the beginning of this textbook as a doctor only through a conversation between her colleagues. Astonishing enough, as a fact of traditional perception of women’s identity, is that one of her fellow doctors neglects her professional profile and focuses merely on her familial status. Her professional information, skills or competence as a doctor seem to be thoroughly absent in the following dialogue:

![Figure 1: Dr. Brown and Dr. Stone’s conversation about Mrs. Itry](image)


The marginalization of Mrs. Itry’s professional identity is reinforced by the way the conversation about her is accompanied with a pictorial illustration depicting the two doctors in the surgery room identifying her through her husband (Dr. Itry). No visual depiction of this female character wearing the doctor’s coat is provided. Rather, most of the pictures show Mrs. Itry in her Kitchen apron.

The depiction of males and females as journalists provides another example of the polar distribution of gendered occupations. In the four textbooks, male journalists outnumber their female counterparts whose intellectual and professional competence in the dialogues is demeaned and juxtaposed with that of the male journalists.

In “Quick Way”, it is true that the female journalist is given the prominence of initiating a dialogue; still, the conversation revolves around different types of clothes and dressing styles. The interview below represents a clear illustration of the themes mostly dealt with by female journalists (social and personal affairs, fashion and ordinary lifestyle matters).
By contrast, these areas of females’ interests in the field of journalism are recursively juxtaposed to their male counterparts’ specialization. In “English in Life”, male journalists are depicted as being interested in socially and intellectually higher areas. The interview between a male journalist and Mr. Lynch, the famous film director and producer, reflects an apparently typical example. In this interview, Mr. Lynch is asked about his career and future plans merely by male journalists to whom he speaks boastfully about his enchanted success and fame in the world of film making and production. The dialogue is illustrated with a picture showing Mr. Lynch surrounded only by male journalists in a press conference (p. 85).

Comparing the specific occupations of women and men, we can see from Table 1 as well as the dialogues and their illustrations that the social status of women’s occupations has increased to a certain degree. Compared with “English in Life”, women in “Visa” and “Window” began to serve as doctors, pharmacists, etc. In “Quick Way”, women hold the posts of office managers and journalists, etc.; occupations which were absent in “English in Life”.

But, generally, the social status of women’s occupations is lower than that of men’s who are mainly depicted in high-ranked jobs, i.e., engineer, businessman, police officer, film director, boss, etc. Other traditionally male-dominated occupations, like driver, chef, soldier, etc. are still taken by men. Similarly, the traditionally female-dominated occupations, such as nurse, waitress, shop assistant, receptionist, etc. are still hold by women. However, in the present situation, and with the social and economic development of Morocco, more and more women are participating in the labor force, with increasing occupations diversity and social status. All this entails that the representation of gender occupations in these textbooks does not accord with the actual changes of the Moroccan society.

2- Gender Roles in the Family
In addition to the fact that more females are recurrently appointed to very specific jobs such as secretaries, shop assistants and teachers, they are more frequently depicted as mothers.

In fact, biased perceptions of gender roles in terms of duties prove to be omnipresent in the targeted ELT textbooks. These textbooks use family stories depicting gender roles in the two polar spheres of the private/public, which, unfortunately, reflects the preconceived ideas that the textbooks designers intentionally or unintentionally hold about gender roles.
By contrast, in “English in Life”, where there is a conspicuous tendency towards an emulation of Western and Local cultures through the way the main characters are depicted, there is also a more tendency towards an emulation of gender roles. Examples in the following discussion demonstrate this point.

On the onset of this textbook, the learner is intended to identify with the character of an American engineer, Steve Lynch, and his family. In terms of gender roles, the family is fairly traditional because Barbara, a wife and a mother to three children represents the typical example of an independent and self-assertive woman who works as a teacher. The egalitarian depiction of gender roles is early established through the following reading passage.

In this reading passage, by undertaking domestic duties, Steve, the husband, illustrates a male role that is often encouraged in Western cultures. On the other hand, the wife is not presented as a traditional housewife. Rather, she is depicted as a modern and emancipated woman who openly exhibits her reluctance to participate in the routine actions of cooking and preparing meals as a mainly female dominated role. This would bring strong prove to the assumption that the home and domestic activities are displayed in such a way that traditional gender roles are questioned if not subverted. In addition to the fact that the passage identifies the reader with the roles advocated by many Western cultures, it also ends with an open and thought provoking question which invites the reader to critically analyze and rethink the gender distribution of social roles. Hence, the question ushers a hot debate about whether or not Barbara should be criticized for not abiding by the traditional female roles.

In the following exchange with Mrs. Nasri, Barbara proceeds to complain about the routine actions of childrearing and housekeeping that are mostly allotted to women:
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Such a conversation would make the reader identify with a new image of women and would, certainly, inspire him/her to challenge all the ideological discourses which tend to produce a homogeneous image of women as weak social entities.

In many contexts, the same female character is depicted as challenging the traditionally gendered prescribed roles. From the very beginning, she is introduced to the learner in a way that makes him/her rethink all gender stereotypes. In a reading text, and along its illustration, she is presented in the kitchen; she is cooking a chicken for lunch, but she is described as a terrible, lazy cook (p. 48). In another reading text, she openly says:

![Figure 5: Barbara’s diary]

The representation of the other types of women is illustrated through the personality of Meriem as a secondary character. She is presented as a typically traditional housewife who usually contends about the stinginess of her rich husband. Her identity as a feminine entity is closely bound to her husband, which represents another extreme of a fragile, docile and non-independent woman. This idea is obviously expressed when she proudly admits:

![Figure 6: Meriem’s letter]

The summer is already here in this part of the world. Time flies but today I have nothing to do and am feeling lonely. The children are at school. Steve is at work. My teaching contract with the Society for International Teachers (SIT) ends next month. It’s time for me to think about my future. I don’t want to be just a housewife again. I would like to study Arabic because I want to be an interpreter. Life is hard.

Najahi always drives me when I go out, and he enjoys the drive to Mohammedia. (He says it’s more feminine if the wife asks the husband to drive her.)


Source: “English in Life”, p.185.
In “Window on the World”, the learner is introduced to the Itry family through a picture that compiles all details to reflect the lifestyle of the modern Moroccan nuclear family in London as a host country (see Figure 7). All the family members are present in the picture. Both Mr. and Mrs. Itry are dressed in Moroccan traditional clothes. They are performing roles that subvert the traditional roles assigned to both genders. While using the net, the mother is supervising her children’s learning; the father is holding a tray to serve Moroccan tea to his family. The picture is intentionally presented to convey that the Itry family preserves the homeland traditions and simultaneously adapts to the host country’s values. In contrast to “English in Life”, the emulation of Western and Local culture does not imply a similar tendency in “Window on the World”. In fact, the focus on Mrs. Itry’s identity as a wife and mother as well as the emphasis on her interests, activities, domestic chores marginalize her professional profile as a career woman.

All this suggests that the unbalanced portrayal of gender occupations in “Quick Way”, “Visa” and “Window” textbooks is extended to the representation of gender roles in the family. Twenty-seven years ago in “English in Life”, the females’ professional roles were highlighted at the expense of their domestic roles. The books designers were more aware of the importance of creating a balanced image of gender responsibilities within the family. This tendency narrowed in the other three textbooks to prove women’s presence merely through their domestic and social roles.

3- Gender Interests and Activities
The stereotypical representation of gender roles in occupational, household as well as domestic duties persists to reach other social contexts. In the four textbooks, women occupy most space in shopping places throughout the textbooks’ exchanges and illustrations, thus reinforcing the stereotypical perception of women as shopping lovers thoroughly possessed by fashion and consumption. What is most striking is the fact that all learners will internalize these preconceived ideas since they have to go through all the dialogues and their concomitant illustrations which provide the cornerstones of their learning in the unit on the theme of “Shopping”.
In “Window”, two big-scaled pictures appear at the picture talk activities in two consecutive units, namely “Food and Holidays” and “Shopping”. The former (Figure 8) provides the learners with a picture in which a woman is shopping at the supermarket. They are invited to talk about the ingredients needed for dishes, express their likes and dislikes and compare prices. The latter (Figure 9) opens with a picture depicting two women immersed in their realm of shopping. The picture stands as prelude to the first dialogue in the unit between Mrs. Itry and Mrs. Baker about carpets. The fact that these female characters are immersed in the realm of shopping doesn’t prevent them from thinking about their husbands and referring to them. Indeed, Mrs. Baker claims that she needs her husband’s opinion about the most suitable carpet for their house even though she is offered a catalogue. The husband’s existence weighs heavily on the wife’s thoughts and decisions (p. 86).

The same perception of women as being hesitant and seeking their husbands’ opinion and consent is expressed in an exchange between Mr. and Mrs. Brown in “Quick way” textbook (p. 65). Mrs. Brown cannot give her daughter Jimmy the permission to go on picnic with her friends. Rather, she asks her to consult her father for the final decision.

In “Visa”, as a response to Cynthia’s invitation to her party, Janice should talk to Albert and the kids before deciding to attend it (p. 65). Thus, the trends reflecting men as being self-confident and assertive while depicting women as weak, less informed and, consequently, unable to make decisions or act independently of their husbands reinforce male preponderance in the decision making ambit.
Two main dialogues in “Visa” are used for listening and reading practice; they are followed by comprehension questions and grammar exercises. The first main dialogue is performed by Mary and Kate at a clothes shop (Figure 10). In the second one, Pierre and Omar are at the bookshop (Figure 11). Pierre is just browsing, whereas Omar is looking for a map about historical places in London and an English cookbook that he needs for his research.

The visibility of females in the shopping activity is higher than that of their male counterparts in ELT Moroccan textbooks. As mentioned above, in “Windows”, the two consecutive units, namely “Food and Holidays” and “Shopping” open up with big-scaled pictures portraying females characters involved in their shopping activities (see Figures 8-9). This idea is present in “Visa”. In one minor dialogue for language practice, Mike is looking for books to set up a reading club at the school library (p. 54). In extension of the lesson based on shopping as a theme, the students are presented with a picture reinforcing the visibility of women in the shopping activity through the use of vivid colours and through the number of female shoppers which exceeds the number of their male counterparts (three adult women, a man and a boy).

![Figure 12: People in a shop clothes](source: Taken from a grammar activity: ‘What are the people doing?’ “Visa to the World”, p. 54.)

The different shopping places where the two genders congregate reflect an ensuing distribution of gender-based interests. All the Shopping Units in “Visa” and “Window on the World” are slightly more female-centred. From this point of view, the analysed dialogues and illustrations have clear manifestations of sexism. In most dialogues where people are shopping (for clothes and food), only women appear, thus consolidating the preconceived idea of women as being overwhelmed by their love for shopping. Meanwhile, when food is concerned, female characters are presented as the only person in the family in charge of the routine duties of grocery-shopping.

Conversely, in “English in Life”, Mrs. Lynch appears talking with her husband about food items for shopping (p. 128). This implies that both genders equally share the household responsibility of food shopping.

In other contexts, food shopping as a routine action is carried out by her son and daughter. They bring with them a shopping list already prepared by Mrs. Lynch who is ill and, thus, cannot do the shopping herself (p. 144).

While shopping activities are presented in “Visa” and “Window” merely as hobbies that satisfy women’s endeavour for fashion and consumption, in “English in Life’ these activities are
portrayed as a household and domestic duty shared by both sexes. “Quick Way” textbook doesn’t make any reference to these activities. In fact, in this textbook there is no special unit based on the theme of shopping.  

Mr. Nasri in another reading passage does the shopping. Astonishing enough is the fact that shopping is presented as only one activity among other hobbies and activities that he practices in his free time (p. 43). All this implies that twenty-seven years ago “English in Life” textbook designers were aware of the preconceived ideas ideologically held about women’s possession by their unbeatable passion for shopping and consumption, and, hence, attempted to challenge it through their main characters’ activities, behaviour and attitudes.  

In addition to their passion for shopping, females are also portrayed as being immersed in indoor activities. Being sociable, they enjoy organizing social events such as parties. In “Window”, Zaina in a dialogue with her brother Hamid is planning to invite her friends for lunch and decides to have barbecue which will be made by her mother (p. 37). Kate and Cynthia in “Visa”, in separate single-sex exchanges (involving females only), are inviting Betty and Janice to attend their parties (p. 62; p. 65).  

“English in Life” also introduces the learner to many situations where women organize parties as social activities in which they indulge from time to time. Still, the reasons for which they organize these parties seem to be apparently different from the ones presented in “Visa”, “Window” and “Quick Way”. Indeed, in “English in Life”, the two parties are organized to celebrate important events in the female characters’ occupational and personal lives. In an invitation letter, Mrs. Lynch invites her acquaintances for a tea party to say goodbye (p. 182). Similarly, another dialogue depicts Mrs. Sharp in a farewell party organized secretly by her colleagues to make it surprise (p. 211). The two women are going to leave their jobs and go back to their home countries with their families. This, undoubtedly, mitigates the stereotypical idea that women indulge in trivial activities which are meant just to entertain themselves and spend good times with friends and relatives.  

On the other hand, all the parties in “Visa” and “Window” are organized merely for entertainment and fun. In “Quick Way”, apart from an invitation to a marriage ceremony in unit 10 on the theme of “Celebrations” (p. 91), all other invitations are more specifically made to share a drink in a café, have dinner in a restaurant or go to the movies (p. 89). The main dialogues about these parties revolve around food, drinks and guests who are expected to attend them. No reference to the reasons for organizing these parties is made anywhere in any dialogue.  

Conclusion  
To conclude, this diachronic study indicates that in the past twenty seven years, some efforts of gender inclusion in the Moroccan ELT textbooks have been consciously invested by book designers through different themes, characters, linguistic as well as pictorial illustrations. However, multiple gender inequalities prove to persist in the four ELT Moroccan textbooks under study. The quantifying data analysis and context-sensitive approach have been employed throughout the present paper to uncover gender imbalance in the four targeted textbooks. The double-method of investigation is also meant to demonstrate the underlying ideological system which persistently deteriorate rather than optimize the image of women in different spheres.
throughout the targeted textbooks that have been published in different years. Among the main
textbook components analyzed are the dialogues as a corpus of linguistic data with their
concomitant pedagogical illustrations. In fact, through a close analysis and interpretation of these
dialogues and illustrations, the study reveals that:

- There exist different privileges which both genders enjoy; males and females’ scope of
  power is relatively widened or narrowed according to their prescribed-gender roles.

- Women are stereotypically depicted as being fully immersed in domestic and household
  roles that relegate them to a secondary, subordinate and vulnerable position in society; their
  occupational roles are more related to caring and social work. On the other hand, males are
  generally overrepresented in highly ranked occupations that reflect their visibility and supremacy
  in powerful walks of life.

- Other themes that are mainly related to both genders’ interests and activities negatively
  portray women as being possessed by their passion for shopping and indulging in trivial
  activities that cloister them in the realm of consumption and equally marginalize them within the
  manly-dominated realm of production.

In spite of the progress that textbook writers have been trying to make, much space is still
there for more pedagogical improvement and innovation at the level of gender representation in
the EFL Moroccan textbooks. It is surprising that the unfair distribution of gender roles in
textbooks does not equally correspond to the main principles underlying the Moroccan feminist
discourse as well as the human rights and civic education values recommended in the National
Charter for Education and Training in Morocco.

Limitations of the Study
Space constraints have been a primary reason for not adopting all criteria of sexist language
analysis advanced by Oliver (1974) and Porecca (1984) so as to deeply and broadly delineate
gender-discriminatory representation in different spheres within the four targeted textbooks.
Another limitation related to space constraints concerns the targeted textbooks as teaching and
learning materials. In fact, other ELT textbooks for intermediate students of first and second
baccalaureate are to be closely analysed in order to come up with a large-scaled research that
offers wider generalizations and enlarges the corpus of data.

A further limitation also relates to the methodology of research adopted in this study.
Admittedly, the two-method used to analyse the linguistic corpus data and the accompanying
illustrations quantitatively and qualitatively has been very instrumental in adopting Oliver and
Porecca’s criteria to scrutinize gender bias in textbooks. Nonetheless, to come up with a
complementary study, researchers should target both teachers and students’ practices and
attitudes towards all dialogues and illustrations embedding biased representation of gender.
Thus, the variation of methods including, questionnaire, interviews, video and audio recordings
of all teaching and learning practices in the classroom represents an important component of any
further research in order to broaden the scope of investigation in this topic. The suggestions as
well as the implications of the findings advanced in the following section will actually attempt to
narrow this gap.

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Recommendations and Implications of the Study

Optimizing gender representation in textbooks as a primary step towards zero tolerance on gender bias and towards pedagogical innovation in the Moroccan curriculum seems to be a long way process which needs outstanding initiatives. Indeed, both gender biased and gender-balanced texts can be endorsed or subverted and used in a constructive way by teachers in different ways. Therefore, unless we observe how the text is actually used in class by the teacher and how its underlying discourses are perceived by the students, it is impossible to predict the pedagogical implications of any gender biased text.

All this suggests the urgent need to undertake more empirical research and target the teaching and learning practices in the classroom where both the teacher and learner are constantly exposed to different folds of gender discourse. However, this should not offer textbook designers and publishing houses alike with an excuse for not adopting a gender approach and for not considering it as an outstanding issue for deep analysis and rethinking. Regardless of teachers’ use of texts or students’ perceptions of their underlying content, gender balance inclusion in textbooks should still be the primary step in the textbook designers’ pedagogical agendas.

More importantly, is the need for all Moroccan CRMEFs (Centres Régionaux des Métiers de l’Education et de la Formation) and all other teacher training centres to open broad avenues towards a preparation of new generations of teachers ready to face the challenge of subverting even the most gender biased and sexist text and use them constructively. In fact, teacher training in the treatment of gender biased texts could be an effective step towards a progressive and gender-balanced use of textbooks. In respect with this view, Hartman and Judd (1978) assert that whenever teachers confront any case of gender imbalance within the textbook, they may create ample opportunities to provoke students’ interest and stimulate their motivation for learning. This could be effectively achieved by raising them as issues worth debate and discussion in the classroom.

Ultimately, in addition to subject experts, we suggest the integration of gender experts in the Moroccan national teaching course council so as to evaluate gender representation in textbooks. Such an evaluation will pave the way to develop formal guidelines for editors to consider gender balanced representation in the Moroccan textbooks. This would stand as a firm step towards a progressive and innovative view of pedagogy.

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An Experimental Study of the Effect of Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) on Vocabulary Learning of EFL Adult Learners

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Abstract;  
Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) has been considered as an important cooperative learning strategy in progressive pedagogy. A number of studies have supported the use of STAD in different subject areas and in different socio-cultural contexts. However, it is still an under-researched area in countries like Saudi Arabia where English is taught as a Foreign Language. This quasi-experimental study was conducted in Unaizah Community College, Saudi Arabia. Both the experimental group and the control group were tested on 2000-word vocabulary test. A vocabulary test was prepared and administered by the researchers at the beginning of the experiment as a pre-test. The experimental group was taught with Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) strategy whereas the control group was taught with traditional whole-class instruction method. The treatment was carried out for two weeks. At the end of the experiment, the same vocabulary test was re-administered as a post-test. Independent samples t-test was used to analyze the data using SPSS 21. Results showed that there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in favor of the experimental group (p= 0.002 < 0.05).

Key Words: Cooperative learning, EFL learners, STAD, vocabulary learning

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Introduction

English is taught as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia and it is perhaps the only recognized foreign language in the kingdom. Arabic is the official language and the medium of instruction for all subjects even at the university level. Though English may be spoken in some EFL classrooms, it is hardly used in Saudi society. Though a wide range of majors now require at least an introductory course in English, it is still struggling to find the status of a living language and not to be treated as merely a subject.

Among some other reasons for Saudi EFL learners’ poor performance in English, teaching methods are most commonly discussed and critiqued. According to Al-Seghayer (2015), EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia mostly use traditional methods of teaching. Grammar-translation is the most commonly used method in Saudi Arabia. Teachers translate some passages in students’ native language—Arabic and write some words on the boards. The students are required to copy them and memorize their meanings. They presuppose that their students will learn new words on their own, without much guidance or explicit instruction. However, Al-Zahrani (2011) claims that such ineffective vocabulary instruction leads to low vocabulary achievement among Saudi EFL learners. Therefore, the students are incapable of improving their linguistic skills in general and their vocabulary in particular.

Vocabulary has long been considered as one of the major contributors to learners’ performance in English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Vocabulary knowledge is at the heart of foreign language ability (Al-Masrai & Milton, 2012). It is an increasingly important area in applied linguistics. According to Al-Darayseh (2014), EFL learners with poor vocabulary are unable to comprehend a given passage. Highlighting the importance of vocabulary knowledge, Mahmoud (2014) argues that learners with poor vocabulary are unable to perform well in other areas of language as well. Therefore, the need of the hour is that EFL teachers should recognize that vocabulary has a pivotal role to play in second language (L2) learning and try to improve their learners’ vocabulary.

Saudi EFL classrooms are vibrant in translations and rote-memorization. Student-student interaction is yet to be seen in Saudi EFL classrooms. If, by chance, there is any class activity, it is often in Arabic, unless the teacher requires students to do it in English and watches them carefully while they are performing it. All class activities are done individually and usually there is teacher’s feedback at the end. The students have a very passive role in such teacher-centered instruction as compared to student-centered instruction. (Struyven, Dochy, & Janssens, 2010). They are hardly given any chance of peer feedback or peer correction. However, as Tiantong and Teemuansai (2013) point out; memorizing the course content would hardly work in the 21st century; new techniques will have to find their ways in classroom practices. It seems that teaching language in this century requires teachers to be literate and well-versed in the current methods of handling classes (Ali, Mukundan, Baki & Ayub, 2012). Thus Saudi EFL classrooms may see more student-centered teaching strategies in the time to come.

Lazarus (2014) argues that there should be awareness among teachers regarding the importance and implementation of peer tutoring and cooperative learning strategies. Keeping in
mind the low proficiency level of Saudi EFL learners, teachers should try to create more student-centered classrooms. Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) is a simple and flexible strategy that can be applied to a variety of subjects in different classroom settings (Ishtiaq, Ali & Salem, 2015). It is a strategy of Cooperative Learning (CL) that may become a possible alternative to teacher-centered instruction (Haydon, Maheady & Hunter, 2010). STAD was developed by Slavin (1995, as cited in Van Wyk, 2012) at John Hopkins University. Since then, it has been used in a variety of subjects and on a variety of students from grade two to college level students (Tiantong & Teemuansai, 2013). However, a great deal of previous research was conducted in native English speaking countries and STAD is still under-researched in EFL contexts (Alijanian, 2012). Saudi Arabia is one such example where cooperative learning strategies may be given a chance to perform their role in improving EFL learners’ linguistic proficiency.

Low vocabulary achievement of EFL learners in Saudi Arabia is one of the major concerns of EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia. According to Guduru (2014), Saudi EFL learners neither have sufficient vocabulary nor are aware of vocabulary learning strategies. Nosidlak (2013) argues that vocabulary retention is especially important for university students who are expected to know more words as compared to younger students. The students’ lack of vocabulary to a certain level is especially felt when they reach university, where they are expected to have a comprehensive vocabulary level. Liton (2012) contends that a number of Saudi EFL learners do not have sufficient vocabulary at the college level. This may affect their overall language proficiency and hinder their progress in all areas of language. Alsaif & Milton (2012) point out that in a test held by the Ministry of Education (Saudi Arabia), learners recognized only 340 words out of a list of 2000. In such a meager situation, it is expected from EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia that they should find ways to help their learners build a large lexicon through different teaching strategies.

This experimental study investigates the effects of STAD—a strategy of cooperative learning on Saudi EFL adult learners’ vocabulary achievement. The study suggests a shift from teacher-centered teaching to learner-centered strategies. New interventions and strategies might find their way in EFL classrooms. The focus of the study is, of course, learners, but teachers and policy makers may also equally benefit from this study. Owing to the lack of such studies in Saudi Arabia, significance of the current study may further be enhanced. Further studies may be carried out to examine the effect of this strategy on other areas of language, for example reading, writing and grammar.

Literature Review

2.1 Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary learning has long been an issue for research in second language (L2) learning. According to Noor and Amir (2009), this area has been ignored by researchers from 1940s till 1960s; however, research in this area has grown a lot in recent years. Over the past two decades, the research on vocabulary has increased in volume (Al-Masrai & Milton, 2012). According to Crossley and Salsbury (2011), vocabulary competence of L2 learners is a crucial area of study both in practice and in theory. Learners without sufficient amount of vocabulary may not perform well in other areas of language as well. Vocabulary proficiency of L2 learners is of great importance to language acquisition and linguistic competence (Crossley, Salsbury,
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McNamara, & Jarvis, (2011a). Therefore, it is expected that EFL learners should have sufficient vocabulary especially at college level.

Vocabulary is considered as very important aspect of L2 learning. Researchers have long held the view that vocabulary plays a vital role in second language learning (Alhaysony, 2012). Schmitt (2008) contends that students, teachers, materials writers and researchers all of them are convinced that vocabulary learning is essential for learning a second language. However, Schmitt (2008) continues, that both students and teachers are unsure of the best way of learning vocabulary. Researchers have been trying hard to find different aspects of vocabulary learning to help their learners improve their vocabulary. Vocabulary development has attracted many researchers in the field of Second Language Acquisition because it has a special role to play especially in those places where there is low language acquisition (Zheng, 2012). Since English is taught as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia and learners’ language proficiency is not up to the desired level, vocabulary learning, therefore, has a special importance in Saudi context.

A considerable amount of literature has been published to show the importance of vocabulary in L2 learning. Vocabulary learning is important for improving all the four language skills (Ahmad 2012; Alhaysony, 2012); therefore, researchers have given special attention to it (Alhaysony, 2012). In recent studies, vocabulary has been given special importance with reference to reading ability. According to Woolley (2010), learners cannot comprehend a given passage because they don’t have sufficient vocabulary. Wallace (2008) also concluded that learners found difficulty in reading because of their poor vocabulary. The learners’ poor vocabulary may affect other areas of language proficiency as well. According to Ahmad (2012), vocabulary development is a prerequisite for EFL/ESL learners to enhance their proficiency in English. In Short, vocabulary learning is important to improve all areas of language proficiency especially in EFL contexts like Saudi Arabia.

2.2 Components of Cooperative Learning

According to Johnson, Johnson and Smith (2007), there are five components of cooperative learning-(i) positive interdependence, (ii) promotive interaction, (iii) individual accountability, (iv) social skills, and (v) group processing.

(i) Positive Interdependence: Positive Interdependence means that everyone understands that they can achieve their academic goals if every member plays his/her role (Gillies, 2007). Individual’s importance was seen in connection with his/her group. According to Wallestad (2010), positive interdependence means that there are clear academic goals before the students and they make sure that everyone understands the material to achieve their goals.

(ii) Promotive Interaction: According to Johnson and Johnson (2009), promotive interaction occurs when individuals help each other to accomplish group goals. They argue that promotive interaction provides the students a chance to listen to one another, gives them help and support, and enhances motivation among the group members. Gillies (2007) calls this as face to face interaction. He points out that students work in small groups and see each other during discussions which enhances interaction among them. This important factor seems to be missing in some EFL classrooms.
(iii) Individual Accountability: Individual accountability means that students understand that they are responsible for their contributions to the group. This is because of this sense of responsibility that there is no social loafing in the groups (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Thus CL does not mean working in groups; it means working as a responsible member of a group. Johnson and Johnson (2009) argue that individual accountability guarantees personal responsibility, if there is no individual accountability there will be no personal responsibility. This is an important point in CL that shifts the responsibility of learning from teachers to learners.

(iv) Social Skills: According to Johnson and Johnson (2010), students should have social skills required for group work which means that they should know how to behave when winning or losing a competition. Social Skills involve interpersonal and communicative skill needed to cooperate in a group discussion (Gilliies, 2007). This component of CL is especially useful for helping and encouraging learners who are not very confident in communication. It is not possible that all students in a group can communicate well; therefore, social skills need to be developed among the students to work in their groups effectively (Wallestad, 2010).

(v) Group Processing assesses the process of cooperative learning. It assesses the students’ reflection on their progress; how well they are doing, what they should continue and what needs improvement (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). Instead of teachers’ feedback, CL encourages learners to give feedback on their own progress. According to Wallestad (2010), the group members need to reflect on what went wrong or what remained successful in achieving their goals. This helps the learners evaluate their groups for any mistakes that they have done and learn from their mistakes.

2.2.1 Theoretical underpinning
This study is based on Slavin’s (1995) CL model as it seems to be more comprehensive and more holistic. It depicts different theoretical approaches and shows how different components work together. It shows the relationship and interdependence of different components of cooperative learning mainly focusing on group goals based on individual learning of all group members. It presumes that motivation to learn and help and encourage others to do so activates cooperation among group members that enhances motivation (Slavin, 2010). The results on the teaching practices can be very positive as learners’ language input perception would improve considerably.

Slavin (1995) argues that CL succeeds because it uses convergent tasks: group goals based on individual responsibility of all group members lead to increased learning achievement. He further elaborates his model and maintains that motivation drives the behavior and attitudes that foster group cohesion, which in turn facilitates the types of group interactions—peer modeling, equilibration and cognitive elaboration—that yield enhanced learning and achievement (Slavin, 2010). In the study at hand, STAD was used as a strategy of cooperative learning. The study investigated the effects of STAD on Saudi EFL learners’ vocabulary achievement. Figure 1 explains this cooperative learning model adopted from Slavin (1995).
Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.1: Cooperative learning model (adopted from Slavin, 1995).

2.3 Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD)

Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) is a structured learning strategy that was developed by Slavin (1995) at John Hopkins University (as cited in VanWyk, 2012). Students are assigned to small groups where they cooperate with one another to achieve a common academic goal. There are five steps of STAD-(i) heterogeneous groups are formed based on the learners’ academic achievement (ii) the teacher gives the instruction (iii) learners help one another to understand the material given by the teacher in the form of worksheets (iv) learners take individual quizzes and are not allowed to help one another (v) high scoring teams are rewarded with some kind of certificate or their names are written on the bulletin board (Slavin, 1995).

There are many practical reasons for choosing STAD as a cooperative learning strategy. The most important reason for choosing STAD, however, is that it inherits almost all the elements of Slavin’s (1995) CL model. Cohesive groups are the first requirement of the CL model. STAD also lays its foundation on building a strong bond among the members of heterogeneous groups. In STAD, learners teach one another and develop a strong relationship among them (Slavin, 1992). The learners in STAD cooperate with one another in order to achieve common academic goals. They tutor one another to prepare for individual quizzes (Alijanian, 2012). This develops cooperation and interaction among the learners. Therefore, STAD was seen as a strategy that incorporates all the elements of CL and thus may help improve learning-teaching situation in Qassim University.

Like other CL strategies, motivation is one of the main elements in STAD. According to Alijanian (2012), STAD has a strong link with motivation and has contributed a lot to motivate students. Motivation to work and win for their teams, play an important role in STAD. Slavin (1995) argues that team rewards enhance both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. When learners know that their groups will be rewarded on their performance, they not only work harder by
themselves, but also they encourage other group members to put their efforts. Warawudhi (2012) is also of the opinion that STAD has a positive effect on learners’ attitudes and motivation. Thus STAD stands out as a prominent CL strategy that may help EFL learners in improving their language proficiency.

Peer practice which is the heart of STAD is another important element of CL model. Learners are given an opportunity to practice English in real-life situations with their peers of the same age and of different proficiency level. This develops student-student and student-teacher interaction in the class (Warawudhi, 2012). Learners will be at comfort if they discuss something with their group members and then with their teachers. Chim (2015) also believes that STAD not only gives socialization experience to learners, it also develops interaction patterns between high and low achievers which are yet to be discovered by researchers. This is, perhaps, what Qassim University EFL leaners require. According to Mohseny, and Jamour, (2012), STAD enhances interaction among the students, improves communicative and interpersonal skills and develops self-esteem and self-confidence. Peer practice may be the first step towards enhancing Saudi EFL learners’ self-esteem, self-confidence and ultimately developing their linguistic and communicative competence.

2.4 Points of Convergence between CL and Vocabulary Learning

Cooperative learning strategies engage students in different tasks that help them learn in a congenial atmosphere. This engagement is helpful in learning a new language. If it is about learning new vocabulary, there seems to be a connection between cooperative learning and vocabulary learning. Schmitt (2008) argues that learners’ vocabulary can be fostered by enhancing their engagement with target vocabulary. Learners’ engagement is the basic tenet of cooperative learning strategies. Basic task for students, teachers and materials writers in vocabulary learning is to promote more engagement (Schmitt, 2008). Thus, involvement of students in different class activities seems to be the basic point of convergence between CL and vocabulary learning.

Cooperative learning promotes active learning in class. According to Schmitt (2008), learners need to be active for a long period of time in order to reach a substantial vocabulary size. The more they are involved in learning new vocabulary, the more they learn. In their Depth/Levels of Processing Hypothesis, Craik and Lockhart (1972) assert that learners remember more if they pay more attention to a lexical item. Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) Involvement Load Hypothesis strengthens this view. According to this hypothesis, learners need i.e. require the meaning of the new word, search its meaning and come to the evaluation stage where they evaluate the word for comparison or to use it in that particular context. This suggests that more involvement, more attention and more manipulation of the target vocabulary can enhance a learner’s vocabulary. These elements are well reflected in cooperative learning strategies.

Motivation is another key element in cooperative learning. Cooperative learning strategies enhance motivation that in turn enhances learning (Slavin, 1995). The relationship of vocabulary learning and motivation has also been established by many researchers. According to Schmitt (2008), students will not be able to master new vocabulary unless they are motivated to learn and change their attitudes towards learning. Therefore, it seems that engagement in vocabulary learning, motivation for learning and CL strategies are part and parcel of each other. They are so much intertwined that it will be hard to entangle them.
2.4 Previous Studies on Vocabulary Learning

A considerable amount of literature has been published about the vocabulary learning in L2 that shows the importance of this area of research. Vocabulary learning is important for improving all the four language skills (Ahmad 2012; Alhaysony, 2012); therefore, researchers have given special attention to it (Alhaysony, 2012). In recent studies, vocabulary has been given special importance with reference to reading ability. According to Woolley (2010), learners cannot comprehend a given passage because they don’t have sufficient vocabulary. Wallace (2008) also concluded that learners found difficulty in reading because of their poor vocabulary. Learners’ poor vocabulary may affect other areas of language proficiency as well. In short, vocabulary learning is important to improve all areas of language proficiency and its importance is enhanced many folds in an EFL context.

Ahmad (2012) conducted a study to distinguish between intentional and incidental vocabulary learning in Saudi Arabia. Twenty students were divided into two equal groups. Both of the groups took a standard confirmation test and a vocabulary test. After a week, final test was administered. One group was requested to attempt intentional and the other was requested to attempt incidental vocabulary. The findings revealed that incidental vocabulary learning group outperformed the intentional vocabulary learning group. The author concluded that incidental vocabulary technique is better than the intentional method of teaching. However, the study had only 10 participants in each group. Secondly, the participants were from different professional courses and not from English majors.

Al-Darayesh (2014) investigated the impact of explicit/implicit vocabulary strategies on Saudi students’ vocabulary and reading comprehension. The study utilized the pre-test post-test quasi-experimental design. Results showed a significant difference between the experimental and the control group in favor of the experimental group. However, participants in this study were not majoring in English. Secondly, two different instructors taught the experimental and the control group which raises some questions about the internal validity of the study.

Baniabdelrahman and Al-shumaimeri (2013) studied the strategies used by Saudi EFL students to determine the meanings of English words. It was a survey study with pre and posttest of vocabulary. The authors concluded that Saudi students are weak in guessing the meanings of unfamiliar words. They further explained that the students are not taught the strategies to guess the meanings; instead the teachers translate the words in Arabic or tell the students to use their dictionaries. However, the authors themselves directed the students to write the meanings of the words in Arabic in the pre-test. Secondly, here again, the authors selected non-English majors for their study.

Bilen and Tavil (2015) conducted a study of the effects of CL strategies on vocabulary skills of 4th graders in Turkey. The study aimed at finding the attitudes of the experimental group towards the CL. The findings revealed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on the post-test. The authors concluded that CL strategies have positive effects on students’ vocabulary skills. However, participants were school students. Secondly, only 48 students participated in the study.
Pan and Wu (2013) researched the effect of cooperative learning on reading comprehension and motivation of EFL learners. This quasi-experimental study had 44 students in the experimental group and 34 in the comparison group. The experimental group was taught with reciprocal cooperation learning (RCL). The findings indicated that students in the cooperative learning group outperformed students in the traditional learning group in reading comprehension in all the three achievement tests. Motivation scale also showed a significant difference in favor of the experimental group. However, the participants were not from English majors; they belonged to different departments.

Dabaghmanesh, Zamanian, and Bagheri (2013) investigated the effect of cooperative learning on Iranian undergraduate students’ English language achievement. This quasi-experimental study used the pre-test post-test design. Results indicated that cooperative learning group significantly outperformed the traditional teacher-fronted group. However, the authors did not explain which cooperative learning strategy or strategies were used in the study. They explained that some cooperative learning methods were used but they only mentioned jigsaw. Secondly, here again, participants were not majoring in English.

Alijanian (2012) studied the effect of STAD on English achievement of Iranian EFL learners. The study lasted for eight weeks. The experimental group was taught using STAD whereas the control group was taught using traditional method of teaching. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in favor of the experimental group at 0.001 level. Both the inter group and the intra group comparisons revealed a significant gain in favor of the experimental group. However, the participants in this study were junior high school students.

The studies discussed above reveal that a considerable amount of literature has been published on vocabulary learning. However, majority of the previous studies focused on dichotomy of vocabulary—incidental/intentional vocabulary (Ahmad, 2012), explicit/implicit vocabulary (Al-Darayesh, 2014) and receptive/productive vocabulary (Zheng, 2012) or finding the strategies used by students to guess the meanings (Baniabdelrahman & Al-shumaimeri, 2013). Moreover, a large number of studies focused on non-English majors (Ahmad, 2012; Al-Darayesh, 2014; Baniabdelrahman & Al-shumaimeri, 2013; Pan and Wu, 2013; Dabaghmanesh, Zamanian, and Bagheri, 2013) who may have different outlook than English majors. In addition, majority of these studies primarily focused on the strategies of vocabulary. There are hardly some studies that investigated how to use different teaching strategies to give students an opportunity to practice the target vocabulary. In addition, some studies have weak description of CL strategies (Dabaghmanesh, Zamanian, & Bagheri, 2013) while some studies used very small sample size (Ahmad, 2012; Bilen & Travil, 2015) and thus were unrepresentative of the population they claimed to represent.

The current study investigates the effect of STAD on vocabulary learning of EFL adult learners. It focuses on English majors and uses comparatively larger sample size.

**Hypotheses:**
The following null hypotheses were formulated:
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**Methodology**
This section presents information on research design, treatment, and the instrument used in this study.

**3.1 Research Design**
The study used a quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test control-group design (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010; Creswell, 2009). Two intact groups of zero semesters were selected for the study. The groups were randomly assigned to either the experimental group or the control group by tossing a coin (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010). A standard confirmation test was administered at the beginning of the experiment to find out whether the two groups were equal with reference to their vocabulary level. Schmitt, Schmitt and Clapham (2001) test at 2000 word level, version 1 and 2 (combined) were administered at the beginning of the study as the standard confirmation test. The test contained 36 items. The original test (both versions 1 and 2) aimed at testing receptive vocabulary. However, this test combined both receptive and productive vocabulary. In addition, it had equal number of adjectives, verbs and nouns (12 each). Question 1 asked the students to match the words with their meanings and question 2 required them to complete the sentences. Both of the groups were found equal at the beginning of the treatment \((p= 0.84 > 0.05)\). Kuder Richardson-20 was used to find out the reliability of the standard confirmation test and the vocabulary test. The reliability of the standard confirmation test was 0.90 whereas reliability of the vocabulary test was found to be 0.96.

The experimental group was taught with the cooperative learning strategy—STAD whereas the control group was taught with the traditional teacher-fronted whole class instruction for two weeks. “Reading and vocabulary building” (a subject of the curriculum) was taught by the same instructor— one of the researchers, to both of the groups. The same text book was used to teach both the groups. A pre-test was administered to both of the groups at the beginning of the experiment. After administering the pre-test, the treatment was carried out for two weeks. The first two chapters were covered during this period. The thematic vocabulary taught in these chapters is about cities and shopping. Both of the groups were taught in the morning sessions. Both of the groups had their classes in the same building and were provided with air-conditioner, multimedia and white board facilities. The number of lectures was also the same for both of the groups (5 hours per week). At the end of the treatment, the same vocabulary test was re-administered as a post-test to both of the groups.

**3.2 Population and Sampling**
Students in their zero semesters in Unaizah Community College (Qassim University, Saudi Arabia) volunteered to participate in the study. All these students were Saudi citizens. Though students from other nationalities are allowed to study at Qassim University, there are usually no foreign students in the college. Their first semester is termed as zero semester as the students are promoted to level 1 (semester 1) after passing zero semester exams in order to
complete their bachelor’s degree in English. The zero semester is also known as intensive course because students are required to pass five subjects with 25 contact hours per week.

The experimental group comprised 33 students, whereas the control group comprised 32 students. All participants were male because of the gender-segregation policy at all levels in education system in Saudi Arabia. The classes are usually heterogeneous having high, average and low English proficiency levels of students. Before joining the intensive course, students study English in their schools for eight years from grade five to grade twelve (5th primary to secondary school). They get admission in colleges and universities after passing the secondary school examination. There is no other requirement for getting admission in any of the departments including English department.

The study was conducted in Unaizah Community College which is a branch college of Al-Qassim University. It is located in Unaizah- a small town in Al-Qassim province, Saudi Arabia. Qassim province is considered as a conservative Muslim society that is trying to adopt modern education and new technology while preserving its culture and Islamic values at the same time.

3.3 Instructional Treatment

The experimental group was taught using Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD). After the introduction and warm up, instruction was given to the students. They were divided into teams of fives and sixes (5+5+5+6+6+6=33) comprising high, average and low achievers based on their scores on the pre-test. Students were asked to help one another to understand and answer activities given in the textbook. At the end of the class, the students were given individual quizzes. The instructor collected worksheets and compared their scores with the previous scores. Individual scores were accumulated and contributed to their team scores. At the end of the week, the high scoring team was announced and their names were written on the bulletin board.

a. The CL Group

The CL group was taught using Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD). STAD was first developed by Robert Slavin in 1995 (as cited in Warawudhi, 2012). Using Slavin’s guidelines, the following steps were carried out:

1. After the introduction and warm up, instruction was given to the students.
2. The students were divided into teams of six members each, comprising high, average and low achievers based on their scores on Standard confirmation test and pre-test. They were assigned different roles—material monitor, recorder, coach, checker and reflector (Kagan, 2009). Their roles were rotated for different activities; however, they remained in the same teams throughout the treatment. Table 1 explains the students’ roles and their responsibilities in their groups.
3. At the end of the class, students were given individual quizzes similar to the activities they had practiced in the textbook.
4. The quizzes were collected and the students’ scores were compared with their previous scores.
5. Individual scores were accumulated and contributed to their team scores. At the end of the week, high scoring teams were announced and their names were written on the bulletin boards to acknowledge the students’ efforts which may enhance their motivation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cooperative Roles</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material monitor</td>
<td>Distributed the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>Recorded ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Helps team-mates learn the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checker</td>
<td>Made sure everyone in the team had mastered the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>Reflected on the progress of his team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Learners in the CL group were given some orientation of how to work in CL groups. As this was a new experience for the students, the instructor explained to them what they were actually required to do in the groups. They were later on divided into heterogeneous groups according to their score on the standard confirmation test and the vocabulary test. The students who scored 90% or above on the standard confirmation test and pre-test were considered as high, those who score 60% or above were considered as average and those who scored less than 60% were considered as low scorers (according to the university grading system). Their roles were explained to them and they were told that they would be responsible for playing different roles when they would be asked by the instructor.

The students were arranged in semi circles so that every student could see the board and the instructor. They were encouraged to play their roles and were monitored during different activities. Though they remained in the same teams, they were asked to rotate their roles. During the activities, the instructor took round and offered his help when and if needed. The students were encouraged to play their roles and exchanged their questions and ideas. They helped one another to answer the exercises in their books and the worksheets. At the end of every activity, the instructor gave his feedback.

b. The Control Group

Learners in the control group remained in their seats for the entire intervention time. They followed the instructor’s instructions and worked on different tasks individually. The instructor gave his feedback at the end of the every activity. The students wrote their answers in their notebooks.

The TL group was taught with traditional teacher-fronted instruction also known as whole class instruction. First three minutes were given for introduction and warm up. The target vocabulary was taught using a strategy known as meaning, form and pronunciation strategy. New words were written on the board one by one and their meanings were elicited from the students. Then, ‘form’ i.e. part of speech were elicited. Finally, the students were asked to practice saying the words individually and as a whole class. The students worked individually and practiced the exercises given in their text books. This whole process took 38 minutes while recapitulation took another 4 minutes.
3.4 Data Collection

Data was collected during the second semester of the academic year 2014-2015. A vocabulary test, prepared by the researchers, was used as a pre-test and later as a post-test to find out if there was any difference between the experimental and the control group with reference to their vocabulary. The vocabulary test comprised 40 items of one mark each. Each correct item was given one mark. No mark was given to the item where more than one choice was circled. Minor spelling mistakes were counted as correct giving a benefit of doubt to the participants. The test was marked by the researcher and was rechecked by two fellow colleagues.

The vocabulary test used as a pre and post-test covered the first four chapters of the students’ textbook-Interactions Access by Hartman, Mentel, and Motala (2007). Question number 1 (complete the sentences) and question number 3 (fill in the blanks) attempted to measure active vocabulary. Ali (2012) argues that completing the sentences and filling in the blanks assess the active vocabulary of the learners as they test words in context. Question number 2 ‘Match with the opposite’ tried to measure passive vocabulary. As Mokhtar et al. (2010) point out that matching questions are an attempt to measure the learners’ passive vocabulary. Question number 4 is a multiple choice question which also assessed the learners’ passive vocabulary (Ali, 2012). Kuder Richardson -20 was used to calculate the reliability of the vocabulary test. The reliability of the vocabulary test was found to be 0.96. After the treatment, the same test was re-administered as post-test. The data was analyzed using SPSS 21. Independent Samples t-test was used to compare the means of the two groups.

Results and Analysis

The following findings emerged from the statistical analysis of data. Table 2 shows the results of the independent samples t-test between the experimental and the control groups after the treatment. As mentioned above, both the groups were found equal at the beginning of the treatment (p= 0.84 > 0.05).

Table 2: Result of independent-samples t-test of the post-test comparing the experimental and the control groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. D</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAD Post-test</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23.58</td>
<td>11.05</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole class instruction Post-test Control</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 illustrates the result of the independent samples t-test of the experimental group and the control group on the post-test. Comparison of the experimental group and the control group on the post-test revealed that there was a difference between the two groups in terms of vocabulary. The mean score of the experimental group (23.58) was higher than the mean score of the control group (14.90). This difference was significant at 0.05 level (p= 0.002 < 0.05). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control group on the post-test in terms of vocabulary.
Table 3: Results of Independent-samples t-test of experimental group on the pre-test and the post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. D</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAD Pre-test</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16.78</td>
<td>6.26</td>
<td>-3.01</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAD Post-test</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23.58</td>
<td>11.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 illustrates the results of the independent samples t-test of the experimental group on pre-test and post-test. Comparison of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group by applying statistical analysis revealed that there was a difference between the pre and post-test scores of the experimental group in terms of vocabulary. The mean score of the experimental group on the post-test (23.58) was higher than the mean score of the same group on the pre-test (16.78). This difference was significant at 0.05 level (p = 0.004 < 0.05). This means that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and that of the same group on the post-test in terms of vocabulary.

Table 4: Results of Independent-samples t-test of the control group on the pre-test and the post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. D</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole class instruction Pre-test</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12.06</td>
<td>6.90</td>
<td>-1.31</td>
<td>.195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole class instruction Post-test</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows the results of the independent samples t-test of the control group on pre-test and post-test. Comparison of the pre-test and the post-test scores of the control group by applying statistical analysis showed that there was a very small difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group. However, the difference between the mean scores of the pre-test (12.06) and that of the post-test (14.90) was not significant at 0.05 level (p = 0.195 > 0.05). This means that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the control group on the pre-test and that of the same group on the post-test in terms of vocabulary.

Discussion

The post-test scores of the experimental group and the control group indicated that there was a significant difference between the two groups. The experimental group outperformed the control group in vocabulary learning on the post-test. The difference between the mean scores of the experimental and the control group was significant at 0.05 level.

$H_{01}$: Table 1 above revealed a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control group in vocabulary learning on the post-test in favor of the experimental group. Therefore, the null hypothesis “there is no significant difference in vocabulary learning between the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control group on the post-test” was rejected. The students in the experimental group performed better than those in the control group in terms of vocabulary. The result is in line with those reached by Alijanian (2012), Khan, Javaid and Farooq (2015), Tiantong and Teemuangsai (2013), Wang...
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(2012), and Zarei (2012) that showed that there was a significant difference between the students using cooperative learning strategy and those using the traditional method.

\( H_0^2 \): Table 2 above showed a significant difference between the means scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and that of the same group on the post-test. Thus the null hypothesis “there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and that of the same group on the post-test in terms of vocabulary” was rejected. The experimental group students on the post-test performed better than they did on the pre-test. This result is supported by the study of Alijanian (2012), Marzban and Alinejad (2014), Pan and Wu (2013) and Wang (2012) that showed that cooperative learning had positive effects on students’ achievement.

\( H_0^3 \): Table 3 showed no significant difference between the mean scores of the control group on the pre-test and that of the same group on the post-test. Thus the null hypothesis “there is no significant difference in vocabulary learning between the mean scores of the control group on the pre-test and that of the same group on the post-test” was accepted. The control group students on the post-test performed no better or worse than they did on the pre-test in terms of vocabulary. This result is in line with the ones reached by Alijanian (2012) and Pan and Wu (2013) that showed that control group did not show a significant improvement in achievement on the post-test.

The results of the present study are consistent with previous studies Alijanian (2012), Marzban and Alinejad (2014), Khan, Javaid and Farooq (2015), Pan and Wu (2013), Tiantong and Teemuangsai (2013), Wang (2012), and Zarei (2012). All these studies concluded that CL had positive effects on students’ achievement. Students perform better when they are taught with CL. It develops social cohesion among the students that may enhance motivation that ultimately improve learning. This is what Slavin (1995) suggested in his CL model that CL enhances motivation and thus learning is enhanced.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that application of CL is effective in enhancing Saudi EFL learners’ vocabulary. The students in the experimental group significantly outperformed the students in the control group on the post-test in terms of vocabulary achievement. Moreover, the experimental group significantly improved its own score on the post-test as compared to the pre-test on vocabulary achievement. On the contrary, TL group could not show significant improvement in vocabulary on the post-test. Therefore, it can be concluded that CL has positive effects on vocabulary learning of EFL adult learners.

The components of cooperative learning—positive interdependence, promotive interaction, individual accountability, social skills and group processing are highly motivating because they encourage learners to work hard, attend classes regularly and put efforts to help one another to achieve common academic goals. These components may have changed a passive teacher-centered classroom into a lively student-centered one. Learners cooperated with their group members to compete with other groups; thus they learnt intra-group cooperation and inter-group competition at the same time. They recognized that their success depended on one another, therefore; they tried to help one another to attain victory for their teams. High achievers became
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responsible for helping low achievers who in turn felt confident with their team-mates’ support. Thus, Saudi EFL learners may be more motivated and perform better if the CL strategies are applied in their true soul.

Saudi EFL classes are usually heterogeneous that may be seen as an opportunity for using different CL strategies. Small heterogeneous teams of five-six members may produce better results as compared to individual whole class instruction. Learners may concentrate more while working in cooperative groups due to their peers’ support as compared to working individually where it is easy to lose concentration. However, Alijanian (2012) argues that individual tasks have their own importance in education and they should not be overlooked altogether. Therefore, it will be safe to conclude that CL should be used as an alternative strategy and not as a replacement for all the other teaching strategies.

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of STAD on Saudi EFL learners’ vocabulary. Though the study was conducted for two weeks, it showed some positive results on Saudi EFL learners’ vocabulary. If STAD and other CL strategies are used in other courses as well, Saudi EFL learners may benefit more. However, time management, students’ willingness to work with other students and teacher training are some of the issues that instructors should consider while applying CL strategies. The students’ willingness to work with others should be specially considered as some students may perform better while working individually. In short, we can conclude that STAD has positive effects on Saudi EFL learners’ language proficiency. Therefore, future researchers may try to find the effects of STAD on other areas of language learning, for example, writing, grammar, listening and speaking.

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References


English for Specific Purposes: A Study Investigating the Mismatch between the “Cutting Edge” Course Book and the Needs of Prince Sultan Air Base Students

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Abstract
Needs analysis is generally believed to be important in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) context because it enables practitioners and material writers to find out about their learners’ needs. Thus, the main research question focuses on the perceived English language needs of the learners at Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), and the study involves an investigation into the mismatch between the Cutting Edge course book and the needs of PSAB students. A total of 70 students from different technical sections at Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), Saudi Arabia participated in the study. Two types of data collection methods were used in this study: quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interviews). The results obtained reveal that the current course book being used at PSAB does not meet their needs because the activities provided are not relevant to the specific context of their field, which is mainly military and aviation. Finding and adapting a textbook that is clearly linked to these students’ needs and to the course objectives is suggested as one possible solution. In the context of PSAB, data from the interviews and surveys shows the need to assess the content of the course book in relation to the needs of the learners. It also indicates the strong demand of the students for supplementary materials that provide linguistic input to match their needs. Finally, offering supplementary materials and content-based instructions for those students would help to bridge the gap between language training and practical performance needs in real situations.

Keywords: aviation, curriculum, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), textbooks

1. Introduction
The statement of the problem:

The textbooks used for teaching English to cadets attending the Prince Sultan Air Base English Language School (ELS) were developed at the Technical Studies Institute (TSI), Dhahran city, Saudi Arabia, by the department for curriculum development. It is argued that this book is not appropriate for meeting the needs of those students. As an officer and from experience working as a teacher, it has been noticed that the current course book is not entirely appropriate, although it has many advantages. It has also been found that the English language of the students is weak and that their needs are better served by replacing the textbook currently in use with the world renowned Cutting Edge textbooks developed by Pearson Education. Through using the new course books, the students’ levels have been improving, and they are now able to use the English language adequately. However, the course book that most students are currently using is a general English course book, despite the learners having very specific needs.

Each individual student participant gained a degree from the Technical Studies Institute, in various specialisms, and has been employed according to the personnel requirements of the RSAF (Royal Saudi Airforce). They have been appointed to work in different sections of the PSAB (Prince Sultan Air Base), including maintenance of both AWACS planes and C130 planes, supply section, air traffic control, airplane crew, weapons and ammunitions, intelligence, and the training wing. Therefore, this study will examine the mismatches between the course book being used and the needs of learners. Munby (1978) states that the students’ learning needs should be the basis of syllabus design. Attention has been paid to the importance of analysing learners’ needs in many studies carried out to investigate learners’ language requirements in a range of fields and majors. The only fields for which no investigations of this type have been found are the military ones.

1.3 Significance of the study:

The Royal Saudi Air Force provides English language training for their personnel in order to prepare them to perform their jobs competently and skilfully in a second language. English language is a very important course, since technicians working in different sections need to utilise English in many ways, such as reading manuals, communicating with other workers who are mostly not Saudis, and developing their knowledge. In fact, the students and teachers find it difficult to cope with the current courses because they are in contrast to the students' needs and their levels. The significance of relating teaching to the particular needs of students has been identified throughout the history of formal language learning, which has recently led to a growing interest in a distinct branch of language teaching referred to as ESP, and the Royal Saudi Air Force is no exception. This kind of language teaching is intended to provide learners with the competence to accomplish a particular set of tasks in order to achieve occupational targets.

1.4 Research questions the main question should be highlighted in the abstract.
The study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1- What are the perceived English language needs of the learners at Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB)?

2- What language skills are most needed by workers in different departments of PSAB?

3- What are some of the difficulties the students face when using the English language?
4- To what extent is the current course book appropriate for the learners? And what limitations have been found, and what solutions are available?

5-

2. Literature Review

The part played by English for occupational purposes (EOP), while significant, has been a lesser one (Dudley-Evans & John, 1998:2). A huge rise in the amount of business conducted internationally has prompted a corresponding increase in the significance of English for business purposes, which currently accounts for the greatest proportion of publications in the ESP category, and is attracting increasing attention from educators, organisations and publishing houses. ESP activity used to be closely associated with projects led, and usually staffed, by expatriate British, North American or Australasian teachers, often in large numbers; projects in the Middle East, such as in Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, are good examples. Local teachers seemed to play relatively small roles in such projects, and it was even occasionally argued by non-native speakers that ESP work was too difficult for them. It has always been believed that local teachers’ knowledge of their situation, as well as their familiarity with their students’ motivation and learning styles, gives them an advantage over native speaker expatriate teachers.

2.1 ESP: History and Development:

There are various trends that have led to the expansion of a new realm in the teaching of English as a foreign or a second language, known as ESP. These trends resulted from various fields, including politics, science and commerce. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), ESP has arisen as a result of three reasons: (a) the demands of the new world, (b) the revolution in linguistics and (c) the focus on the learner.

2.3 Differences between ESP and EGP:

There are various differences between ESP and English for General Purposes (EGP) that are noted in the ESP literature, and this section will shed light on these differences.

Walther (1987) explains that the goal of many EGP programs is to improve the linguistic and communicative ability of the learner to enable him or her to use the second language, and there are two main reasons for this. Firstly, students enrolled on EGP programs often learn the language as part of their education or out of interest, so it is usually unknown how the language will eventually be used. A second reason why EGP courses develop the capacity to handle a large number of situations is because these courses are rarely homogeneous, particularly where there are large classes (as in an entire school system), and so the need for students to perform specific tasks at specific times rarely coincide. On the other hand, the goal of ESP is to develop the linguistic and communicative capacity of the learner to deal with specific types of situations in the second language. ESP programs, Walther (1987) adds, attempt to develop different degrees of capacity as quickly as possible to meet the different immediate needs of the learners.

There are two principal reasons why the aims of an ESP course are different from those of EGP courses. Firstly, where language courses are for experienced employees, language training often costs the employer time (in the case of in-house courses) and money, therefore employers like the training to produce effective results as quickly as possible. Even in situations
where learners are attending language training on their own, these learners would like to be able begin using the language right away, and not sometime in the future, to perform specific tasks.

Secondly, since learners require the language for different purposes, which have different linguistic demands, not all learners need to be able to analyse large parts of the language system. Indeed, since many of the situations in which ESP is required, the second language can be clearly pinpointed, with only the linguistic and communicative capacity required to tackle these situations needing to be provided.

2.4 Needs Analysis:

Needs analysis is seen as a fundamental element of ESP. Richards (2001, p. 32) suggests that the reason for and context of the learners’ requirements should drive planning and content, as opposed to basing the design on general English courses. As certain learners may have a specific need for language acquisition, it is necessary to limit the content to reflect only the learner’s requirements. Needs analysis can provide a guide for adapting a new learning program as it enables teachers to identify the learners’ needs and amend the learning process accordingly. One essential advantage of needs analysis is that by identifying the requirements of learners, it is possible to identify the weakness and strengths of their skill set with regard to the students’ language use in their job roles. Dudley-Evans and John (1998) recommend needs analysis as the first stage in course design, and state that this should be conducted prior to the start of the course in order to allow for a basic course structure as well as the gathering of resources.

Needs analysis should be used, and courses should be developed, around human and material resources. Needs analysis can be seen as an objective endeavour to assist teachers of ESP find the best methods of teaching that are relevant to their learners.

2.3. Studies Related to Needs Analysis:

Much research has been conducted in this field, which seeks to determine students’ learning needs in order to design appropriate English language or academic courses. Such research has focused on a variety of specialist areas, including scientific fields and the medical profession, as well as business.

Alfehaid (2011) conducted a study to evaluate ESP courses and investigate the needs of two groups of ESP students and health professionals at a Health Sciences College in Saudi Arabia. The main goal of Alfehaid’s (2011) study was to create a proposal for the development of the present English for Specific Purposes course. A mixed methods approach was used to obtain the data. The findings on language needs revealed that all four of the language skills were important for both students and for their target careers. Also, the evaluation explains that while the ESP course is effective to some extent, it has some limitations, including its curriculum organisation and syllabus specifications; the teaching-learning materials used and the assessment procedures adopted. Accordingly, Alfehaid (2011) proposes a new ESP curriculum based on the students’ needs.

A study by Nakprasit (2010) examined the learning requirements of adult students of ESL who wished to enter higher education who were attending an intensive English language course at Ontario University, Canada. The research aimed to facilitate administrators and
teaching professionals in designing effective ESL courses to address learners’ language needs for both academic and social aspects of university life. A mixed methods approach was used in this study, but with a qualitative focus and narrative findings. This holistic study gathered data on the perspectives of both learners and administrators. The study reveals that the learners’ academic requirements were not sufficiently addressed by the course, and that speaking and listening skills were not paid adequate attention throughout the course. In addition, it was found that the most effective way to tackle these problems was not to alter classroom practice, but to provide a different structure to the course, which would allow more flexible learning tailored to individual requirements.

Al-huqbani (2008) conducted a study to investigate and assess the English language needs of police officers in Saudi Arabia. A questionnaire was administered and distributed to 103 officers working at King Fahad Security College, The Higher Institute of Security Sciences and the Individual Security Sectors. The results of the study show that English language plays an important role in police work. Also, these results reveal that although police officers and their colleagues understand the importance of English to police work, many officers stated that they have not been trained in how to use English for police purposes. Therefore, Al-huqbani suggests some general guidelines for the improvement of the English program in the security sector. He also found that it is important to take into consideration the proficiency level of the target learners before the commencement of the ESP program. Al-huqbani concludes that the selection of materials should be related to police work. Moreover, the language materials that the cadets are exposed to should include the communicative knowledge that cadets and officers need in order to perform their duties. Finally, Al-huqbani states that there should be more emphasis on the teaching of listening and speaking, since there is a need to improve the officers’ proficiency in communication.

Cowling (2007) carried out a needs analysis survey at a major Japanese firm for the purpose of designing an intensive course of study in English. This multiple-method research reveals the essential role of needs analysis in uncovering the requirements of this group of learners.

Algorashi (1989) conducted a study to investigate the English communicative needs of Saudi military cadets at King Abdul Aziz Military Academy (KAMA). Algorashi distributed a questionnaire to 212 Saudi army and air defence officers: eighty-nine captains, fifty-six first lieutenants and sixty-seven second lieutenants representative of various army branches. The questionnaire consisted of 58 items and was divided into three parts: one about biographical data, the second containing questions about the language background of the subjects, and a third with questions about the activities for which English may be used by the subjects. The findings of the study show that English is of great importance in situations related to the cadets’ future jobs and training courses. The study also reveals that the English course at KAMA is not enough in terms of instructional information given to the cadets, and the content of the textbooks is not relevant to their needs. For the development of teaching English at KAMA, Algorashi puts forward many recommendations. He suggests that the teaching of English should be defined in terms of the final practical use of English in the workplace, and not in terms of the general capacity of English. In addition, there should be more focus on the teaching of reading and listening skills.
Overall, the textbook should enhance the communicative knowledge needed for carrying out the military activities that are related to the cadets' specialty.

Finally, a study by Mosallem (1984) investigated the communicative needs in terms of English within the Egyptian police force, across ten separate departments. These included special security, passport officials, airport security, traffic police, tourist police, criminal investigations, Interpol, police station forces and national security. The research instrument used was a questionnaire. Within each department, individuals were selected on the basis of several variables, including rank and age group. The survey questionnaire was made up of sections which gathered data on the degree to which English is needed in the officers’ professional roles; what skills are required for completion of their usual tasks; how well officers consider that they are able to use English; which aspects cause difficulty with using English, and the perception of the importance of English skills in succeeding in work and in promotion opportunities. Mosallem found that the English language requirements within the police force are set out by the individual departments. However, a recommendation of the study arising from a needs assessment is that a basic English course could be created for use by officers from all departments in order to prepare them to use English within their work tasks.

3. Research Design:

There are different ways of investigating and gathering data. In terms of methodology, this research has utilised mixed methods research approach. Dörnyei (2007, p. 44) describes such research as a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods within a single research project. Also, Dörnyei (2007, p.24) makes a distinction between these two methods: Quantitative research includes procedures of data collection that result in numerical data which is then analysed using statistical methods. On the other hand, qualitative research involves data collection procedures that result in open-ended, non-numerical data that is analysed using non-statistical methods. Holliday (2010, p.99) states that the basic goal of qualitative research is to get to the bottom of what is going in all aspects of social behaviour.

The main advantage of mixed methods research is that by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, researchers can utilise the best of both paradigms, thereby integrating quantitative and qualitative research strengths (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 45). Also, Dörnyei adds, mixed methods research has the potential to provide evidence for the validity of the research. Indeed, improving the research validity is related to the idea of triangulation. The data collection will follow different stages. In the first phase, a textbook evaluation questionnaire will be used to collect students' perceptions of the English textbook and its appropriateness for the Saudi cadets. The second stage will involve carrying out interviews to obtain in-depth information from the participants. The research issues have been divided into four areas as follows:

a- Learners’ Perceptions of the current course book  
b- Perceived English language needs of PSAB learners  
c- The language skills most needed by learners from different departments  
d- Difficulties met by the learners in using the English language
3.1 Setting and Participants:

Since the goal of this study is to investigate the mismatch between the course book and the needs of Saudi cadets working at (PSAB), the sample population is Saudi Air Force Technicians. 70 cadets of different ranks participated in this study. Their ages range from 22 to 30 years. These cadets are studying an RSAF Elementary English Course at the School of English language/Base Training Wing/ Prince Sultan Air Base. All of them graduated from the Technical Studies Institute (TSI) with different specialties and have been appointed to fulfil the Royal Saudi Airforce’s (RSAF) needs. They have been appointed to work in different sections of PSAB, such as the maintenance of both AWACS planes and C130 planes, supply section, air traffic control, weapons and ammunitions, intelligence, and the training wing. The training strategy in the RSAF permits an instructor-learner ratio of 1:12 as the maximum in each classroom, unless there is a waiver by the Training Wing Commander to exceed the limit, for example if there is a shortage in teaching staff or school facilities.

3.3 Instrumentation:

This study will use two types of data collection: questionnaires and interviews to collect quantitative and qualitative data.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Learners’ Perceptions of the Current Course Book:

The view of most of the participants in this study is that the content of the course book is appropriate for their needs, as shown by their response to statement 1 (S1). A combined total of 78.6 per cent are agreement with the statement that the content of the course book is appropriate for learners’ needs. This observation may be due to the participants’ perception- indicated in the response to the question what they like most about the course book- that the exercises and examples provided in the course book are simple.

The data obtained from the questionnaire and the interviews further reveals why most of the participants indicated that the course book is appropriate for their needs. Firstly, the new words and situations presented in the course book hook the interest of the learners. A typical response in this case came from Student A who mentioned during the interview that, “The new words in the new course book excited me because it assisted me with new words, meanings and topics that are likely to be related to everyday situations.” Thus, a total of 60 percent agreed with statement 2 (S2) that the topics and lessons in the course book promote students’ engagement and interest.

Another reason for the participants claiming that the content of the course book is appropriate for their needs is that they found that the instructions and examples are adequately explained and illustrated. In fact, a total of 54.3 percent indicated their agreement with statement 3 (S3).

Also, the participants believe that the accompanying materials that come with the course book are useful and informative, as can be seen in their response to statement 4 (S4) where 17.1 percent chose strongly agree, while 47.1 percent chose agree. Moreover, the participants indicated that their exposure to the instructions in the course book helped them read the instructions in manuals written in English, as 57 per cent of them showed
strong agreement and 54.3 percent showed agreement with statement 5 (S5). In addition, it appears that the course book improved the participants’ general vocabulary, as indicated by their response to statement 7 (S7) in which 58.6 percent expressed agreement with the statement that the course book has helped them improve their general vocabulary.

Similarly, 57.1 percent of the participants reported that the course book helped them with everyday listening, while 62.9 percent claimed that the course book helped them with everyday speaking. All of these perceived benefits are likely to have stemmed from the students’ exposure to new general vocabulary and interesting situations that reflect casual everyday conversations that happen at home, in the shopping centres, or in restaurants. As student C noted:

\[ I \text{ learned new words I can apply to everyday situations when I see friends \in shops, or when I meet office workers during tea breaks. The new words also help in listening to casual conversations.} \]

However, despite the aforementioned benefits that the participants gained from the course book, overall, the course book seems to have fallen below the expectations of the participants. To illustrate this, less than half of the participants agreed that the course book helped develop their writing skills. In fact, 22.9 percent chose neutral, 28.6 percent disagreed, and two percent strongly disagreed with statement 6 (S6). The data from the interviews suggests that the participants generally do not consider the course book helpful in developing their writing skills because the writing exercises presented in the course book are not relevant to the writing skills needed in the actual jobs of the participants. According to Student F:

\[ The \text{ writing situations in the course book are so very different to writing situations in the actual work. The writing in the course book does not show actually how to write things related to our field.} \]

Furthermore, the participants have reported that the course book has not really helped much in terms of providing them with expressions and technical words relevant to their job. Thus, only 45.7 percent indicated agreement with statement 10 (S10), while 30 percent chose disagree, and 12.9 percent expressed strong disagreement. This finding is supported by the interview data, which reveals that while the course book abounds with situations reflecting real-life scenarios, it does not provide situations pertaining to the scenarios in PSAB. A typical response from the interviews came from Student E, who reported:

\[ Really \text{ we appreciate the realistic situations in the course book, but there is a different reality in PSAB. Everyday life in PSAB is not all about eating, drinking, and going out. It is more maintenance of planes, and of working in the supply section. PSAB means weapons, ammunitions, and intelligence and, you know, training and more. There is no mention of that in the course book. It should be part of it.} \]

Similarly, in response to statement 11 (S11), which asks whether the course book provides the learners with adequate knowledge of English to be used in their field of specialisation and work, only 11.4 percent of the participants strongly agreed and 28.6 percent
agreed, while 30 per cent were uncertain, 11.4 percent disagreed and 18.6 percent strongly disagreed. These results indicate that there is a need for teachers to provide the learners with adequate knowledge of appropriate English that the learners can use in their field of specialisation and work.

Another reason why the participants believe that the current course book being used in PSAB is insufficient for their needs is that it has not helped much in improving their conversation skills with their supervisors and colleagues who need assistance in the workplace. This is revealed by the participants’ response to statement 12 (S12) in which only 8.6 strongly agreed and 40 percent agreed compared to 18.6 percent who disagreed and 2.9 percent who strongly disagreed. Student B provided a typical explanation for this observation:

*You see, the dialogues in the course book that we use are not technical-only ordinary conversations. That is good for general English learning, but in case of our actual work, in which is we have to give advice to people or offer solutions to supervisors, the course book dialogues are not at all of help.*

Correspondingly, less than half of the participants have reported that the course book helped them to understand the English spoken by foreign workers working in PSAB. Only 5.7 per cent strongly agreed and 40 per cent agreed to statement 13 (S13), while 37.1 per cent chose neutral, 11.4 per cent chose disagree and 5.7 percent chose strongly disagree. Apparently, the exercises in the course book have not helped the participants listen to and comprehend spoken texts.

Also, in response to statement 14 (S14) in the questionnaire about whether the course book has helped them write reports and business letters, only 11.4 percent of the participants indicated strong agreement. On the contrary, a considerable 41.4 per cent were uncertain (neutral) while 12.9 per cent disagreed strongly. The responses during the interviews have revealed that while the course book provides writing exercises, the situations given are more about descriptive writing and personal essays, as Student D surmised:

*Yeah...we write a lot...but not reports or business writing or memorandums...but...a lot of describing...like describing myself, my family, and personal stuff like that. I do not remember making us write letters to commanders and other sections or reports about that...like when we have problems in the work...or we solved something.*

Another criticism that the participants have attributed to the current course book is that it is not helpful for passing the English language examinations set at PSAB. In fact, the combined percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed to statement 15 (S15) is only 42.9 percent, while the combined percentages for those who were uncertain and those who disagreed and disagreed strongly is 57.1 percent. This observation could be due to the fact that the participants thought that the technical information is not paid sufficient attention in the course book. This is reflected in the response of Student H during the interview:
The course book does not really help in terms of preparing for the exams. The exercises are good in the course book. But the problem is that when they test us, instructors give us exams full of exercises that have close links to technical words and sentences (like fuselage- cockpit- radar- engine).

Subsequently, only 5.7 percent of the participants strongly agreed and only 34.3 percent agreed to statement 16 (S16) which deals with whether the activities in the course book have enabled them to apply the English knowledge they have learned to real situations. It appears that while the participants’ general English knowledge improved, the English knowledge that is relevant to their work at PSAB did not improve. The following common responses to the question “Write down three things that you dislike about the course book” provide an insight into why the participants believe that the activities in the course book have not enabled them to apply the English knowledge they have learned to real situations:

1. There was not enough explanation of grammar.
2. There were no words and idioms that relate to our job or speciality.
3. Some topics’ vocabulary is very different from the words we use in our work.
4. The aforementioned inference is further supported by the explanation of Student D who stated:

Sometimes, I feel I do really well in English class. But I get really confused when I notice that the vocabulary and idioms and words I learn in the course book are not used in my actual job. The people in my workplace, I mean the foreigners and the superiors, they use other words not at all used in the course book. It confused me. It makes me frustrated sometimes really. I wish too that grammar was explained enough. I think grammar is important, especially grammar related to my work.

To recapitulate, it could be inferred from the survey and interview data presented that there is a mismatch between the learners’ work-related needs and the skills promoted or developed by the current course book. Hence, it would be better if modifications to the current course book could be carried out. In addition, the use of supplementary materials that could help the course book meet the needs of the PSAB learners should be considered. Thus, based on the previously mentioned data, it can be inferred that there is a mismatch between the learners’ needs and the skills promoted or developed by the current course book, and this urgently needs addressing.

The data pertaining to the learners’ satisfaction has provided more evidence with regard to the mismatch between the course book and the work-related needs of the participants. To start with, a small number, 25.7 percent, agreed with statement 1 (S1) in the third section of the questionnaire, which states: “Generally, I am satisfied with the course book”. On the contrary, 55.7 per cent of the participants indicated uncertainty (not sure) while 18.6 per cent of the participants signified disagreement. This finding can be explained by the common response to
the question “Do you think the present course book meets your needs as a learner?” articulated by Student G:

*The course book is good for learning English, but in fact it is a general English course book and to some extent I think it should be improved to meet our needs as technicians since we are studying specific English.*

The way the course book is taught also seems to magnify the mismatch perceived by the participants, as indicated by their response to statement 2 (S2) for which only 28.6 percent reported that they are generally satisfied with the way the course book is being taught, compared to a considerable 40 percent who reported that they are not sure, and the remaining 31.4 per cent who showed outright disagreement.

The same thing is true of the participants’ perception of whether the course book has contributed towards improving their level of English. Only 38.6 percent reported agreement, while 37.1 percent reported uncertainty, and the remaining 24.3 percent showed disagreement. According to Student H, the students at PSAB generally do not feel that the level of their English has actually improved because ‘*even after studying English, the difficulty experienced in the workplace is almost the same.*’

Another source of learner dissatisfaction is the number of hours allotted to studying the course book in the classroom. On the one hand, only eight percent indicated agreement with statement 4 (S4), while 37.1 percent expressed uncertainty. On the other hand, a massive 51.4 percent of participants reported that they are not generally satisfied with the number of study hours provided for the course book in the classroom. Student I shed light on this concern as he commented:

*There should be more hours to spend on discussing the content of the course book. You see, it is not good that students are assigned home reading for most of the pages. The teacher’s explanation is important, especially for grammar and vocabulary. Maybe if there was more time for the course book, the teacher could provide more examples of use of English that we can use in the workplace.*

Finally, in response to statement 5 (S5), only 25.7 percent agreed that the skills taught in the course book are appropriate to their needs, while a considerable 38.6 percent signified uncertainty and 35.7 percent indicated disagreement. This observation implies that, overall, the participants are not satisfied with how the course book addresses their actual needs. As Student K revealed:

*Actually, the course book does not have topics related to our needs- just English language- which I think is necessary to build up our general English, but also we need to have topics related to our speciality and our job role.*
In short, the learners are not satisfied with the current course book because while it presents novel experiences for them, its contents are not sufficient to meet their needs as they carry out their work at the PSAB. Hence, it would be better if the teachers of the English language classes could adapt the contents of the course book and the way the structured learning experiences are presented to the learners to ensure that they match the needs of the learners.

4.2 Perceived English Language Needs of PSAB Learners:

To study the needs perceived by the learners at Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), semi-structured interviews were conducted. The responses of the learners have been coded and categorised. Table 1 summarises the perceived English language needs of the respondents.

Table 1. English Language Needs as Perceived by PSAB Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learn to read instructions found in manuals written in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop skills for writing reports, memos, and business letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn general vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use technical words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with superiors and fellow workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand English words spoken by foreigners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in Table 1, the learners of English language at PSAB consider learning the four macro skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening as necessary skills for carrying out their respective jobs effectively. A typical response to the question “What do you need to learn in your English language class?” is that of Student A who stated:

*I want to learn everything English... You see, my work is so demanding. I read manuals in English, sometimes with difficult words I can’t understand really. My superior asks me to write letters and all that. Then there are foreigners in my workplace. They talk and really it is difficult. Sometimes their English is hard. The words I can hear, but ... I don’t know exactly what it means.*

Student B also explained how the four macro skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening are related to their jobs at the air base:

*I think the four skills are of great importance to us. Since we are technicians and work in technical sections in the air base, especially in the maintenance of planes, we need to know how to read, write, speak and listen in English. Knowing how to read well will help technicians to read manuals in English, and also knowing how to write well will help me to write reports to supervisors and will help me order parts for the planes. Also, the listening and speaking skills are important to understand and communicate with the pilots and with our supervisors whose language is English, like Americans, Philippine and people from the United Kingdom.*
The aforementioned data from the qualitative interviews and the survey implies that the learners recognise the fact that they need to be able to learn how to read, write, speak, and listen to English texts and be able to apply those skills in the context of their workplace. Since the course book plays a major role in the PSAB learners’ learning process, then they should expect their English course book to be appropriate for addressing such needs.

4.3 The Language Skills needed most for learners in different departments:

With regard to the language skills needed most for the different departments, the data from the interviews has revealed that learners need to learn how to read, understand, and follow the instructions found in operation manuals written in English; write reports, memoranda, and business letters; communicate with English-speaking superiors and fellow workers, and comprehend spoken texts. In addition, the respondents noted the need to pass the language tests in the air base, as well as the need to be able to apply their language skills in real situations outside the classroom, as needs that should be satisfied by the language class.

This means that the learners expect their course book to provide them with sufficient structured learning exercises that will not only ensure that they pass the language test set at the base, but also help them transfer their English language skills as they communicate with other English-speaking interlocutors outside the confines of their work. Hence, there is a strong need to ensure that the course book being used matches the needs of the learners at PSAB.

4.4 Difficulties met by the learners in using the English language

Among the difficulties experienced by the learners in using the English language are understanding the spoken texts, sustaining conversations in English, writing formal texts, understanding technical terms and other English vocabulary words, and expressing themselves clearly in English. For example, when asked about the difficulties he experiences in using the English language, Student D replied:

*It is hard for me to understand foreigners like Filipinos speaking in English to me. Some words I don’t know. Some I heard already before but the meaning I don’t know. Student D added: The hardest part is when I start talking in English with a foreigner but I feel really mad because after the start, I cannot continue the talk anymore. In addition, Student E narrated, “Many, many difficulties. Last week, the boss said to write a memo for him then he would sign. I confuse. I not moved first. How about that?*

The foregoing responses of the participants indicate the language needs they need, as well as the skills they think they need the most, and they reflect the difficulties that they experience in using the English language. Hence, teachers and administrators concerned with language learning at the PSAB must ensure that the course book, which is the primary instructional material used in the English classrooms, provides activities that address the perceived needs and difficulties that the learners at PSAB actually experience.
5. Conclusion:
This study has generated data that points to the fact that the learners of English for Specific Purposes at Prince Sultan Air Base believe that they have to learn not only general English language skills but, more importantly, English language skills that are related to the field of military and aviation. Among the English language skills that they consider of utmost importance to them are reading skills, technical writing skills, communication skills, listening skills, and speaking skills.

Unfortunately, while the participants in this study have acknowledged the benefits of the current course book in terms of developing general English skills, they realise that the current course book does not really help them acquire the language skills specific to their field of specialisation. Consequently, the data from this study reveals that there is a mismatch between the activities offered by the current course book and the needs of the learners at PSAB. Thus, it is necessary to provide supplementary materials that will address the discipline-specific needs of the learners. Similarly, there is a need to modify the current teaching strategies utilised by the English teacher. While the textbook has not yet been replaced, there is a need to integrate writing, speaking, listening, and reading activities that are more relevant and workplace-based.

5.2 Implications for ESP:
The results of this study highlight the importance of considering the absolute characteristics and variable characteristics of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), in developing instructional materials like course books, and creating appropriate language learning environments for adult or professional learners enrolled on English courses in specific disciplines (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). The recurring responses of the participants to the questions in the survey and interviews conducted is that the current course book being used at PSAB does not meet their needs, because the activities provided are not relevant to the specific needs of their field, which is basically military and aviation. This is precisely what absolute characteristics of ESP refer to - the capacity of ESP to provide the learners with the skills they need in their specific field of expertise through structured learning experiences that mirror the realities in the area of specialisation that the learners will eventually practice. An implication of this for teachers is the need to find and adapt a textbook that is clearly linked to their students’ needs and to the course objectives. If the textbook focused on the linguistic skills technicians need in the workplace, it would be more useful.

Also, teachers should make use of authentic materials by taking, and if necessary adapting, parts of relevant workplace manuals. Brown (1995, p. 5) states that it is important for teachers to facilitate activities in which learners can “express their intentions.” Communication opportunities also allow learners to practice what they have gained in terms of language, discourse, pragmatic and strategic competencies.

Likewise, the responses of the participants echo the need to provide learners with instructional strategies that are different from those used in teaching general English. This is precisely what variable characteristics of ESP means. In addition, the results of this study also lend support to the argument of Hutchinson and Waters (1987) that a learner-centred approach is crucial to the effective teaching of English for Specific Purposes.
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References


The Phonotactic Adaptation of English Loanwords in Arabic

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Abstract
The phonological modifications made to English loanwords in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) have come as a response to cope with the phonetic and phonological constraints in MSA sound system. These adaptations of loanword pronunciation clearly reflect the areas and effects of phonetic and phonological interference between the two languages in contact. For this purpose, over than 300 of English words borrowed by MSA are analyzed. At the syllabic and prosodic level, mechanisms like cluster simplification, syllabic consonant conversion, gemination, etc. are found at work and by far systematic in MSA borrowings. Generally, it has been found that most of the regular adaptations at syllable level such as declusterization, syllabic consonant conversion, consonant lengthening and vocalic glide insertion, are motivated by linguistic constraints inherited in the phonological system of MSA rather than by extra-linguistic motivations.

Keywords: adaptation, consonants, English loanwords, MSA, phonotactics, vowels

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1. Introduction
The phonological adaptation of loanwords is of two kinds: adaptation at the segmental (individual-sound) level and adaptation at the phonotactic (syllabic or prosodic) level. The present article focuses on the second type, i.e. the syllabic modification of English borrowings in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). MSA follows its own rules and has its own characteristic types of syllable structure. The following facts on MSA syllable patterns are agreed upon among Arab and non-Arab linguists.

Unlike English, vowel-initial syllables never occur in MSA; all syllables always begin with a single consonant. This statement is supported by the fact that “all vowels, when recorded (in isolation by spectrograph), are initiated with a glottal stop ?”\(^1\) (al-Ani 1970: 22). Therefore, all native words and foreign words as well, which are supposed to start with a vowel are initiated with a glottal stop before the vowel.

Unlike English, too, initial consonant clusters are not permissible, and the onset, which is a basic constituent of the syllable, is occupied by only one consonant. Final and medial two-consonant clusters are possible like in \(\text{qaşr} /\text{CVCC}/\) ‘a palace’ and \(\text{?aḥmar} /\text{CVC-CVC}/\) ‘red’. In the case of medial consonant sequence, the first member is the coda of the preceding syllable and the second one is the onset of the following syllable as in the word \(\text{?aḥmar}\) above. This implies that three-consonant clusters are not allowed. On the other hand, the sequence of two vowels is disallowed anywhere in MSA syllable structure (Al-Matlabi 1984: 235).

There is a third specific type of sound sequence, which involves the sequence of two identical consonants and technically called “geminate”. By definition, gemination is a process by which a consonant is doubled, obtaining a long consonant as a result\(^2\). Unlike English, gemination in MSA is abundant and serves a significant morphological and semantic function, and therefore contrasts with their corresponding simple consonants. Consider the following native minimal pairs in (1) in which \(l\) and \(k\) are geminated:

\[
(1)\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{qalam} & (n) & \text{‘a pen’} \\
& \text{qallam-} & (v) & \text{‘to cut ones nails, flower beds, etc.’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{?akal-} & (v) & \text{‘to eat’} \\
& \text{?akkal-} & (v) & \text{‘to feed’}.
\end{align*}
\]

Distributionally, the geminates occur word-medially as in (1) and word finally as in \(\text{haqq}\) ‘a right’, \(\text{watadd}\) ‘a peg, wedge’, etc. The former occurrence is the most frequent and always comes in intervocalic position. It should also be mentioned that all consonants (including the semivowels) are potentially involved in germination process.

The syllable nucleus [+ syllabic] should be either a short vowel or a long vowel. Thus, the number of syllables in an utterance will be identical to the number of vowels therein. This is in line with the universal principle of syllabification.\(^3\) Five syllable patterns are permitted in MSA (see al-Ani 1970: 87, Al-Matlabi 1984: 238 and Hijazi 1998: 80-81) (C= consonants, V= a short vowel and V\(_\text{L}\)= a long vowel):

\[
CVC, CVCC, CCVC, CVCCV, CVCCVC.
\]
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(2)

(i) /CV/ as in wa ‘and’
(ii) /CV:/ as in fi: ‘in(side)’
(iii) /CVC/ as in qiţ ‘a cat’
(iv) /CV:C/ as in ba:b ‘a door’
(v) /CVCC/ as in milħ ‘salt’.

The pattern ending with a vowel is an open syllable (CV and CV:) and that ending with a consonant is a closed syllable (others). Moreover, the first pattern (CV) is classified as a short syllable and all the rest as long syllables. The first three patterns have a higher frequency of occurrence.

2. Statement of the research problem

With the modern technological and educational developments that have taken place in the world and their recent echoes in the Arab world, a need has arisen for transferring many technical concepts into Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in many fields. As a result Arabic finds itself facing an immense number of foreign terminology, especially from English. The consonant cluster systems of English and MSA are totally different as mentioned in the introduction above. So, the adaptation of English consonant clusters into MSA is faced by many constraints.

This paper, therefore, attempts to address the following question: how are MSA borrowings from English accommodated at the syllabic (phonotactic) level into the phonological structure of MSA? It aims at investigating the possible mechanisms and strategies used by MSA to incorporate English clusters into the phonological system of MSA.

3. Research methods

Being a language of formal speech, formal education and mass media, MSA loanword materials meant for the analysis are compiled from different sources such Arabic newspapers (as the main source), some Arabic magazines, textbooks, and dictionaries, and a number of Arabic websites. An additional source is the linguistic background and intuitions of the researcher himself as a native speaker of Arabic. The number of loanwords collected is over than three hundred items. The data collected are analyzed by using the descriptive and analytical methods.

4. The integrated model of loanword nativization

The integrated model proposed by Danesi is based on Italo-Canadian loanword data from English, and consists of two main principles (1985c: 21-39): i) The Paradigmatic Principle (PP) and ii) The Phonological Synchronization Principle (PSP). PP refers to the interpretation of foreign item morphologically. So, this principle will not be discussed here because is beyond the scope of the present paper.

4.1 The phonological synchronization principle (PSP)

The foreign sounds of the item in question are interpreted in terms of the syllabic, prosodic, phonemic and phonetic patterns (as the case may be) of the borrowing language. This principle implies two basic processes:
a. Sounds and sound patterns that are identical in both the donor and borrowing languages will not be modified in any way.

b. Differences in pronunciation will activate either repatterning processes which are tied to the phonological system, or simple phonetic substitution mechanisms.

Thus, such model is eclectic in the sense that it has incorporated the three basic types of adaptation mechanisms of a morphological, phonological and phonetic nature that are attributed respectively to the generative, phonemic and phonetic models.

The two principles stated earlier interact with each other to generate a nativized form which is, in most cases, indistinguishable in form-class shape and phonological configuration from native words. Such interaction, which occurs in determining the final shape of a loanword, is not a new concept. Danesi, however, considers the morphological adaptation mechanisms as autonomous rather than extensions of phonological ones. The borrower, he notes, seems to make some adjustments purely on the basis of the internal paradigmatic requirement of the native language without any reference to the phonological configuration of the incoming item (1985:23).

5. Analysis and results
It is obvious from the quick comparison between the two phonological systems of English (as the source language) and MSA (as the recipient language) in the introduction that the areas of interference do exist in both the phonetic level and the syllabic level. The involvement of the two levels in loanword adaptation is natural. Wells (2000: 10) explains that in the borrowing process “the incorporating of a loanword from one language into another may involve not only the sounds (phonetic segments, phonemics), of which the word’s pronunciation is compared, but also the positions in which those sounds are used (syllable structure, phonotactics), the phonetic processes they undergo (phonological rules) and their accompanying suprasegmental features (duration, stress/accent)”. In this way, not only do the speakers of MSA replace the exotic English phonemes by familiar MSA ones, they will also reorganize the way the sounds are arranged to conform to MSA phonotactics.

In the Integrated Model of Loanword Nativization, the adjustments to syllable structure of incoming words are an example of phonological repatterning (Danesi 1985c: 37). This fact manifests itself clearly in a number of sub-mechanisms that operate within this framework and which include the following: declusterization, syllabic consonant conversion, consonant lengthening (gemination), vocalic glide insertion, syllable deletion, monophthongization, and change in vowel duration (i.e. quantity). As can be seen below, these sequential and prosodic modifications in syllabic structure of English loans show a high degree of regularity. In the following analysis, I will confine myself to the first four mechanisms.

5.1 Declusterization
One of the clear-cut phonotactic constraints in MSA phonology is that consonant clusters (CCs) exist only word-medially and word-finally but never word-initially and they are always made up of two elements. Therefore, in the context of arabicized loans, the English initial consonant clusters (ICCs) will subject to the process of cluster split or Declusterization. It is made possible by means of two repatterning methods or mechanisms: i) the anaptactic vowel insertion and ii) the prefixation of the prosthetic syllable ?i-.
The anaptactic vowel insertion is the most frequent mechanism whereby an anaptactic vowel is placed after the first member of English ICCs and after the second member of English medial consonant clusters (MCCs) that consist of three elements. The examples in (3 a-b) will suffice:

(3)  
a) ICCs:  
kiri:m < cream  
kiristal < crystal  
firi:zar < freezer  
fulu:r < fluorine  
bulu:tu < Plato  
burunz < bronze  

b) MCCs:  
kunturul < control

kumbiyu:tar < /k∂mpju:t∂/ ‘computer’

?ilikuru:niyy < electronic

In the case of the three-element sequences across word boundaries, the vowel is inserted after the first element of the sequence as in the loanword ?aysikrim from /aıskri:m/ ‘ice-cream’. The consonant sequence may, however, remain as it is as in banknu:t from English ‘banknote’ because the syllable structure of this compound is in line with that of MSA phonology. That is, the syllables /CVCC/ plus /CVC/ of this word are permissible in MSA.

As can be observed in (4 a-b) above, the phenomenon of sound harmony (i.e. the spreading of the following vowel or the following glide) in this mechanism is clearly manifested. That is, the quality or category of the intrusive vowel is always determined by the quality of the vowel occurring in the subsequent syllable. At this point, it may be appropriate to note that such phenomenon seems to be general in languages which do not admit ICCs in their phonological structure (see for example Paradis and Lebel 1994: 82 on Fula (a western African language), and Sharma 1980: 83-84 on Central Pahāri Language in India).

It should be also noted that the intrusive vowel is usually short as i and u in (3 a-b). The short vowel a, however, might be used as an anaptactic vowel, but it optionally alternates with i in loanwords like in (4) below:

(4)  
tara:nzi:t ~ tira:nzi:t < transit  
balazma ~ bila:zma < plasma  
fi la:š ~ fila:š < flash
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The vowel harmony is also maintained here because a and i still belong to the same category, i.e. both are front vowels.

Now, we turn to the second mechanism of declusterization, i.e. the prefixation of the prosthetic syllable ?i-. It is so striking but less frequent. The mechanism strictly applies to the English ICCs that start with the sibilant /s/, e.g. /str-/ /st-/ /sk-/ etc. To split such consonant sequences, the prosthetic syllable ?i- (i.e. the glottal stop ? + the short front vowel i) is prefixed before the cluster constituting, with the first element of the cluster, a new syllable of the type /CVC/: (5)

(?istira:ti:jiyyah < strategy

?istarli:niyy < sterling

?iskitš < sketch

?isti:riyu < stereo

?ista:ti:kiyyah < statics

?iskuwa:š < squash

The break of the ICCs in this way makes the syllabic structure of English loanwords permissible to MSA phonology: in the new created syllable, the first /C/ (i.e. ?) performs as the onset of the syllable, the /V/ (i.e. i) as the nucleus and the first element of the consonant cluster as the coda. Needless to say that the use of the glottal stop ? is necessary here in order to conform with MSA phonological rule which states that syllables should always start with a consonant. In the case of the first example in (5), i.e. ?istira:ti:jiyyah, the two mechanisms are involved, i.e. the prefixation of ?i- and the insertion of the anaplectic i after the second element of the three consonant cluster as the nucleus of the second created syllable (i.e. /-tr-/). The prosthetic ?i- might be prefixed to some loanwords that do not have initial clusters like ?ismant from English ‘cement.’ This case can be accounted for as a case of false analogy.

There are some cases in the data where the two declusterization rules may alternatively apply as can be seen in (6):

(6) a. Vowel Apantyxis

kili:ni:kiy

bila:ti:n

bila:zma

b. ?i-Prefixation

?ikli:ni:kiy < clinical

?ibla:ti:n < platine

?ibla:zma < plasma

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In other borrowings, the alternative application of declusterization mechanism in (6b), however, is infrequent and in many other cases seems to be unacceptable by MSA speakers.8 It would be very odd, for instance, to encounter loan forms like the ones in (7):

(7)  *?ikrista:l to refer to English ‘crystal’
     *?ibrunz to refer to English ‘bronze’
     *?ifla:š to refer to English ‘flash’, etc.

The discussion of the ICCs being split in English loanwords of MSA gives rise to a very important and controversial point which calls for some comment and clarification.

Some Arab linguists (see Al-Qinaii 1998 & 2000) claim that MSA terms in modern times (than ever before) tend to maintain the initial clusters of foreign vocabulary. Al-Qinaii, for instance, supportively quoted al-Shihabi (1955) who in turn notes that:

This rule (i.e. the rule of ICCs declusterization) has become somewhat out dated in Modern Standard Arabic wherein the flux of loanwords has made initial clusters of two consonants permissible without the need to insert any short or long vowels.

(Al-Qinaii 1998: 299)

To provide an evidence to his view, Al-Qinaii argues that words like the French ‘stade’ (i.e. stadium) can be either adapted as ?ista:d or sta:d in Arabic and the English item ‘tramway’ as tra:m (ibid). Note that the statement concerning the English loan tra:m contradicts with al-Qinai’s notation in his article of 2000, p. 21, where the MSA correlate of the English ‘tram’ is transcribed as tira:m, i.e. with the break of English ICC.

In fact we don’t agree with such point of view for many reasons. First of all, it can be argued that al-Shihabi’s earlier observation may hold true only with regard to many Arabic regional dialects, which permit initial clusters in their own syllable structures like dialects spoken in Al-Sham and Al-Maghrib countries.9 This phenomenon can be accounted for by the fact that such dialects were largely influenced by foreign languages during the colonization era, especially by the French language and culture. For MSA, the case is totally different and as we discussed above that the rule is so strict that all foreign ICCs should be declusterized. In case of any anomalies occur (see Al-Qinaii 2000: 15) they have to be considered as exceptional cases that are highly influenced by the indigenous dialects and by the level of education as well. The second argument is that there is a linguistic evidence against such claim. If we want to apply the MSA morphosyntatic rule of “?al-prefixation” (where ?al- is the definite article meaning ‘the’) to the loanword sta:d stated by Al-Qinaii, we get the unacceptable word *?al-sta:d, and of course the correct alternative is ?al-?ista:d, i.e. by prefixing the prosthetic syllable ?i- to the word before adding ?al-.

Thus, it can be inferred that accepting ICCs in MSA borrowings may cause many problems which, in turn, may lead to linguistic complexity. Another linguistic support drawn from my personal observations is related to the fact that English vocabulary with ICCs represents areas of interference to untrained Arabic learners of English in most Arab educational institutions. They usually and unconsciously insert a short vowel and break the ICCs of many English words. Finally, it can be concluded that the non-existence of ICCs in MSA native
syllable patterns is marked as one of its language-specific characteristics. Consequently, the repeatedly ICCs split of English loanwords in MSA is a matter that is related to the very phonological and morphological structure of Arabic (i.e. MSA), the change of which becomes impossible. Despite the fact that MSA has already incorporated a lot of foreign items into its lexicon as a response to the need-filling motive, to use Hockett’s (1970) terms, this should not be utilized as a justification to modernize the language by wrong means, i.e. by altering or modifying its basic structure. The natural reaction towards the incoming items is rather to adapt them so as to conform to MSA morphophonemic structure.

5.2 Syllabic consonant conversion
Vowels in English (both pure and diphthongal) typically behave as the nuclei (i.e. peaks) of the syllable and are assigned the feature [+syllabic]. Furthermore, the sonorants /ļ/, /m/, and /ņ/ may also constitute the peaks of some types of final syllables as in English words like ‘little’, ‘racism’ and ‘mutton’, respectively. These consonants become [+syllabic] and labeled as syllabic consonants. In the context of MSA syllables, however, [+syllabic] is only granted to the vowels and never to consonants which, as a result, never occur as syllabic consonants.

The syllabic consonants found in some English loanwords are, therefore, converted into non-syllabic ones. In other words, each syllable whose peak is a syllabic consonant is changed to a syllable with a vowel as the syllable nucleus and the syllabic consonant as its coda margin, as in (8) below:

\[(8)\]

a. \(diižil < /diːzļ/ \) ‘diesel’
   \(ni:kl < /niːkļ/ \) ‘nickel’
   \(kaːbil < /keibļ/ \) ‘cable’
   \(muːdil < /modļ/ \) ‘model’

b. \(díjiːtl < /dídʒitļ/ \) ‘digital’
   \(šandal < /sændļ/ \) ‘sandal’
   \(kiristaːl < /krıstļ/ \) ‘crystal’

c. \(kartiːn < /kaːtn/ \) ‘carton’

The epenthetic vowel is either \(i\), as in (8a), \(a\) as in (8b), or \(u\) as in (8c) whose quality is influenced by the spreading vowel in the preceding syllable, hence the vowel harmony occurs as in (8a-b) (both vowels in each case are front) except in \(muːdil\) (8a) and \(kartiːn\) (8c). The influence of English orthography (i.e. spelling) is evident, particularly in (8 b-c) wherein the quality of the intrusive vowel is affected by the vowel letters of English final syllables.

The process of English syllabic consonant conversion can be couched in the form of a general rule in (9), (C, refers to the syllabic consonant):

\[(9)\]
Among the total number of the adapted syllabic consonants (8 cases as in (8)), the sonorant /ļ/ constitutes the sizeable number (7 cases (8a-b)) with only one case of the sonorant /ņ/ (8c). The syllabic sonorant /m,/ is attested in one word, viz. ru:mati:zm from the English /ru:m∂tızm,/ ‘rheumatism’. It is, however, an exceptional case to the rule in (9) where the syllabic /m,/ is somewhat maintained and partially dealt with as a final consonant cluster, i.e. -sm. Alternatively, the English syllabic /m,/ is deleted so that we get the loan form ru:mati:z.

5.3 Consonant lengthening

The technical term for consonant lengthening or doubling is usually known as “gemination”. Blanc (1952) defines it as “the prolongation of the continuants and a longer closure of stops” (quoted by al-Ani 1970: 77). As it has been discussed earlier that geminates are so abundant in MSA and occur word-medially and word-finally with the former being the most frequent.

In MSA loanwords, the germinates usually occur word-medially and, of course, intervocally. The lateral /l/, and the semi-vowel /y/ are the only geminates found in MSA loanword data as can be seen in (10):

(10)  ġurilla < /g率达到/ ‘gorilla’
      fanilla < /fænIl/ ‘flannel’
      millimitr < /milli:t率达到/ ‘millimetre’
      millilitr < /milli:t率达到/ ‘millilitre’
      filla/villa < /v率达到/ ‘villa’
      ?ayyun < /aon率达到/ ‘ion’

There is one case in which the geminate /n/ occurs word finally. It is the loanword ānn from the English ‘ton’. The gemination taking place here is in analogy with native words like ħadd ‘boundary, limit, penalty’, ħaIl ‘drizzle, dew’.

It is convenient here to point out that consonant lengthening is treated as a syllabic phenomenon by many linguists. Al-Ani (1970: 77) refers to it as “identical clusters”, and in Danesi’s Model of Loanword Nativization it is classified as one of the syllabic repatterning mechanisms. Danesi (1985c) provides a phonological evidence to such classification. Referring to Ingria (1980), Lefen (1980), and Stemberger (1984), he argues that:

In terms of syllable structure, the doubling process (i.e. gemination) can be explained by positing that length is a nonsegmental feature … It belongs to what Clements and Keyser (1984) call the CV-tier. The double consonants are, it would seem, ambisyllabic constituents filling two non-nuclear positions in a syllabic tree. (Danesi 1985c: 37)
The following metrical tree in (11) is given by Danesi for the English loanword ‘fatto’ fact’ in Italo-Canadian, an Italian variety spoken in Canada ($ = syllable boundary):

(11)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Segmental tier} \\
\text{CV-tier} \\
f \\a \\t: \\
o
\end{array}
\]

In loan forms, and also in native words, a geminate occurs within a single morpheme, and is, therefore, called, in Hayes’ terminology, “true geminate” as opposed to “fake geminate” which takes place across morpheme boundary. Moreover, true geminate cannot be broken up by epenthesis or metathesis rules (Hayes 1986: 327). The split of the geminate -ll- in fanilla, for instance, by an epenthetic vowel results in the unacceptable *fanilila. The true geminate like -ll- in loanwords can be presented as in (12).

(12)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
C \\
V
\end{array}
\]

However, where the syllable boundary is concerned, the first member of the doubled consonant occurs as a coda of the preceding syllable, and the second always as an onset of the following syllable.

The syllabic repatterning mechanism in English loanwords may be illustrated by analyzing two arabicized items, i.e. ġurilla and ?ayyu:n cited in (10) above in terms of metrical trees as can be seen in (13) below:

(13) a. ġurilla < gôrîlê

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{English Form} \\
\text{Arabicized Form}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
C \\
V
\end{array}
\]
The fact that geminates in Arabic performing a morphological and semantic function has nothing to do with geminates in loanwords. An explanation for the point could lie in the fact that these functions are related to gemination that is pertained to certain morphological patterns of native morphemes that do not follow in the available loanword data. As a sort of example at point is the doubling of the second consonant of MSA tri-consonantal verbal root faɛal- or/and the doubling of the second consonant plus the lengthening of the second vowel (vowel germination) of the same pattern. This yields the morphological patterns faɛal-, and faɛaːl, respectively. The output is so productive as can be observed in (15) and which is not applicable to loan forms:

(14) faɛal- faɛal faɛaːl

?akal- ?akkal- ?akaːl
‘to eat’ ‘to feed’ ‘one who eats much’
rasam- rassaːm
‘to paint’ ‘a painter’
dahak- dahhak- dahhaːk
‘to laugh ‘cause to laugh’ ‘one who laughs/ makes others laugh much’
jamad- jammad-
‘to freeze’ ‘cause to freeze’

Thus, the presence of the geminates in loan words of MSA is merely stimulated by the tendency on the part of Arab speakers to assign such characteristic to loans as a mechanism of nativization.

5.4 Vocalic glide insertion

MSA disallows the combination of two (or more) different vowels in its phonotactics; this constraint suggests that a nucleus of MSA syllable is always composed of a single vowel and never be a sequence of different vowels.
The expression “different vowels” in the previous paragraph should not be understood as
to otherwise state that a sequence of two “similar vowels” might exist in MSA syllable structure.
Rather, the only implication the expression may have is that “long vowels (in their underlying
forms) can be considered as sequences of two identical vowels” (Mahadin 1996: 44-5).

To avoid the occurrence of two (or more) vowel sequences in MSA borrowings from
English, MSA resorts to a phonological rule at work in order to alter such unacceptable
sequences to acceptable ones; that is the rule of vocalic glide insertion.

5.4.1 Vocalic glide insertion rule
The types of vowel sequences that found in English loanwords, and which are subject to the rule
of vocalic glide insertion are mentioned in (16) below:

(15)
   a. two pure vowels such as /ɪʌ/, /əe/, /æ/, etc.,
   b. a diphthong such as /ɪð/, /əɪ/, etc and,
   c. a diphthong + a vowel such as /ɪðə/, /aɪd/, etc.10

Now, consider the following examples:

(16) a. ?ulu:mbiya:d < /ɔlɪmplæd/ ‘Olympiad’
    jiyu:lu:jiya < /dʒɪˈliːdʒ/ ‘geology’
    ?infiluwanza < /ɪnfluˈenzə/ ‘influenza’
    kalsiyu:m < /kælsı∂m/ ‘calcium’
   b. ra:diyu: < /reıdı∂υ/ ‘radio’
    malu:riyu < /mələriðʊ/ ‘malaria’
    fi:diyu:< /vɪdɪðʊ/ ‘video’
    kafiti:riya < /kæfɪtɪriðʊ/ ‘cafeteria’

The vocal glide insertion rule is applied in a total of 28 cases in the loanword data. The
intrusive glide is either y (the most frequent= 26 cases) or w (very rare = 2 cases), and that is
determined by the spreading of the preceding vowel, i.e. it is a back glide w after a back vowel as
the last example in (16a) and a front guide y after a front vowel as the rest of examples in (16).

The split of vowel sequences by means of a vocalic glide in English loanwords can be couched
in a form of a rule in (17).

(17) English       MSA
   {VV}   →   {VGV}  G = the glide y or w

The intrusive glide should not be treated as a member of a diphthong. If we analyzed it as
such, we would have a sequence of two vowels (the created diphthong plus a vowel, preceding or
following it). The alternative and adequate analysis is that the glide of the rule in (17) can safely
be considered as a separate consonant (i.e. semi-vowel) whose function is to break the unpermitted vowel sequences in MSA loans.

This observation also operates in some cases where the vocalic glide replaces the first element of the English vowel sequence as in /iːdyluːˈʃiːyə/ ‘ideology’ and /fɪzɪˈɒlədʒiə/ ‘physiology’ or sometimes substitutes a diphthong as in /hɪrwiːn/ ‘heroin’.

The glottal stop? and the glide h may have the same function of the vocalic glide as stated by the rule in (17). The former may be inserted to break vowel sequences within words, while the latter is inserted when the MSA bound plural morpheme -aːt is suffixed to singular loanwords ending with the vowel uː as in /siːnəˈriːyuː-ːaːt/ (pl.) ‘scenarios’ and /ʃæmbuː-ːaːt/ (pl.) ‘shampoos’.

6. Conclusion

The analysis has revealed that the foreign items are adapted at the syllabic level. This would mean that not only do the speakers of MSA replace the exotic English phonemes by familiar MSA ones (the segmental adaptation), they also reorganize the way the sounds are arranged to conform to MSA phonotactics. The phonological analysis serves a very significant pedagogical purpose of drawing the attention of English teachers in the Arab homeland to most of the predictable linguistic interferences by bringing home to them the contrastive aspects of the phonology of Arabic and English. The syllabic analysis of English borrowings in MSA has revealed the following areas of interference which English teachers should take into account when introducing English to Arab learners of English: English ICCs (initial consonant clusters) may be repeatedly declusterized by the students because they are lacking in the MSA phonetic system as discussed above. The absence of gemination in English may represent another area of interference. For instance, The English sounds /m/, /d/, /l/, /t/ in words like “common”, “sudden”, “pillar”, “butter”, etc. may be considered as geminates by Arab learners of English and mispronunciations as /kɒmmən/, etc. may repeatedly occur. In addition to the influence of the Arabic gemination, this is partially affected by the orthographic form of English.

7. Notes

1. For reading convenience, the following phonetic symbols are used in the transliteration of Arabic words (both native and borrowed):
   - ? glottal stop (‘)  h voiceless pharyngeal fricative (ح)
   - x voiceless uvular fricative (خ)  t emphatic voiceless denti-alveolar plosive (ط)
   - ǧ voiced uvular fricative (غ)  ş emphatic voiceless alveolar fricative (ص)
   - š voiceless palatal fricative (ض)  j voiced lamino-palatal affricate (چ)
2. In MSA orthography, gemination is indicated by the optional diacritic symbol [w] (؟ات-تاشد:د) rather than by doubling the consonant.

3. One of the universal principles of syllabification is that every [+syllabic] segment is placed in nucleus of a syllable. Consequently, the number of syllables in any particular utterance is equal to the number of [+syllabic] segments in that utterance (Kahn 1976 – as quoted by Abu-Salim 1998: 296).

4. Mahadin (1996) claims that there are six syllable patterns in Arabic, rather than the five patterns cited in (2). He adds the long closed syllable /CV:CC/. This pattern, however, never exists in MSA.

5. The MSA loanword ?al-kunturu:l from English ‘control’ has come to mean ‘a section or department of examination/evaluation in school, university, or even in the Ministry of Education’ in many Arab countries such as Egypt, Yemen, etc. This particular meaning, which does not exist in English, has most probably undergone a partial semantic shift, i.e. the word ?al-kunturu:l has taken on a partially new but related meaning.

6. In the Egyptian dialect, however, an anaptactic /i/ is inserted after /k/ in the loan /banknu:t/.

7. The last two examples in (6) are also reported in Shahin (1986: 322).

8. In older loanwords from Greek, Latin and other languages, the mechanism in (6b) is the most frequent and is followed in loanwords like (see Ali 1987: 108).
   i. ?afla:ţu:n < ‘plato’ (Greek)
   ii. ?isţabl < ‘stable’ (Latin)
   iii. ?uşţu:l < ‘fleet’ (Greek), etc.

9. The term ‘Al-Sham’ refers to the following Arab countries: Palestine, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon.

10. Sometimes one-vowel element is omitted to avoid the two-vowel sequences. The case at point is the omission of /?/ in the English sequence ‘diphthong +?’ like /?i?/ and /a?/ as in /fayru:s/ from /va?r?/ ‘virus’.

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9. References
Learning English (and Arabic) in Malaysian Islamic Schools: Language Use and the Construction of Identities

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Abstract
The Malaysian schooling system celebrates the diversity of Malaysian ethnic groups by allowing different school types to co-exist since the independence of the Federation of Malaya (now Malaysia) from British colonial rule in 1957. Whilst ideologically young Malaysians can pick and choose where they want to learn, these schools are clustered around ethnicity, language and even religion. Only the majority national schools (or sekolah kebangsaan) reflect the diversity of the ideological Malaysian ‘race’ (or bangsa Malaysia). For national type schools (or sekolah jenis kebangsaan), these are almost exclusively subscribed by Tamil speaking students who are mostly Indians or by Mandarin speaking students who are mostly Chinese. The focus of this empirical paper is on a final school type, national religious schools (or sekolah kebangsaan agama), that represents the religious ideology of the Malaysian majority race, the Malay-Muslims. These are primary and secondary ‘Islamic schools’ that place heavy emphasis on Islamic education often through the medium of Arabic, for the Malay-Muslim majority in Malaysia. This paper focuses on the lived experiences of 30 first year university undergraduates who completed five to six years of secondary education in national religious schools. Data were collected from periodic focus group discussions and also written narrative ‘reflections’ of their Islamic school days with three cohorts of selected undergraduates from March 2016 to May 2017 at two university campuses in northern Malaysia. The stories they shared draw attention to how English, and to an extent Arabic language, influenced their school-based learning experiences and constructed their identities.

Keywords: identity construction, Islamic schools, language use, Malaysian education, qualitative data

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Malaysian education and the national schooling system

The school system is undoubtedly the most important component of the formal education process (Hefner, 2007). Through the school system, the government and members of society can pool their resources to propel a nation towards economic, political and social progress by investing in the potential abilities of the younger generation (Adnan & Smith, 2001). Not only that, the school system plays a critical role as both purveyor and transmitter of positive values to the younger generation (Zaman, 2007). For a pluralistic nation like Malaysia, the role of the school system becomes even more noteworthy because Malaysian schools need to fulfil the needs and wants of the younger generation regardless of religion, ethnicity and social customs (Adnan, 2001, 2012). It is due to this diversity in the multi-ethnic fabric that is Malaysian society that the Malaysian education system has undergone several policy changes throughout the years to meet the demands of major stakeholders within the system. Ever since the Federation of Malaya (now Malaysia) became independent from British colonial rule in 1957, changes in education policy have brought forward parallel changes in attitude, mindset and perception of members of Malaysian society (Harper, 1999).

These changes are the result of a national schooling system that is, by and large, clustered based on ethnicity, language and even religion (Koh, 2017). 60 years after independence from colonial rule, only the Malaysian mixed national schools (or sekolah kebangsaan) reflect the aspirations of the government to create a single Malaysian race (or bangsa Malaysia) (Adnan, 2017). The picture is quite the opposite in national type schools (or sekolah jenis kebangsaan). These schools are almost exclusively attended by Tamil speaking students who are mostly Malaysian Indians or by Mandarin speaking students who are mostly Malaysian Chinese. In another type of school, nearly if not all students come from the majority Malaysian race: the Bumiputera Malays, who are also devout followers of Islam. Islam is the official religion of the Federation of Malaysia as outlined in the Malaysian Federal Constitution. This final school type, national religious schools (or sekolah kebangsaan agama), represents the religious principles and spiritual aspirations of the Malaysian majority race, who also commonly view themselves as ‘Malay-Muslims’ (Ilias & Adnan, 2014; Mohd-Asraf, 2005; Rosnani, 1996, 2014).

For the Bumiputera (or literally ‘sons and daughters of the earth’) Malay-Muslims, access to religious education through the Islamic school system is not just a privilege but also a necessity to maintain the status quo (Ahmad Kilani, 2003; Ahmad Zabidi, 2005). Indeed, Islamic schools have been the focus of many researchers who are interested in the complex interweaving nexus between ethnicity, religion and language within the Malaysian educational and socio-political contexts (see, for example, Ilias & Adnan, 2014; Mohd-Asraf, 2004, 2005; Rosnani, 1996, 2014). In today’s Malaysia, Islamic schools “incorporate both core academic subjects and Islamic religious subjects within the formal primary and secondary curriculums for the Bumiputera Malay majority” (Adnan, 2017, p. 221). The Malaysian government also introduced an A-Level equivalent of Islamic schooling certification dubbed the Malaysian Higher Certificate in Islamic Education (or Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia – STAM). STAM is a post-secondary certificate that focuses on branches of Islamic theology and Arabic language and is becoming a popular choice amongst Malay-Muslim students (New Straits Times, 2017). With STAM, Islamic school leavers can continue studying Islamic revealed knowledge, jurisprudence or other branches of Islam at university level.
Despite the above, not all students who complete their education in Islamic schools are compelled to deepen their religious knowledge at tertiary level. As a result, there are also those who complete their Islamic-styled education in such schools but these students continue their tertiary education in typical tertiary fields such as accountancy, architecture, computer science and even more diverse fields like business management, fine arts and medicine. Viewed in this light, Islamic schooling in Malaysia should not perhaps be compared to conservative ‘Madrassa’ education which is prevalent in third world Muslim countries in the African continent and the Middle East (Abu-Nimer & Nasser, 2017; Lo & Haron, 2016); Malaysian Islamic schools are perhaps more affiliated to mainstream national schools except with an equal concentration on religious education other than just conventional academic subjects. Another distinguishing marker of Islamic schooling in Malaysia is its substantial emphasis on Arabic language as a means to access religious knowledge as the next subsection will elucidate (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014).

**Learning Malay, English and Arabic language in Islamic schools**

Given that all Islamic schools must subscribe to the national primary and secondary curriculum and teach prescribed subjects as stipulated by the Malaysian Ministry of Education, students in Islamic schools are in a unique position to be able to learn and use three languages: Malay or Bahasa Melayu as their mother tongue, English as a second language, and Arabic as an additional language. The Bumiputera Malays are protective of their language and so within the Malay community, particularly in rural areas, “those who use other languages (like English), are not just non-Malay but possibly non-Muslim” (Adnan, 2005, p. 3). Malay language is simultaneously a lingua franca that is understood by almost all Malaysians and it plays a critical role “towards the creation of a Malaysian identity” (Adnan & Smith, 2001, p. 330). So, even in Islamic schools it could be argued that Malay language plays a significant role not just within the classroom but also as a common language for day-to-day interactions. The figure below depicts the centrality of language as part of Malay identity and ‘Malayness’.

*Figure 1: Ethnicity, religion and language as the tri-cores of ‘Malayness’*
This figure illustrates that a Malay person “is naturally (normally) defined by ethnicity, religion and language. It is through these constructs that her or his Malayness is expressed through interactions with others, and projected through the way that person navigates the immediate environment” (Adnan, 2013b, p. 6). Rajadurai (2011) further defines this relationship between Malay ethnicity, Islamic religion and Malay language as the “essential identity” (p. 36) of the Bumiputera. No matter which social sphere a Malay person enters, be it school or workplace, he or she is eternally bound to these core constructs (Adnan, 2010, 2013a).

Nevertheless, as part of the Malaysian school curriculum, students must also acquire English as a second language. This is not an easy task for young Bumiputera Malays, perhaps even more so in Islamic schools. This is not to say that all Bumiputera Malay students will shun the learning of English or Arabic and other additional languages by virtue of them being Malay. In truth, there are Bumiputera Malay students who still want to learn and use other languages, English for example, compared to just sticking to Bahasa Melayu (Ilias & Adnan, 2014, 2015; Rajadurai 2011). Bumiputera Malay students, even from rural areas, understand the utility of English as an international language (Karib & Adnan, 2005). Kim’s (2001) research on identity construction involving ESL learners in Malaysia provides a useful insight. She argues that in Commonwealth countries like Malaysia, English will always be viewed as a relic of colonialists and the use of English will remain a thorny issue, even more so for the Bumiputera Malay-Muslim majority. Kim (2003) suggests, for the Malays, “Using English could be interpreted as being Westernized or renouncing their Malay cultural identity. It could also be interpreted as being less religious” (pp. 153-4). To exacerbate matters, even if much has been written about the Bumiputera Malays and their ‘English Language Dilemma’ (Adnan, 2005), there is a dearth of empirical data on the problems that other languages might cause to members of this ethnic group.

As aforementioned, Bumiputera Malay students in Islamic schools must also acquire the Arabic language. Arabic is part of the curriculum and it is a language that affords the student the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of all branches of Islamic theology, including the revealed knowledge from God (Allah) in the Holy Koran (Al-Qur’an) (Haji Omar, 2016). But, does this also pose a challenge to the Bumiputera Malay identity and the construct of Malayness? In a recent study, it was found that Bumiputera Malay students who learned Arabic faced two barriers to become proficient in this language. Whilst the first barrier relates more to their individual lack of drive to learn and practice Arabic, the second is connected to an unsupportive learning environment when it comes to Arabic and insufficient opportunities to practice. Both barriers combine to frustrate Malay students who need to master this language in the few short years that they spend in Islamic schools (Haron, Ahmed, Mamat, Ahmad & Rawash, 2016). In this sense, perhaps some of the difficulties related to learning and using English can also be linked to Arabic (Ismail, Albatsya & Azhar, 2015).

Language use and identity construction in Islamic schools: Participants and data collection
Based on the research literature in the preceding sections, an empirical study was carried for nearly two years to understand the interconnections between language use and identity construction in Islamic schools. Due to a gap in knowledge on both subjects, the study should be able to provide a glimpse into what is really happening in Malaysian Islamic schools with reference to language and identity construction. As established above, Islamic schools in the Malaysian context are interesting sites for research not only because these schools cater to
Bumiputera Malay students who are bound to their ethnic, religious and language identities but also because these students have the unique opportunity to learn and use Malay, English and Arabic as they strive to complete their studies on religious matters and secular knowledge. Three research questions guided this longitudinal study:

First, how do Bumiputera Malay students make sense of their language learning experiences in Islamic schools? Do they go through the process in a critical manner?
Second, what challenges and opportunities await Bumiputera Malay students when they learn English and also Malay and Arabic in Malaysian Islamic schools?
Third, in what ways does the English language construct the identities of Bumiputera Malay students in Malaysian Islamic schools vis-à-vis Malay and Arabic?

The participants of this qualitative research project

To answer the three research questions, this study investigated the lived experiences of 30 first year university undergraduates who completed between five to six years of secondary education in national religious schools all over Malaysia. Although the initial plan was to collect primary data from within national religious schools, this idea was abandoned due to access problems. Therefore, this project relied on first hand data from fresh Islamic school leavers who just started their first degree year at university. Participants who have completed the whole of their secondary education in Islamic schools were invited through word of mouth with the help of senior representatives of the student body at two university campuses. Research Information Sheets and Data Release Forms were then distributed and duly signed by participants who agree to commit themselves for about four months. As this study took place on campus after lecture hours, official permission was sought from the outset from the respective university’s administration. Permission was successfully granted from both campuses, on academic grounds.

The 30 participants who volunteered for this study came from diverse backgrounds. The majority of them were undergraduates of built environment degrees fresh out of Islamic schools. However, there were also participants who completed the STAM certificate but could not afford to continue their tertiary education in Arab countries due to the economic downturn in Malaysia. Others include students from matriculation colleges, polytechnics and private colleges. There were also participants who did art and design degrees and computer science degrees. To better manage fieldwork and to ensure the quality of the data, it was decided that only 10 participants would be engaged per semester with five participants in one focus group. The researcher also strived for an equal mix of gender and managed to gather data from 16 female undergraduates and 14 male ones between late 2015 to early 2017; the age of the participants ranged from between 18 to 21 years. 14 of the participants were fresh Islamic school leavers accepted for an accelerated degree programme. Each focus group was invited to four rounds of discussion staggered throughout the semester; the first discussion session was also the full briefing session regarding this research.

The qualitative data collection and analysis process

Qualitative data were collected by means of two instruments: periodic focus group discussions (Ho, 2006) and written narrative ‘reflections’ (Barkhuizen, 2011; Pavlenko, 2007) of the Islamic school days of the participants. Fieldwork started with 10 undergraduates in March 2016 followed by another two cohorts of 20 undergraduates until May 2017 at two universities in
northern Malaysia. Four discussion sessions were held with each five-member focus group (coded as 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A and 3B). On average, each session lasted about 65-70 minutes. With the permission of participants, all 12 sessions were digitally video recorded. A digital voice recorder was also used as backup. Data were then transcribed and a summary sent to each participant for ‘member checking’ (Chapelle & Duff, 2003). Each discussion transcript is about 14-18 pages in length. Notwithstanding the first discussion cum briefing session, each focus group discussion addressed one of the three research questions. No specific interview protocols were prepared and each participant was free to comment and share her or his experiences (Ho, 2006). The sessions were conducted by the researcher with the five participants (per group) in both Malay and English language. However, because the participants had to commit to their own degree studies, it was quite difficult to meet up with all group members regularly.

Forseeing this, each participant was also requested to produce three written narrative ‘reflections’ (Barkhuizen, 2011) of their Islamic school days, again corresponding to the three research questions. They were asked to submit one written narrative to the researcher each month. The length of these reflections varies from a few sentences to two pages. All the participants managed to complete this task although a few of the narratives were too short to be useful. Together with the transcripts from the 12 focus group discussion sessions, the 90 written reflective narratives constitute the large ‘thick’ (Geertz, 1973) textual data record that was co-constructed with the participants (Adnan, 2013b). After transcribing and coding the initial data, the data were then thematically analysed in two stages: horizontally (group level) and vertically (individual level). The results of broad thematic analysis of the data (Chapelle & Duff, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) revealed stories of how English, and to a lesser extent Arabic language, shaped the school-based learning experiences of the participants and constructed their language identities. This painstaking process within a span of nearly two years contributed to the quality of qualitative data in this research, in line with Lincoln and Guba’s (2000) construct of ‘trustworthiness’.

Language use and identity construction in Islamic schools: Data presentation and analysis
Empirical data in this section is organised to deal with the three guiding questions of this research project. Critical analysis of the qualitative data sources led to three broad themes that are linked to the guiding questions. The themes are as follows: First, making sense of and going through the process of language learning; Second, challenges and opportunities related to language learning; Third, English and other languages in the construction of identities. All three themes are related directly to the experiences of participants in and from the research sites, i.e. their Malaysian Islamic secondary schools (sekolah menengah kebangsaan agama) located all over the country. These themes are presented and discussed, in turn, below. At this juncture, it is important to highlight that all of the names cited are pseudonyms chosen by the participants for the purpose of writing up and presenting the findings.

Making sense of and going through the process of language learning
According to the participants, the process of language learning in Islamic schools is the same as learning languages in other schools in Malaysia, at least based on the own experiences in their alma maters. The participants did not report going through extreme difficulties other than having to learn different languages on their own merit. Moreover, being Bumiputera Malays from the outset, all of the participants reported that they preferred to use their first language, especially for
social conversations. They also said that in the classroom, Malay is widely used even for the learning of Islamic religious subjects when Arabic ideas and concepts are just too difficult to understand. As ‘Nisak’ sees it, “I think for us it’s just normal. We must learn Malay, English also Arabic so we just learn. Just because we’re in the Islamic stream doesn’t mean we have to imagine we are living in Egypt, right? [laughs]” (Focus Group Session [FGS] 2, Group 1B, April 2016). Like Nisak, nearly all the participants reported that their language learning efforts are geared more towards utilitarian purposes or as ‘Mussa’ explains, “to make sure we have superb [language] skills when we want to continue to study at university” (Written Narrative Reflection [WNR] 2, Group 3B, March 2017). The participants said that they focused their efforts to acquire all the skills related to Malay, English and Arabic before they complete their secondary education because “these [languages] are great assets at university” (Mussa, WNR 2, Group 3B, March 2017).

Interestingly, even in a fairly religious learning environment, quite a number of the participants admitted that they preferred learning English compared to Arabic due to their familiarity with the former. Where Malay is used for day-to-day conversations, English is the go-to language of the participants for their ‘future university life’. ‘Reesa’s comment echoes the feelings shared by most of the other participants, “I think English is still important at my old school. Even the Mudir [Principal] of my school used to give speeches to us in English because it’s a language of knowledge. Arabic is important but not like totally important” (FGS 2, Group 3B, March 2017). That being said, ‘Fizan’ cautions that students who are extremely proficient in Arabic were those who wanted to continue their studies in the Middle East or Arab-speaking countries: “Us in this university, we’re the secular ones [laughs]. We focus on English because we know we’ll study non-Islamic degrees. ... We learn Arabic because it’s compulsory if you want to deeply understand the kitab-kitab [religious texts]” (FGS 2, Group 3A, March 2017).

As the first paragraph of this subsection highlighted, the participants saw very few differences in learning languages in Islamic schools compared to mainstream Malaysian schools. The participants also chose their mother tongue, Malay, for normal conversations. Remarkably for the participants, most of them preferred learning English compared to Arabic. As we delved deeper into this subject matter, the reasons for preferring English compared to Arabic became much clearer. ‘Arifa’ remarks:

Why we like English? Because Arabic is actually really difficult to master. Just ask anyone. Like for me, I don’t have any basics in Arabic. So, for five years I really struggled. It’s a useful language to learn but it’s just too hard compared to an international language like English. So, for me and my group of friends, we focus on English to score A+ but we always just target to pass in Arabic. (FGS 2, Group 2B, October 2016)

Even the participants who scored excellent grades in Arabic argue that English was a better language to learn. According to ‘Madie’, “I like Arabic that’s why I scored in that subject but my English was A+ because I think I can be more expert in English than Arabic. ... Some of my schoolmates got dismissed because they failed Arabic” (FGS 1, Group 2A, September 2016).

The comments made by other participants resonated with what Madie said. For a number of them, English became their language of focus because of their unfamiliarity with Arabic and
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the fact that Malay language was not an easy subject to pass as well. Consequently, English remains significant even in an Islamic religious school environment where Arabic and Malay are thought to dominate the academic sphere. Still, it is important to understand that the comments made by the participants in this study are based on the caveat that they are all products of Islamic schools who have chosen to enter university to do non-Islamic mainstream degree courses. Perhaps, if the same discussions were held with Islamic school leavers who have chosen to continue their higher education in Arab majority countries, a different picture might be painted regarding the process of language learning in Islamic schools. This is surely a worthwhile effort to undertake in future studies.

Challenges and opportunities related to language learning in Islamic schools

The above subsection highlighted the general experience of learning languages in Islamic religious schools. This subsection aims to uncover the challenges and opportunities of learning English and other languages within the research context. Given that the participants believe there were little to differentiate between learning languages in the Islamic stream compared to mainstream academic streams, the third focus group sessions honed in on this issue. Interestingly, what the participants reported were similar to the challenges and difficulties faced by the Bumiputera Malays as whole, when it comes to learning and using another language vis-à-vis their mother tongue. As the introduction of this article noted, this Malaysian majority ethnic group is highly protective of their mother tongue, making it difficult for languages other than Malay to co-exist within Malay communities. ‘Rifki’ reminisces:

You want to know the challenge to speak in English or Arabic? For us it’s the same. It’s hard to use other languages with the old-school Malay people [laughs]. … So, each day we almost totally use Malay. But, in my dorm we also try to practice English and Arabic to face our tests and because for certain lessons our teacher will just use English or Arabic. If we don’t practice, we’ll only fail the subjects. (FGS 3, Group 1A, May 2016)

Rifki further explains that he still faced the same negative attitudes when it comes to using other languages within his campus. For his third language subject at degree level, Rifki chose to study Mandarin Chinese. But, he found it difficult to converse in this language with other Bumiputera Malay undergraduates who prefer to stick to Malay whilst conversing.

Reesa agrees that the challenges related to learning English can be traced back to the negative attitudes of some students in her Islamic school. She writes, “I don’t even know why some of the girls make fun when I practice debating in English. I am Captain of the school team but they act as if I’m a show off and they make faces to me” (WNR 3, Group 3B, April 2017). On top of that, some of the more ‘orthodox’ teachers in Islamic schools are also not proficient in English and they do not like students who love to use the language. This was the challenge faced by some of the participants, especially those who attended more ‘old-fashioned’ Islamic schools in less urbane areas of Peninsular Malaysia. ‘Dibah’ remembers her experience in school:

In my school, some of the teachers are old-fashioned, especially the Ustazahs [female religious teachers]. If you use English in front of them they will mark you and then make fun of you. Not to say they discriminate but it’s a challenge for me. Luckily my Arabic is good so they don’t badmouth me too much [laughs]. … I guess it depends on the school.
My friend went to a private Islamic school and her experience was worse than me actually. (FGS 3, Group 3A, April 2017)

Dibah’s experience relates back to the general opinion of the participants; they face the same challenges when using English in Islamic schools compared to mainstream schools not due to the religious nature of the former but owing to the unconstructive attitudes of some members of Bumiputera Malay ethnic group when it comes to language use.

In truth, like any other Malaysian schools, Islamic schools also afford their students the opportunities to acquire and to be proficient in English and other languages. As ‘Piqah’ puts it, “I guess for all of us, a school is a school. Some teachers are bad, most are okay. Some students are evil, most are nice. It’s not a problem with English, the problem is people with negative vibes” (FGS 3, Group 2B, November 2016). Like Piqah, the other participants also believe that there were many opportunities for them to learn and to use English, Malay and even Arabic in Islamic schools. They shared stories about quiz competitions, public speaking contests even nasyid [Islamic song] singing tournaments not just within their schools but also at district, state and national levels; some of the participants also represented their schools at state and national levels for English and Arabic based academic contests and tournaments. In the eyes of the research participants, one of the principal reasons why Bumiputera Malay-Muslims parents continue to send their daughters and sons to Islamic religious schools is the over-achieving nature of many students in the Islamic stream, themselves included. They argue that the products of Islamic schools are not only proud of their academic prowess but they are also well-versed in the different theological branches of Islam, not forgetting the trilingual abilities of Islamic school students in Malay as their lingua franca followed by the English language and also Arabic as their additional fortes.

English and other languages in the construction of identities in Islamic schools
The focus of this empirical study is to understand the ways in which English and also Malay and Arabic construct the identities of Islamic school students in Malaysia; the final group discussion session concentrates on this. From the outset, the participants linked their language proficiency, especially in English, with their ‘future life’ as university students doing mainstream degree courses. When it comes to Malay or Bahasa Melayu, being in schools with 100% Bumiputera Malay teachers and students only serves to strengthen the Bumiputera Malay identity of the participants. But, rather than perceiving this as a negative thing, many of participants argue that it is only normal for use Malay with their Malay friends and teachers. As ‘Haris’ jokingly explains, “I think it’s not an issue. Malay students speak Malay language because it’s just natural. … White American or British students also use English in their schools, right? They don’t use Japanese or Arabic, am I right? [laughs]” (FGS 4, Group 2B, December 2016). Like Haris, all the participants report using Malay as their main mode of communication and as a way to ‘belong’ in their Islamic school communities. English and Arabic are viewed as more ‘academic’ languages more suited for the classroom and to acquire theoretical knowledge.

To be sure, many of the participants imagined that English will enable them to have access to knowledge at tertiary level “and it’s absolutely true”, says ‘Zamil’. He adds, “I’m doing fine arts and our textbooks are in English. It’s not easy to understand art history, design concepts and many more. But my friends and I are thankful our English is good and we don’t have to
translate” (Zamil, FGS 4, Group 1A, June 2016). English is seen as an academic language that is not just important for successful university study but also for future employment. In the minds of the participants, English proficiency is the symbol of education and career success in all fields, including international business. As ‘Ikram’ writes:

Oh, my English! Everything English! Our teachers ask us to study English until we vomited. But, seriously in Malaysia, English is important because our country is a ‘business country’ (sorry I don’t know how to express it). In business, people from everywhere normally use English. So, English is an important asset for university and for a good job. But, nowadays Mandarin [Chinese] is important also. I already know Arabic and so, now I am studying Mandarin [at this university]. (WNR 4, Group 1B, June 2016)

Dibah, however, emphasises that not everything is easy when it comes to using English in Islamic schools because, “some teachers and students view whoever is good in English as Hollywood artists [laughs]. Maybe if you use English you’ll become Beyonce or Taylor Swift? I was Head Girl [Prefect] but I still faced this typical Malay attitude” (Dibah, FGS 4, Group 3A, May 2017). To counter the “typical Malay attitude” that conflates between English and Western culture is not easy according to the participants. They reported using strategies like only using English with their closest classmates or contributing as much as possible during English lessons so as not to be seen as “Hollywood artists” and the like. The participants all disagreed with the notion that learning and using English makes them more Westernised. All of them thought that this notion is absurd but continues to be espoused by some member of the Bumiputera Malay ethnic group. For the participants, English is an important academic language for future career success and it has “so much history behind it” (Dibah, FGS 4, Group 3A, May 2017). At the same time, they cherished the fact the English allows them to creatively express themselves in ways that the Malay or Arabic language cannot.

Arabic is another ‘academic language’ in the eyes of the participants. Even though many of them liked learning Arabic, all of them said that the language is really difficult to master with little contact time between teachers and students in their Islamic schools. Where they viewed English as a language with much history behind it, some of them said that Arabic is more like a ‘historical language’ akin to Greek or Latin. The most illuminating comment with reference to learning Arabic and Islamic schooling came from Nisak: “Islamic school students don’t automatically go to Heaven-lah [laughs]. We learn Arabic and Islam to deepen our knowledge of Hari Akhirat [The Hereafter]. We also learn English, Maths, Science, Economy, the normal subjects… this is the truest Muslim identity” (FGS 4, Group 1B, June 2016). Other participants too view their learning of English, Arabic and other subjects as what a Muslim person should be like. They cherish this idealised Muslim identity because Islam as a religion places heavy emphasis on the acquisition and the practice of knowledge to do good deeds and to prevent bad deeds from happening.

**Summation and conclusion**

Even though each participant in this empirical research went through her or his own unique experience in terms of language use and identity construction in his or her Malaysian Islamic school, the preceding sections highlighted marked points of similarities across the lived experiences of the 30 participants. At the same time, whilst the stories shared by the participants
suggest that they, overall, are quite adept in learning and using English compared to Arabic and even the Malay language, some of them emphasised that this is due to the fact that they are preparing themselves for a more ‘secular’ university education. Within that context, the participants argue that English plays an important role as a conduit for knowledge acquisition, particularly when their textbooks, lectures and even tests (in their present university campuses) are mostly conducted in the English language. On the contrary, the stories collected might possibly be different if the pool of participants was made up of Islamic school students who have set their minds on degree studies in the Middle East where Arabic is given prominence. Indubitably, this is an interesting proposition to examine in future research efforts.

With reference to the first broad theme, making sense of and going through the process of language learning, it is still a worthwhile finding to investigate further when students in Islamic schools confess that they felt more at ease with learning English compared to other foreign languages like Arabic. This is perhaps a reflection of the success of the Malaysian government’s effort to raise the overall standard of English in Malaysia since Independence from British colonial rule. It is also interesting to note that the participants believe there are not many differences between learning languages in Islamic schools compared to other school systems that they have experienced. Indeed, for some of them learning languages are just like learning other academic subjects.

As for the second broad theme, challenges and opportunities related to language learning in Islamic schools, again the participants believe that the challenges and opportunities they might face in national school are the same in Islamic school when comes to language learning. Some of them highlighted that, in truth, it is the attitudes of Malaysian students particularly Malay-Muslim ones that influence their ability to learn and use English, Malay, Arabic or whatever language is taught to them. Again, this is an issue that must be investigated further in a more critical manner to comprehend the realities of Malay students as language learners within the Malaysian education system.

The third and final broad theme, English and other languages in the construction of identities in Islamic schools, reinforces the findings in the two earlier themes but also uncovers the imaginative links that the participants make with reference to their language learning. English, for instance, is a language for their ‘future life’ as ‘university students’ and a language that is a worthwhile investment to land a good and comfortable career in the near future. As for Arabic, it is a language that links back to the Islamic roots of the participants. Learning Arabic is not just for the now but also for the Hereafter. Finally, Malay language is just another ‘normal’ part of life for the participants; Malay is at the core of their language, personal and social identities that can never be replaced or taken over by other languages in their immediate formal learning environments.

About the author
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## References


Reading Comprehension Difficulties among EFL Learners: The Case of First and Second Year Students at Yarmouk University in Jordan

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Abstract
This paper discusses English as a foreign language (EFL) reading comprehension difficulties faced by students at a university in Jordan. Data were collected using questionnaires which were distributed to 200 students at Yarmouk University. The questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part contains demographic information about the participants and the second part includes two sections: the students’ preferences and the students’ reading difficulties. The findings reveal that the respondents are motivated to learn as they are in dire need for acquiring English. However, they face several problems in the reading process, such as ambiguous words, unfamiliar vocabulary, and limited available time to cognitively process the text. The findings of this study may be useful to policy makers in Jordan to improve the leaners’ reading experience.

Keywords: EFL reading, higher education institution, Jordanian students, reading comprehension, reading difficulties

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Introduction
Reading plays a central role in our educational, working, recreational, and social lives. The ability to read is highly valued and important for social and economic advancement. Reading is the most important skill among the four language skills as it can improve the overall language proficiency (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; Krashen & Brown, 2007). Even though one may have reading difficulties in his or her mother tongue, the problems get worse when reading is applied to a second language, as students might be lagging behind in a number of reading components, including accuracy, comprehension, and speed. Lagging behind is a cognitive difficulty associated with the process of reading in another language (Alsamadani, 2008). In other words, these difficulties are more likely to be associated with the nature of the language pragma linguistic or even sociocultural aspects.

Most researchers agree that reading comprehension is not simply recognizing individual words, or even understanding each individual word as our eyes pass over it. All models of comprehension recognize the need for readers to build up a mental representation of text, a process that requires integration across a range of sources of information, from lexical features to knowledge concerning events in the world (e.g., Garnham, 2001; Gernsbacher, 1990; Kintsch, 1998). For this reason, the Simple View of Reading, which could be seen as the first endeavor to describe the “balanced literacy”, suggests that reading comprehension results from developing skills in the areas of decoding and linguistic comprehension (Kirby & Savage, 2008).

Literature Review
Reading
Mastering reading skill requires interaction between the reader and the text. The reader has to decode the meaning of the written words to be able to understand the writer’s point of view. Rivers (1981) said that, “reading is the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and a pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and extending one’s which are knowledge of the language” (p. 147). Readers have to use their prior knowledge while reading in order to construct meaning. Goodman (1973) declares that the learner “interacts with 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).

Ehri (1991) reported that there are four different ways to read words; decoding, reading by analogy, reading by prediction made from context and sight word reading. On the other hand, linguistic comprehension which is often operationalized using listening comprehension tasks is defined by Hoover and Gough (1990) as "the ability to take lexical information (i.e. semantic information at the word level) and derive the sentence and discourse interpretation" (p. 131). Several studies have shown that decoding and linguistic comprehension represent for more than 70% of the variance in reading comprehension (Catts, Hogan, & Adlof, 2005).

Decoding difficulties
Reading and writing difficulties have been the focus of many studies since the beginning of the 1960s, where they have mainly focused on children with poor decoding skills (Vellutino et al., 2004), such as those suffering from Dyslexia. Dyslexic is defined as “a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin and characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or
fluent word recognition, poor spelling and decoding abilities" (Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003, p. 2). The double-deficit hypothesis suggests that there are three different forms of difficulties associated with reading disability; selective phonological deficits, selective rapid automatized naming (RAN) deficits and combined deficits (Wolf & Bowers, 1999). Poor readers might spend less time reading, therefore, develop limited vocabulary and general knowledge (Yunus, Mohamad, & Waelateh, 2016; Ismail & Yusof, 2016).

Different types of comprehension
Comprehension of language does not only involve the understanding of individual words but also active engagement with the content to create a mental representation (Rashid, 2012). Successful comprehension requires coordination of skills at many levels to extract and construct meaning. The level of difficulty associated with comprehension of certain content depends on the complexity of the language used. There are important differences between the language that we use in everyday conversations and the language used in school (Westby, 2012), where everyday conversations are originally used to achieve daily tasks and share personal information. Academic language includes a different set of words, more complex grammatical structures and different text organization to express content which describes complex relationships (Zwiers, 2008).

Comprehension models
A number of different models have been suggested by researchers, such as mental models by Gernsbacher (1990) and Johnson-Laird (1983), and Construction-Integration Model by Kintsch and Rawson (2005) to account for the complex process of understanding text. The bottom-up models where the process of reading starts with the written words and comprehension is constructed by building the representation stepwise from the individual phoneme to the understanding of the entire text. The top-down models confirm the importance of inference making and schemes used to predict the content of the texts. The parallel models suggest that these two processes (bottom-up and top-down) work in parallel, simultaneously (Kahmi & Catts, 2012).

Recent studies on reading
Nation (2004) reviews what is known about reading comprehension difficulties in children and the results show that not all children who have comprehension difficulties have morbidness in basic decoding. In a more recent study, Hartney (2011) investigated reading difficulties in English as a second language of grade 3 learners in one primary school in the Khomas education region of Namibia. Hartney used mixed-methods approach in the case study which reveals that many children lack proper reading skills and they cannot read properly.

Raihan and Nezami (2012) conducted a study on comprehension strategies and general problems in reading faced by Arab EFL learners at Najran University in Saudi Arabia. The study aimed to find the reasons behind the low level performance of university students in reading comprehension. A survey was conducted through the teachers’ questionnaire, and students were observed during several reading sessions. The results show that students face spelling and pronunciation problems to a great extent.
Mohd Mahibur Rahman and Eid Alhaisoni (2013) aim to discuss the present status of education and ELT in Saudi Arabia. They highlight various challenges in teaching English, such as students’ poor proficiency and lack of good learning materials. They call for active participation from the policy makers, syllabus designers, textbooks writers, teachers and students to address the challenges.

Elwér (2014) examined the cognitive and language profiles in children with poor reading comprehension using a longitudinal perspective. Elwér found high levels of instability in compromised oral language skills, such as vocabulary, grammar and verbal memory across all test occasions for the poor oral comprehenders. Rajab and Al-Sadi (2015) identified certain habits and preferences of EFL learners regarding various personal practices of the reading process in the first language (L1) as well as in second language (L2) by using 10-item questionnaire on a Likert scale format. The students’ responses indicated the lack of interest as well as the lack of motivation towards ‘academic reading’ in both L1 and L2.

Methodology
A questionnaire was designed as a research tool to gather data from 200 students who are studying at Yarmouk University during the academic year 2016-2017. In addition to demographic profile, the questionnaire consists of two sections: the students’ language preferences and the students’ reading difficulties, with four questions in each section. The questionnaire was validated by a group of professionals from the English department at Yarmouk University. This questionnaire was adopted from a previous study conducted by Medjahdi (2015). As for reliability, Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient test was used to test the consistency of the data collected where Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient was as high as 0.89 which is acceptable.

Results and Discussion
Demographic profiles
The data collected shows that of the 200 participants in this study, 28% where less than 25 years old, 14% were 25-35 years old and 8% were 35 years old and above; 40% were females and 60% were males; 61% were in the scientific field and 39% were studying in the art field; 31% were above average in their academic achievement, 41% on the average level and 28% were below average; 56% of the participants were of less than one year in the university, 43% of 2-4 years and 1% of 4 years and above, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LESS THAN 25 YEARS</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD</td>
<td></td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-35 YEARS OLD</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 YEARS OLD AND UP</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Demographic profiles
Language skills preferred by the learners
The responses of the participants show that 32% of them prefer listening skill, 14% prefer writing, 23% prefer reading, 31% prefer speaking, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Preferred language skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 2, students' first preference is listening. This may include listening for entertainment, such as listening to music. Listening can improve reading comprehension in many ways. For instance, students may encounter new words when they listen to others. Low preference to reading stated by the respondents reflects that students face reading difficulties and they may not do well in their academic achievement, since they do not prefer to read.

Language of the reading materials
The majority of students (56%) prefer Arabic language, 30% prefer English language while 14% prefer neither Arabic nor English, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Preferred language in reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Motivation to read English materials is considerable. However motivation alone is not enough. The students need to be exposed to effective reading strategies and this is rarely emphasized in ESL classrooms in Jordan.

Types of preferred reading materials
A total of 14% of the respondents choose newspapers, 22% prefer short stories, 25% choose reading novels and 39% choose reading books, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Preferred reading materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>14.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Books</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Novels</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>short stories</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary goal of reading
Most learners (16%) said that their purpose from reading is to enrich their general knowledge, 20% state that their objective from reading is to increase their vocabulary knowledge, 23% reads for their academic needs, 40% claim that they read for pleasure and 1% for other purposes, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Purpose of reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>16.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Pleasure</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>enrichvocabulary</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>academic needs</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategies to aid reading comprehension
A total of 16% respondent state that they translate what they do not understand to their mother tongue, 6% carry on reading without understanding, 33% used dictionaries, 32% stop reading, where the remaining 14% choose none of the above, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Responses to reading difficulties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Translate</th>
<th>15.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Open dictionary</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Reading difficulties
A total of 13% respondents agree that they have problems with ambiguous words, 9% have problems of reading aloud in the classroom, 15% have difficulties of pronunciation, 29% have troubles with new words, 32% have problems to guess the meaning, and 2% answered none of the above, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Sources of reading difficulties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulties of</th>
<th>15.0</th>
<th>15.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pronunciation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambiguous words</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New words</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading aloud</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meaning of word</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons for not reading
A total of 51% agreed that they do not have the habit to read, 6% blamed limited available time, 25% associated reading difficulty to the kind of texts that they read and the remaining 18% agree on the difficulty of the reading skill itself (poor mastery of reading skill), as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Reasons for not reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of reading habit</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The difficulty of the reading skill itself</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The difficulty of the kind of texts</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Time devoted for reading
A total of 56% respondents stated that the time devoted for the reading session is insufficient, while 44% said that the time devoted for reading is sufficient, as shown in Table 9.
Table 9. Enough time allocation for reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation Test. Pearson Correlation

ANOVA TEST

As for ANOVA test, the test shows that there are statistical significant differences between the responses of the participants attribute to age, sex, field of study, academic achievement and the number of years studying in the university. This is shown in Table 10.

Table 10. ANOVA for all the variables studied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>8.414</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.841</td>
<td>2.619</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>28.586</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>.321</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37.000</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>11.002</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.100</td>
<td>7.533</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>12.998</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24.000</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field of study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>7.590</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>4.170</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>16.200</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23.790</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>12.379</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.238</td>
<td>2.368</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>46.531</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>.523</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58.910</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Years at the university</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>11.089</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.238</td>
<td>1.368</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>44.531</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>.523</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33.000</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, only the second dimension and age show no significant difference in the answers of the participants where sig = .038, as shown in Table 11.
Table 11. ANOVA test shows no significant difference between Age and second dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>2.271</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.135</td>
<td>3.392</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>32.466</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>.335</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34.737</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nevertheless, there seems to be a correlation between students' preference and reading difficulties even though weak where Pearson Correlation coefficient is .0.126, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Pearson Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preferences</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties</td>
<td>.126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the correlation was taken between the academic achievement and the comprehension difficulties, there seem to be a stronger correlation which support the higher level of linguistic comprehension, where Pearson Correlation coefficient was .417, as shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Pearson Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading comprehension</th>
<th>Academic Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the correlation between student preferences and comprehension difficulties, the data analysis shows a weak correlation, since there seems to be a correlation between students' preference and reading difficulties even though weak where Pearson Correlation coefficient is .0.126. However when the correlation was taken between the academic achievement and the comprehension difficulties, there seem to be a stronger correlation which support the higher level of linguistic comprehension. In fact, this was very evident By ANOVA test, where the test shows that there are always statistical significant differences between the responses of the participants attribute to age, sex, field of study, academic achievement and the number of years studying in the university. Only the second dimension (students' language preference) and age show no significant difference in the answers of the participants where sig = .038.

Conclusions
Reading is an important skill that learners need to master in learning any language. This paper reveals that the secondary school EFL learners face difficulties in their reading comprehension where they encounter ambiguous words, unfamiliar vocabulary, and limited available time to
cognitively process the text. Thus, policymakers and teachers need to find effective ways to tackle this problem in order to engage learners in a meaningful reading experience. It is recommended that future research employs a qualitative approach to observe EFL classrooms in Jordan and explore how reading lessons are conducted. The close observations of the classroom will be useful in identifying the barriers faced by the teachers in teaching reading besides providing insights into the current practices in the classroom. Future research should also examine the students’ reactions to the approaches employed by teachers in order to understand their coping strategies in dealing with reading difficulties.

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References


Reading Comprehension Difficulties among EFL Learners

Qrqez & Ab Rashid


A Developmental Paradigm for English Language Instruction at Preparatory Year Programs

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Abha, Saudi Arabia

Abstract
Preparatory Year Programs (PYP) at Saudi universities are meant to narrow the gap between high school and tertiary education. Improving English language proficiency and skills among newly admitted university students is also a major objective of these programs. However, PYP programs do not achieve much outside the ordinary to set students on the road to the university. In particular, low-level English language proficiency and poor language skills are still apparent among most PYP students. Hence, this study is an attempt to conceptualize some of the challenges and obstacles faced by both English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and students at the PYP program at a Saudi university. The study then develops a paradigm that can improve EFL practices and pedagogies within similar PYP programs. A number of 48 EFL teachers within the PYP program participated in the study, and then challenges were categorized into six subcategories relevant to the context of the study. Teacher participants' feedback was formulated into a developmental paradigm. The study used a questionnaire with open-ended questions. Results were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive research method. Findings of the study can be implemented by policymakers and educators within PYP programs.

Keywords: developmental paradigm, English as a foreign language, tertiary education in Saudi Arabia, preparatory year

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Introduction

Preparatory Year Programs (PYP) were established in most Saudi universities in an attempt to prepare students to the university life, and to enhance their opportunity for success. Students’ low levels in most subjects - especially English language - after finishing their high school were of concern for most policymakers and educators in Saudi Arabia. PYP programs are also meant to provide students with new opportunities for evaluation, and to guide them to the appropriate discipline based on new standards that differ from the standards they underwent at the end of high school (Al-Otaibi, 2015). The idea of PYP programs at Saudi universities is consistent with similar foundation programs at international universities in terms of the goal, but different in terms of the content. The preparatory year programs at world universities focus primarily on qualifying the student according to the specialization he/she wishes to join (Yednak, 2016), and designing educational programs that suit their abilities (Scaffolding Programs), and help them to study effectively (Arum & Roksa, 2011). For PYP programs at Saudi universities, developing students’ skills in English language and subjecting them to scientific English content that is close to the content studied at high school is the main goal.

Kenedy (2015) believes that PYP programs must adopt a holistic approach that requires all members of these programs including students, professors and administrators to cooperate. Kenedy also suggests that the role of academic guidance, students support programs, and libraries should be enhanced. However, PYP programs at Saudi universities lack a clear vision, and suffer from the inadequacy in adopting scientific models or concepts that can inform the design of these programs. Accordingly, English language programs within these PYP programs are not exempted; policymakers and program planners are required to identify the causes of these problems and to address proper solutions.

Problem of the study

During his work as PYP Academic Director, and after the attendance of many seminars and conferences related to PYP programs at Saudi universities, the researcher noted that there was a discrepancy in the performance of English language programs from one university to another. In addition, the lack of coordination between universities to share their experiences or experiences of leading international institutions in the same field was also noticed. Therefore, there was an urgent need to explore the difficulties and challenges facing such programs, and ways to improve them. English language programs do not follow scientific pedagogies, and do not adopt effective practices in the management and implementation of similar educational programs. This has led to low-proficient learning outcomes.

This study is conducted with English language teachers in the PYP program to explore their perceptions towards these problems, and to improve developmental paradigm that can inform the English language practices, and to meet the expectations of similar PYP programs at Saudi universities.

Literature review

An overview on PYP programs at Saudi universities

The experience PYP programs at most Saudi universities is recent, and thus, few studies explored some of the learning/teaching aspects of such programs. Most of these studies focused on the challenges facing these programs, and suggested few practical suggestions. The PYP
program is the first foundation year for some university majors. PYP programs aim at preparing students with academic and linguistic skills that they would need during their tertiary education. Students can then cope with tertiary standards of knowledge and skills, and can choose from a variety of disciplines according to their expectations and abilities, after passing PYP programs and meeting the conditions of disciplines. Aliyan (2013) summarizes the role of PYP programs at Saudi universities as merely bridging the gap between public education and tertiary education. Meanwhile, he highlights the need to review these programs on regular basis, and to consider students' opinions and feedback to ensure the success of such programs.

As reported by Al-Adwani and Al-Abdulkareem (2013), both PYP students and teachers claim that English, as the medium of instruction, is the major challenge in these programs. Moreover, English language instruction at public schools can be described as inadequate; students usually come to the university with poor English language skills. Thus, many students prefer universities or specializations that do not require passing such programs.

Al-Sultan (2012) also believes that universities should not be responsible for reforming public education through the adoption of PYP programs, which are merely private low-performing institutes that are not subject to any specific criteria. Al-Sultan also claims that these programs have contributed to reducing the pressure on the Ministry of Education to reform public education; high school students can easily obtain high GPAs and therefore be admitted to universities through PYP programs. Thus, admission into university does not reflect students' true achievement. What makes it even worse, as Al-Sultan states, is that expectations of students are exaggerated so that they feel initially admission to the required specialization is reachable. Then students who finish PYP programs with low GPAs would be soon directed to other disciplines or even excluded from the university.

In response to Al-Sultan, Al-Maliki (2013) believes that PYP programs play a crucial role representing a 'middle' stage between public education and tertiary education. Students can learn skills and practices of tertiary education, communication and research skills, as well as proficiency in English language. However, the lack of clear standards, Al-Maliki adds, for PYP programs at Saudi universities would not help to achieve their goals. This is inline with Al-Otaibi (2015) who argues that universities, particularly newly established ones, did not take advantage from older universities' experience, which contributed to the lack of clear objective for PYP programs.

Due to the shortage of faculty members at PYP programs, some Saudi universities signed employment contracts with a number of private sector companies. Contracts included partial or full employment for some PYP courses, and providing faculty members particularly native speakers of English. Hence, education quality was of concern for many Saudi educators. Here, Al-Sameti and Al-Seraji (2016) point out that PYP programs have been transformed into "commercial" programs, in which companies hire low-qualified faculty members. University colleges do not directly supervise PYP programs, Al-Sameti and Al-Seraji continue, which contribute to poor academic support programs. In addition, running PYP programs through the private sector at some Saudi universities, as cited by Al-Otaibi (2015), contributed to lower educational outcomes. Eventually, the implementation of successful international experiences
would be even more difficult, Al-Otaibi continues. Thus, PYP programs has to be run and supervised directly by universities, were strict learning and employment standards are applied.

Relevant to lower educational outcomes of PYP programs, Al-Juhani (2012) conducted a study at the University of Princess Noura. The study looked at the reasons underpinning students' failure and/or withdrawal from PYP programs from the perspectives of both students and faculty members. The study concludes that the main reasons behind failure and withdrawal were the direction of students into unwanted specializations based on their low GPAs, and students' incapability to maintain good English language skills after completing the PYP programs.

For the positive side of PYP programs, Al-Anzi (2015) conducted a study to explore the advantages of PYP programs at Saudi universities, and summarized them into the following:

- PYP programs can be considered as significant leap in education, as they help to improve students’ basic skills in science, mathematics, computer science and English.
- PYP programs can improve students’ job skills, increase their self-confidence and self-esteem, and break the fear towards tertiary education.
- PYP programs can develop self-learning skills, students' independence and communication skills.

English language programs in PYP at Saudi universities

English language programs in PYP programs at Saudi universities are not an exception from the overall programs in terms of the lack of vision, poor educational outcomes, poor academic guidance and student support programs, and the reliance on private companies to operate most of these programs. Furthermore, PYP students are not able to acquire English language skills required for their tertiary study at only two semesters; students finish their high school study with poor English language skills. In addition, Al-Otaibi (2015) summarizes other challenges that have an impact on English language programs. Challenges include the lack of qualified faculty members with good experience in English language instruction, particularly for female students, the lack of curricula appropriate for intensive one year English programs. Al-Otaibi (2015) also asserts that English should be the medium of instruction for all PYP courses so that students can develop good command of English language knowledge that help them succeed in their university study. Classrooms, in particular, should be equipped with instructional technologies needed for effective English language instruction, Al-Otaibi suggests.

As far as English proficiency was concerned, Al-Adwani and Al-Abdulkareem (2013) argue that students’ lack of proficiency in English after graduating from high school is a major challenge, which contribute to failure for most PYP students. Consequently, students are not able to pursue their tertiary education in a discipline from their choice in case they did not get qualifying GPAs. The researchers also believe that the choice of English as a medium of instruction for PYP programs does not reflect the actual level of the student; the student may achieve well in specific courses that are taught in Arabic, but English language is still a barrier. This is also confirmed by Al-Juhani (2012) who claims that English language programs at PYP programs did not help to improve students' English language skills, as a result of poor English language instruction at public schools.
Al-Asmari (2013) conducted a study with 176 PYP students at Taif University. The study aims at exploring students' attitudes towards the English language program and the native community of English language in general. The multiple roles of students and teachers and the overall impact of the Arabic language on the learning process were also examined by the study. The researcher concluded that the majority of the surveyed students had positive attitudes toward the English language programs, as well as culture of the English language. The study also found that students had positive motivation to learn English, and that they needed real opportunities to practice English, and to minimize the use of Arabic inside the classroom. In addition, the study highlights the need for active learning strategies as well as instructional technologies.

Motivation strategies was the focus of Alshehri's (2013) study from the perspectives of female students and their professors. The study was conducted with 345 female students of PYP programs at three Saudi universities, and with 96 of their professors. It was found that both students and professors realize the importance of English language programs in promoting students' motivation to learn. However, participants' views on how to promote motivation for learning vary between students and professors: professors believe that motivation to learn is enhanced by the learning outcomes, whereas students think that the motivation is enhanced by the learning process itself, including social communication skills and interaction with native speakers of English.

Students' perceptions towards PYP English language programs were investigated by the study of McMullen (2014). Thy study also explores the impact of sex and geographic location variables. A number of 184 male students and 225 female students from three Saudi universities participated in the study. It was found that there were homogeneous positive opinions among students regarding English in the PYP programs; the majority perceive the importance and feasibility of these programs. Yet, 64% of the students at one university believe that dedicating one year only for English instruction is not enough, and 48% of the students at another university believe that this period is relatively enough. Moreover, the majority of surveyed students believe that the teacher is the most important factor in the development of PYP English language programs.

Difficulties and challenges facing PYP students at Taif University were discovered by Tawalbeh (2014). His study was conducted with 326 students and 55 professors. Challenges were categorized into four types: organizational, educational, environmental, and assessment challenges. The study shows that most professors do not attribute the program difficulties and challenges to organizational factors or factors related to the educational environment itself, while students think that challenges are associated with the educational environment. As for English curricula, the majority of professors believe that students' academic and linguistic needs were not taken into consideration in the design of PYP programs.

It is clear from previous studies that discuss the situation of PYP English language programs, that such programs are not able to improve students' language skills, especially in one academic year. It was obvious that English language itself has become the main obstacle for most students who were admitted with poor language proficiency and limited language skills. Students, after completing PYP programs, may not then be admitted to specializations of their own choice, or may not even get a chance to pursue their study at any of the university programs.
Furthermore, it was also noticed in previously reviewed studies that they are basically 'diagnostic'; they did not actually contribute to formulate proper solutions or developmental paradigms for PYP programs. However, it is worth mentioning that PYP programs are not responsible alone for the improvement of the learning outcomes. Generally, English language instruction at public education stages need substantial developmental steps, so that expectations of PYP programs can be met.

**Methodology**

This study is an attempt to conceptualize some of the challenges faced by both EFL students and teachers. The study also draws up a paradigm for the development of PYP English language programs at Saudi universities. The study takes into account findings of previous studies discussed so far, as well as perceptions of teacher participants with whom this study was conducted.

**Context of the study**

This study was conducted at King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia. Unlike other Saudi universities, King Khalid University has not established an independent deanship for the preparatory year. Alternatively, PYP programs are managed by a department called the "Joint Programs", so that colleges are responsible for their preparatory programs independently. PYP programs at King Khalid University include three tracks: Health Science, Computer Science, and Engineering. As shown in tables (1,2,3), students should study various subjects such as Islamic Culture, Language Skills, English, Mathematics, Physics, and Biology. English is the medium of instruction for all PYP courses except for Islamic Culture and Language Skills.

**Table 1: Courses of Health Science Track**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Semester</th>
<th>Second Semester</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Culture 1</td>
<td>General Physics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Skills</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English for Health Sciences</td>
<td>General Chemistry</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organic Chemistry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biostatistics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Table 2: Courses of Computer Science Track**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Semester</th>
<th>Second Semester</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Culture 1</td>
<td>Islamic Culture 2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Computer Science Mathematics</td>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 1</td>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English 2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[437] Arab World English Journal
ISSN: 2229-9327

[437] Arab World English Journal
ISSN: 2229-9327
Table 3: Courses of Engineering Track

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Semester</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
<th>Second Semester</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>General Chemistry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Islamic Culture 1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculus</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering Drawing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English 2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PYP English language program at King Khalid University

PYP English language program at King Khalid University is run and managed by College of Languages and Translation. Colleges are responsible for all teaching and academic supervision duties, while management of PYP programs acts as a general supervisor; follows-up student affairs and runs exams. In 2013, and like other Saudi universities, the University co-managed the PYP programs along with a number of private companies. Companies were required to provide English language teachers particularly from English speaking countries, since labor regulations in Saudi Arabia only allow universities to hire faculty members with doctorate degrees as a minimum.

English language programs include multiple intensive courses that range between English for Specific Purposes and General English courses. Students of health sciences study English for one semester, whereas other students study English over the two semesters. Touchstone series, issued by Cambridge University Press, are the textbooks used at all PYP English language programs.

Methodology and procedure

This study was conducted using a qualitative descriptive research method. According to Rajab (2003), "the question in qualitative research is an open-ended question, which cares for process and meaning rather than cause and effect" (p. 18). Furthermore, in a qualitative descriptive approach, "there is no pre-selection of study variables, no manipulation of variables, and no prior commitment to any one theoretical view of a target phenomenon" (Lambert & Lambert, 2012, p. 255). This illustrates the reasons underpinning the choice of a qualitative descriptive approach for this study; no pre-existing set of rules nor specific philosophical or epistemological stance are required for either data collection or data analysis. In other words, the researcher aimed at finding clear conclusions that are not affected or derived by personal experience or specific confection about context of the study.

Participants of the study

Participants of the study include all English language teachers in the PYP programs at King Khalid University. The total number of teacher participants is 48; of whom 18 belong to the University, and 30 teachers who have been contracted through the company operating the PYP programs.
English teachers in the PYP programs at King Khalid University hold American, British, Canadian, or South African citizenships, and Asian citizenships such as Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi. Most native teachers are Muslim and of Asian origins. Faculty of Languages and Translation, from one semester to the other, rotates between teachers to work either at the PYP programs or at the College itself. Most of teachers prefer to work at the College since its located at the main campus, and closer to the city of Abha. Few teacher participants hold either masters or doctorate degrees. Most teacher participants hold diplomas degrees in English methodology and teaching such as CELTA and DELTA.

Instruments of the study
This study utilized a questionnaire with open-ended questions. Open-ended questions were meant to enable participants to elaborate clearly and express their opinions and views freely. It was also intended that participants should get the chance to discuss their experiences and provide meaningful suggestions for the learning context. Questions shed light on some of the difficulties faced by the teachers, as cited in a previous study by Al-Shehri (2016), and then teachers were requested to provide solutions. As mentioned, difficulties have been classified into six categories that include English language proficiency, motivation to learn, the use of technology, opportunities of English practice, teachers' qualifications, and students' support programs. Observation of the researcher during his work at the PYP programs was also used to provide some notes on various stages of the data analysis and discussion.

Results and discussion
The aim of this study is to identify difficulties faced by EFL students and teachers of PYP programs at King Khalid University. The study is also an attempt to provide developmental paradigm that can inform the learning design and process for PYP programs. Teacher participants preferred to analyze the dimensions of these difficulties and connect them with context of the study. Next is an overview of difficulties from perspectives of the teachers, followed by a suggested developmental paradigm for PYP English language programs.

English language proficiency
Most teachers believed that the low-level proficiency at most English language skills among students cannot be attributed to the nature of the program itself, but rather to students' prior knowledge and skills. Some teachers also stated that textbooks used do not match actual levels of students. In addition, speaking and listening skills, unlike reading and writing skills, are not adequately focused by the textbooks, some teachers mentioned. Some teachers also added that students are not exposed to intensive language content through audio/visual materials in the English labs, which would not promote their speaking/listening skills. Besides, teachers also believe that the large class numbers do not allow them to implement active learning strategies, and then students' characteristics and individual differences are difficult to be focused on.

Teachers also suggested that the English program should consider beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. Hence, all students should undergo replacement tests and be classified accordingly. The integration of all newly enrolled students into a homogenous class does not reflect their actual linguistic levels, one teacher asserted. Another teacher advised that the University required them to complete all topics as scheduled, regardless of students' skill development or achievement.
To improve students' English language proficiency, a number of suggestions are summarized, based on the feedback of teachers and the researcher's observation:

- Visions and objectives of the English language program should be made clear for both students and teachers.
- More time should be allocated for the English language program, other courses should either be delayed to higher levels or even excluded. Thus, students would find more time to learn and practice English.
- Level-based system and replacement tests should be incorporated in the program.
- Class number should not exceed 20 students as a maximum.
- Activities that promote students' participation and self-confidence, such as oral presentations and class discussion, should be incorporated.
- Activities, curricula, and teaching methods that can create real learning situations, should be integrated.
- More assessment options, rather than just mid-term and final exams, should be considered.
- Teachers should be enabled to reflect on their previous teaching experiences, and how to cope with contextual learning standards and students' background.

Similar to this study, Shamim, Abdelhalim, and Hamid (2016) explored the challenges faced by PYP English language students at the University of Taibah, Saudi Arabia. Their study found that students' English language proficiency was generally low. Researchers add that students tended to translate most of the lessons into Arabic, and wasted their time and effort in translation without developing their English language skills. The study also agreed with the current study in the way that the transition from an Arabic medium of instruction to a full English program is the most prominent challenge, which requires comprehensive review of the overall educational policy.

The motivation to learn

Most teacher participants agree that the lack of motivation to learn among most PYP English language students is a concern. Teachers attribute this to the fact that students are unaware about the importance of the English language, and the lack of proper English language qualification among students before joining PYP programs. Other teachers believe that the PYP English language program does not focus on self-learning skills; students mainly rely on the teacher's role. Moreover, although English is the medium of instruction, English is not officially used in the academic announcements or the University's official communication, which does not help to create optimal educational environment for the English language, one teacher claims. Another teacher adds that most students are anxious about failure, or not achieving the required GPA, which negatively affects their motivation to learn. The majority of students, he adds, focus on what possibly helps them to pass the exams and get high GPAs without taking into account the language itself. Teachers' recommendations for improvement of learning motivation can be summarized into the following:

- Students should be motivated to learn the language for the language itself rather than the sake of passing the exams (integrative motivation).
• Other subjects should be reduced or eliminated, so that students can find the time study English and practice it intensively.
• Students should be aware that English is the medium of instruction for the whole program, not just the PYP programs.
• Enthusiasm to learn and competition should be highlighted by current programs.
• Students need to be allowed to make effective presentations that can enhance their self-confidence, and contribute to the development of their speaking and listening language skills.
• Students' feedback is crucial. Students should be able to evaluate the whole English program, and to be enabled to measure the impact of their feedback on the program.
• Buildings with modern facilities and educational technologies should be allocated for the PYP programs. PYP programs should be transferred to the main campus so that students would be more familiarized with the academic atmosphere and different programs and disciplines of the University.

It can be noted that the weakness among English language students does not only affect their motivation to learn English itself, but extends to other subjects studied in English, which necessitates reviewing all PYP programs, dedicating the whole PYP program for English instruction (Shamim, et al., 2016). On the other hand, Springsteen (2014) emphasizes that PYP teachers at Saudi universities need to fully understand how students learn the language, rather than how the language should be taught from teachers' perspectives. This illustrates the need for PYP teachers to maintain better understanding of teaching methods and strategies appropriate for Saudi students, and how to improve their motivation to learn. This is in line with Liton's (2016) statement that the PYP English curriculum at Saudi universities must reflect the prevailing local culture norms in order to improve students' motivation to learn English.

The use of educational technologies
Most teacher participants agree that there is a shortage of modern educational technologies at PYP classrooms. English language labs, for instance, suffer from poor maintenance and frequent internet disconnections, as teachers state. One teacher also advises that Blackboard, the Learning Management System provided by the University, does not help to improve English instruction; training or professional support before and during the semester are not available. The teacher continues that courses do not cope with the nature of Blackboard, and he recommends the integration of other textbook series that contain online activities or cope with technology. Likewise, teachers suggest that technological tools, that represent students' daily life, and with which students are already familiar including mobile phone applications and social networks, should be implemented. This is consistent with the study of Al-Otaibi (2015) in terms of the need to use non-traditional e-learning environments that stimulates creativity and innovation. Hence, the shallowness of online content and the lack of interactive activities may not contribute to appropriate implementation of available learning technologies. At this point, Atim and Al-Jeriwi (2015) propose an electronic interactive bag for each course similar to what has been applied at King Saud University; bags contain training and activities sessions, presentations, tests, indicators of performance, interactive group discussions, and audio/visual sessions designed for students with special needs.
For better implementation of instructional technology, some teachers advise that proper incentives provided by the University, either financial or otherwise, can inspire the teachers to use learning technologies in an appropriate way.

**Lack of opportunities for students to practice English outside the classroom.**

Most responses of teacher participants indicate that the lack of meaningful opportunities for students to practice English outside the classroom does not enable students to acquire communication skills. Teachers also find that as a common challenge in most EFL learning contexts. Therefore, available contextual solutions that can inform English language practice must be found, as explained below. Some teachers also feel that most students are anxious about making mistakes while speaking with each other, which negatively affect their desire to use English in informal occasions. In addition, the lack of government or private facilities, where the language of communication is English, is also a barrier to effective language practice. Teachers suggest that:

1. Student's clubs or cafes for English language programs should be established. Students can then practice English informally and at no specific times.
2. Electronic communication channels between students outside the classroom should be created. Students can find the chance to practice English with each other and with native speakers of English. Teachers' supervision, participation, and guidance are needed in these online environments.
3. Better student-student and teacher-student relationships should be maintained. Students can then practice the language in a positive and friendly learning environment.
4. The increase of classes allocated for the PYP English program, as well as the reduction or postponement of other subjects, may help students to develop their language skills. In this respect, it should be noted that the PYP programs at King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals will include a summer English program prior to the main program. This summer program aims at developing students' English language skills, and thus helping them to successfully pass the other preparatory programs (Al-Assaf, 2015). Thanks to technology, students at such programs can find the opportunity to directly communicate with each other, with their teachers, and with native speakers of English (Alshehri, 2013). This is consistent with the study of Kadwa (2012), which found that Saudi PYP students have positive attitudes towards the use of online communication tools for learning English after classes, and with users and online communities outside the learning group.

**Teachers' qualification**

Teachers come from different cultural backgrounds and hold different qualifications from different institutions. Moreover, all teachers are not Saudi citizens and are not fully aware of norms of the local context nor psychology of students. Before collecting data about teaching performance of the teachers, it was anticipated that no accurate answers will be obtained, since teachers will be evaluating their own experience; teachers' evaluation of their own teaching performance is self-explanatory. However, teachers' feedback illustrates that their qualification generally does not meet with the teaching standards of the PYP programs. Feedback also highlights the need for hiring more qualified teachers with better experience, better professional
training, and better knowledge of the learning context. Hence, suggestions that may contribute to improving teaching quality include:

1. Teachers should be multicultural and context-aware; there is a need to hire Arabic teachers, or teachers who are familiar with Arabic and the local culture.
2. Employment standards of the PYP programs should be adjusted. The program needs to hire teachers with excellent learning and teaching experience, and with higher qualification in the field of English language instruction.
3. New teachers should undergo intensive training programs on available educational technologies. They also need to be familiar with the teaching context and students before starting their career at the PYP program.

It should be noted that, through the researcher's work in the PYP program, the contracting committee did not have the opportunity to conduct face-to-face interviews with teachers before they start teaching at the program. Teachers were selected based on the examination of their CVs and their own recorded tracks. The committee sometimes had to contact the candidate through Skype for more information about his qualification, and to ensure that his pronunciation was correct. However, some teachers have been dismissed shortly after starting their work due to their poor teaching performance. In order to solve this, Al-Anzi (2015) asserts that we need to consider strict employment standards similar to what is being applied at university colleges; employment committees usually conduct face-to-face interviews with candidates, and candidates also undergo professional tests. However, the avoidance of the private sector as a provider of teachers, and the reliance on self-management strategies are highly recommended (Al-Yubi & Nu'man, 2015). In addition, PYP programs should make their standards and visions very clear for teachers, and teachers should be informed of what needs to be achieved through these programs, and how their performance will be assessed accordingly (Rice, 2015).

**Academic guidance and student support programs**

Some teachers believe that academic guidance and student support practices at the PYP programs need to be reviewed on regular basis. Teachers indicate that current student support programs only focus on the distribution and processing of students' timetables, and processing students' withdrawal requests or sick excuses. Additionally, academic guidance practices were merely individual efforts by some of the teachers or PYP administrators, one teacher claims. Thus, a number of suggestions include:

1. The preparation of a comprehensive orientation program for all newly admitted students, so that students will be aware of their educational rights and duties.
2. The allocation of a qualified academic advisor for each group of the students. Advisors are expected to provide the necessary advice to students, and to activate communication channels between students and the academic staff.
3. The implementation of remedial programs to improve students' language and communication skills, and to strengthen their tendencies and trends towards the appropriate specialization.
4. The role that colleges should play in organizing workshops that cover different disciplines, so that students would recognize requirements and description of each discipline.
For the importance of academic guidance and student support programs, the First National Conference for the Preparatory Year in Saudi Universities, held at the University of Dammam in 2015, concluded that students' support programs should: (a) improve students' awareness of the philosophy of PYP programs, (b) improve the use of instructional technology, (c) and benefit from the social media to communicate effectively with students. Besides, Alseweed and Daif-Allah (2012) assert that PYP programs should improve their orientation programs to familiarize students with skills and regulations of the university.

A Developmental Paradigm

After results of the current study are reviewed and discussed, a developmental paradigm is suggested to inform the design and improve the practices of PYP English language programs at Saudi universities. The paradigm consists of two main structures: pedagogical and organizational. Below is a description of what each structure should entail.

**Pedagogy**

The program must ensure the following are maintained:

- Intensive English language programs should be considered. Meaningful methodologies and learning practices need to be designed into a two-semester program. Along with the basic skills of English language instruction, communication and university academic skills needed at students' future disciplines also need to be focused on. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) concepts and pedagogies should also be maintained through intensive implementation of communicative learning strategies.
- Non-English subjects may be eliminated or postponed to higher levels. Eliminating current courses and replacing them with other subjects that support English language acquisition and practice.
- English courses and activities need to be linked to students' contextual environments; students need to feel the connection between English formal instruction and their daily life outside the campus. Students’ online spaces such as social networking sites and mobile applications also need to be part of their learning process. Additionally, students should be provided with meaningful opportunities to practice English in informal ways.
- Classrooms and English labs should be provided with smart audio-visual aids. Students also need to be connected with online learning communities to increase their language practice.
- The number of students in each class should cope with learning activities in question, in a way that allows for more interactive and cooperative learning practices.
- English clubs with latest learning resources and technologies should be established. A Learning-Through-Entertainment approach is a priority at these clubs.
- English language programs need to be redesigned for all levels from beginner to advanced. Programs also need to be classified into general and academic taking into account English for Health Sciences, English for Computer Science, and English for Engineering.
- Self-learning and lifelong learning skills should be enhanced by PYP English language programs. Students should realize that English is needed throughout their university study and their future career as well.
Organization

The program must ensure the following are maintained:

- Clear vision, message, and objectives are essential for all PYP programs. Programs also need to meet the global standards of similar foundation year programs, and to adopt practical framework that takes into account local contexts, students and teachers' feedback on the practice, and professional development programs.
- English language programs should be run by dedicated departments that are academically supervised by the university or independent deanships. Colleges should have partial organizational roles in the management of PYP programs.
- Students' support and academic guidance programs along with effective orientation programs should be maintain by PYP programs.
- The private sector does not perform well at most PYP programs. Hence, teaching staff and employees must be provided through the university under strict and selective conditions. Teachers with high qualifications and better experience should be considered.
- PYP programs must promote students' belonging and loyalty to the university. Students can then be more engaged to learning activities. In addition, students' must reflect on the program and experience their own contribution to the learning design.
- More research studies should be conducted at different PYP programs. Performance and practices of the programs should be periodically investigated and reviewed on scientific bases. Students, teachers, and employees should be collaboratively encouraged to participate in these studies, and shared with results and recommendations.
- Detailed evaluation and assessment processes should be carried out. This should include study plans, courses, methodologies, teaching staff, students' support programs, and above all, outcomes of the PYP program.
- Teachers should undergo intensive professional development programs. Professional development programs need to consider the learning context, local culture, teaching methodologies and pedagogies, instructional technologies, and students' learning and thinking pattern.

Conclusion

This study investigated the challenges and obstacles faced by both EFL teachers and students at the PYP program at a Saudi tertiary context. Based on analysis of teachers' feedback, challenges were categorized into subcategories evident in students' language proficiency, motivation to learn, use of instructional technologies, opportunities of language practice, teachers' qualification, and student support programs. As a solution, the study developed a developmental paradigm that can improve EFL practices and pedagogies at PYP programs, and inform the overall learning design.

The present study was conducted with male English language teachers of the PYP program. Future research should consider both male and female students, female teachers as well. Experiences of PYP students will inform any future research work, and provide more results that reflect the educational and pedagogical prospects of the English language programs. However, research tools should be designed in a way that cope with the limited skills and experiences of PYP students. Students at preparatory year programs, as Tawalbeh (2014)
suggests, may lack the knowledge and experience necessary to provide accurate data in accordance with scientific research standards.

It is also suggested that the impact of the surrounding context and local culture are explored in any future work. Contextual factors could successfully draw up features of PYP programs, and to explain how environmental and cultural norms can be implemented. EFL students, PYP students in particular, need to be engaged well with language learning practices, and to be provided with meaningful opportunities to practice the language.

About the Author:
Saleh Al-Shehri is an assistant professor of TESOL and mobile learning at College of Education, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia. Al-Shehri is interested in English language instruction and the affordance of innovative technologies for language instruction, and has published several articles and chapters in this regard. Behavior of mobile language learners in the current era is also a major interest. Other research interests include Connectivism and design-based research.

References


Teaching English as an International/Lingua Franca or Mainstream Standard Language? 
Unheard Voices from the Classroom

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Abstract
Over the last two decades there has been an upsurge in the voices among TESOL/applied linguistics scholars calling for the teaching of English as an International (EIL) and Lingua Franca (ELF) language as opposed to the mainstream Standard English (MSE). These calls seem to be rather theoretical than empirical intellectual debates among those scholars without taking on board the voices of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and learners themselves as stakeholders. Focusing on a Sudanese EFL context, the present study therefore duly aims at empirically contributing to this intellectual debate by involving those stakeholders in the debate and by offering a reconciliatory third way forward. The study attempts to address two main research questions: (i) what kind of English(es) do Sudanese EFL teachers and learners want to teach, learn and identify with? And (ii) how do they view EIL and ELF language and to what extent are they willing to teach and learn this variety in the classroom? The study adopted a qualitative interview-based methodology and thirteen EFL teachers and learners took part in the investigation by allowing face-to-face interviews. Results of data analysis showed that both teachers and learners reportedly prefer to teach, learn and identify with the mainstream Standard English. They also showed unawareness of EIL/ELF as an emerging and competing variety to the MSE. Teachers and learners also reported varied views towards the potentials of teaching and learning EIL/ELF in the classroom. The pedagogical implications and insights for TESOL research and pedagogy were discussed.

Keywords: critical TESOL, English as a lingua franca, mainstream Standard English, new Englishes, Sudanese EFL context

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1. Introduction
There has, recently, been an upsurge in the number of voices among TESOL/applied linguistics scholars calling for the teaching and learning of English as an International language (EIL) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) instead of the mainstream Standard English (MSE). These calls are particularly common in the outer/expanding circles. Many keynote speeches/plenaries and conference presentations have focused on this issue. The underlying arguments behind these calls can broadly be summarised as follows: English is widely used outside the inner circle as a language of communication (Lingua Franca) among speakers from different first-language backgrounds. English is therefore predominantly used among non-native speakers. English non-native speakers are hugely and steadily outnumbering native speakers. Another factor perhaps is related to the increasing development in the collection and description of the non-stream Englishes. There is a growing body of literature on the nature and description of EIL/ELF. Huge corpora of EIL/ELF are now available such as Voice corpus: Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English jointly developed by Oxford and Vienna universities and which can be accessed at: https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/page/corpus_information. The English non-native speaker teachers are outnumbering the native speaker teachers (see e.g., Graddol, 2006; Graddol et al., 2007). What is characteristic with these calls is that they take some sort of scholarly and intellectual debate among applied linguistics and TESOL researchers and practitioners, and they do not seem to be touching on the grounds and realities. What seem to be missing, though, in this debate are the voices of EFL teachers and learners themselves (as core elements of teaching and learning process). Put simply, EFL teachers and learners’ views, attitudes, preferences and perceptions seem to have been ignored by those scholars with regard to what kind of English(es) they want to teach and learn and identify with. We need to substantiate this intellectual debate by engaging ourselves into more empirical research that moves beyond debates and get down to the grounds and realities of TESOL actual practices in the outer/expanding circle contexts. The present study attempted to empirically fill this gap by moving beyond the debate and involved both EFL teachers and learners as stakeholders in the debate and explored their stances towards the issue. The study reported in this paper is part of a large research project that was set to empirically investigate the attitudes and preferences of both EFL teachers and learners in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries regarding the kind of English(es) (mainstream or critical) that they want to teach, learn and identify with. At the current phase of investigation, the project focused on the Sudanese context and it involved both EFL teachers and learners in the investigation. The study empirically contributes to the current philosophical and intellectual debate, in the literature among Applied Linguistics/TESOL scholars regarding the mainstream vs. critical TESOL, by moving a practical step forward beyond the debate and involving, in the issue both EFL teachers and learners as the core element of the teaching and learning process. The implications of the findings of the study are intended to better inform and empower both EFL teachers and learners in their choices regarding the kind of English(es) they would like to learn, teach and identify with? The implications of the findings of the study are intended to better inform and empower both teachers and learners in their choice of which English(es) they can teach and learn. The implications could also inform the ELT textbooks publishers and designers to consider, when designing and publishing ELT materials, the language teachers' and learners' perceptions and attitudes. The study will also empirically contribute to the on-going debate in the literature between the mainstream and critical TESOL approaches to the teaching and learning of English.
2. Context of the study
Sudan is an African sub-Saharan country situated in the north-east of Africa. Arabic is the official language in the country and English is the second official language. English is also taught as a subject in schools. The study was conducted at the British Educational Institutes, Khartoum, Sudan. These institutes are private English language institutes, established more than 30 years ago, with many branches in the country. They offer General English courses for the public (adults and young learners). They heavily use the OUP Headway International Series as main textbooks. The institutes attract large number of learners and they have high rate of enrollment with classes running in both morning and evening times.

3. Literature review
Following the publication of the 1999 special issue of TESOL Quarterly, 33(3) on critical approaches to TESOL, there has been, over the last two decades, an upsurge in the voices in TESOL/applied linguistics literature promoting the teaching of English as an International language and lingua franca, adopting critical approaches in teaching and learning as opposed to the long-standing and predominant mainstream pragmatic approaches. The underlying argument behind that as stated above seems to have stemmed from the premises that English is no longer owned by the inner circle countries and it has become an international Lingua Franca and spread across the expanding/outer circles. The spread of English worldwide from the original small inner to the outer and expanding circles worldwide (see Graddol, 2006; Kachru, 1985) has indeed attracted extensive research looking into the future and status of English being used outside its origins in various domains by speakers of other languages. This reality would indeed have implications on the teaching and learning of English in these outer circles. Applied linguistics and TESOL literature is replete with studies (e.g., Canagarajah, 2007; Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 2006; Graddol et al., 2007; Pennycook, 1999; Widdowson, 1997) debating the use and status of English in such outer/expanding socio-contextual and socio-cultural spheres. Accordingly, the orthodox original Standard mainstream variety of English has changed into many other Englishes collectively referred to as world or global Englishes including English as an EIL or ELF.

The attempts (e.g., McKay, 2003) at describing EIL/EFL pedagogy have always been theoretical in nature with counter-assumptions to challenge the orthodoxies of ELT pedagogy that is wholly based on the Standard mainstream English. However, there is a lack of empirical attempts that go further and materialize and take these assumptions forward into a practical alternative pedagogy. There have been many attempts (see e.g., Jenkins, 2006; Jenkins, et al., 2011; Seidlhofer, 2004) to describe the EIL/ELF. Some corpora of it as I mentioned above have also been developed which have advanced the research on documentation and description of this kind of English. Below are some common and salient characteristics namely lexico-grammatical of of EIL/EFL based on VOICE corpus and as discussed by Jenkins (2006) and Seidlhofer (2004):

➢ Non-use of the third person present tense–s (“She look very sad”)
➢ Interchangeable use of the relative pronouns who and which (“a book who,” “a person which”)
➢ Omission of the definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in native speaker English and insertion where they do not occur in native speaker English (Moon is
nice today. I am going to have break. I will go back the home after the class/I spoke to the nice lady. I met her in the restaurant yesterday).

➢ Use of an all-purpose question tag such as isn’t it? or no? Instead of shouldn’t they? (“They should arrive soon, isn’t it?”)
➢ Increasing of redundancy by adding prepositions (“We have to study about . . .” and “can we discuss about . . .?”), or by increasing explicitness (“black colour” vs. “black” and “How long time?” vs. “How long?”)
➢ Heavy reliance on certain verbs of high semantic generality, such as do, have, make, put, take.
➢ Pluralisation of nouns which are considered uncountable in native speaker English (“informations,” “staffs,” “advices”).
➢ Use of that-clauses instead of infinitive constructions (“I want that we discuss about my dissertation”).

Corpus research on EIL/EFL has undeniably been significant in attempting to provide a full description, understanding, analysis and documentation of such non-standard mainstream varieties. However, there still seems to be a long way to go until we reach to a fully-fledge pedagogy to effectively teach and learn EIL/EFL. In addition to this, more empirical research seems to be needed to explore the attitudes and preferences of TESOL stakeholders, particularly teachers and learners, towards the learning and teaching of the various varieties of English. Put simply, were learners asked which kind of English(es) they want to learn and identify with? Which approaches, mainstream and/or critical under which they would prefer to be taught? Same questions would apply to teachers as well. We seem to have an apparent lack of empirical studies to investigate the perceptions, views and attitudes of both language teachers and learners, as a core element of the learning process, towards this ongoing debate. Teachers’ and Learners' voices should be taken into consideration into any study attempting to promote the teaching and learning of English from a non-mainstream critical perspective.

Teachers may well have different views to those highlighted in such debates among TESOL researches. For example, Davies (2013) notes that these debates on the non-standard mainstream English(es) were mostly intellectual in nature and these types of English were only material for research and debate. People do research about them but they have not been practically taught in the classroom. Davies cites an incident that some Asian English language teacher trainees refused to take a training language test made locally and they believed that the test was not based on the MSE.

The present study attempts to fill this gap by taking a qualitative methodology to investigate the attitudes and preferences of EFL teachers and learners towards the teaching and learning of English. At the current phase of investigation, the project will focus on the Sudanese context and will involve both EFL teachers and learners in the investigation. The study strives to address the following two research questions:

1. What kind of English(es) do Sudanese EFL teachers and learners want to teach, learn and identify with and what are the reasons behind both parties’ attitudes and preferences?
2. How do Sudanese EFL teachers and learners view English as an international and Lingua Franca language and to what extent, if given the opportunity, are they willing to teach and learn EIL/EFL in the classroom?

4. Methodology and design

4.1. Participants

Thirteen participants took part in the study. Participation was completely voluntary after signing a participant consent form. Participants were also reassured that their data would only be used for research purposes and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. Participants were seven advanced-level EFL learners and six EFL teachers (5-10 years of experience in teaching English in EFL contexts).

4.2 Methods of data collection

To address the research questions, the study adopted an exploratory qualitative methodology with semi-structured interviewing being as the principal method of data collection in addition to the use of some prompt cards during the interviews in a discourse-based format to talk around text and elicit more specific, focused and in-depth responses (see Odell et al., 1983; Lillis, 2001). Follow ups and probe questions were also asked. Thirteen face-to-face tape recoded interviews were conducted with the participants (see appendix A for the interview schedules). Each interview lasted between 30-40mins. Interviews with learners were conducted in a mix of Arabic and English (the Arabic bits were translated). Interviews with teachers were conducted exclusively in English.

4.2.1 Samples of EIL/ELF

Besides the interviews the study also used some documents as prompt cards during the interviews. Samples from EIL/ELF were used during the interviews as prompt cards (see appendix B for an example prompt card) and participants were invited to provide their comments on them. Participants were shown example phrases of EIL/ELF and were asked to react/comment on them. The examples were adapted from Seildhofer’s (2004, p. 220) article based on VOICE corpus and Jenkins’s (2006, p. 169) article.

4.3 Interview coding and analysis procedure

Interviews were transcribed and coded. An open and inductive coding was adopted to gain as many themes as possible from the data. Coding scheme was checked by another coder and applied to the transcripts to achieve reasonable inter-rater reliability check. The coding and analysis approach in the present study was based on a cross-sectional qualitative coding approach whereby thematic coding was followed and themes were generated from the data with representative quotes (see e.g., Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Mason 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Interview themes were described, presented and links were established among the themes and further analysis and explanatory commentaries on these themes were provided through presenting, linking, comparing and contrasting of the themes and concepts in order to gain a multi-perspective analytical view on the data.

5. Results

Both groups of participants reported a strong association with teaching, learning and identifying with the mainstream Standard English. Participants reported that Standard English, particularly,
British English is the mainstream English and is the most common and standard language and it is the variety that they have learned and have always taught in schools and universities in Sudan. Surprisingly, both teachers and learners reported unawareness of the existence of EIL/EFL. When shown the examples of EIL/EFL during the interviews, they both reacted negatively towards the examples. They described the examples as an incorrect English with no grammar or rules and as a deviated kind of English, from the Standard language. They also reportedly added that - when asked about whether they would teach and learn it in the classroom - they would never teach or learn it in the classroom. However, learners somehow viewed it as an ‘easy’ form of English to learn to practice speaking. Teachers also reported that even if they would teach it, they would still need clear pedagogical applications and guidance (training, textbooks, materials, methods of teaching and assessment).

Teachers reported preference to the mainstream English believing that it is the authentic and most common variety:

I prefer **British English** because it is everywhere. The English language is **British** so why should I have variations. Why would we deviate from the original language (T5). **Font size added throughout for emphasis and square brackets** were also used to give some further analytical explanations.

Learners also went in the similar vein as their teachers showing a preference for learning the two mainstream English varieties to any other varieties of English:

I prefer both **British** and **American** English but we are used to the British English most. I like the British English most. It is **eloquent** and **civilized** language and it is the original language. (L1)

Perhaps, surprisingly, teachers reported unawareness of the existence of IEL/ELF as a competing variety to the orthodox MSE:

I have **no idea about EIL/EFL**. As far as I know English is divided into two kinds: British English and American English. British English is spoken all over the world. People would easily understand you if you speak either of these two varieties (T3).

When shown the samples of what supposed to be the EIL/ELF, teachers describe it as incorrect form of English and they reportedly claimed that they would not be willing to learn such non-Standard English:

I will not teach it [EIL/ELF]. There are **a lot of mistakes**. This is not **Standard English**. I must teach English in the right way. As you can see ‘here she like pizza’ she likes pizza. I would refuse to teach it. Even students will not accept to be taught this kind of English. **Standard English is grammatically correct not like this one** [EIL/ELF] you showed me (T2).

Furthermore, teachers when asked about whether they would be willing to teach such kind of English, they reported that even if they were willing to teach it they would still need to know
about it and they also need some guidance and pedagogical training to help them go about teaching and assessing such kind of English:

I think this kind of English causes a lot of problems. I need a training to teach it. How would you teach it? It is not acceptable to me. But who knows maybe in the future it would be acceptable. If I knew more about it I would teach it. I notice there are many mistakes in word order. I need certain models to follow. The first question I would ask is how can I teach it? If I find explanation I can try it out. It is not an easy job to teach this kind of language unless I have training. I can’t give you a final answer now but I can when there is a clear syllabus like teacher’s book, materials, and then I can say I may teach it (T1).

In contrast, learners, when asked about whether they would accept to be taught EIL/ELF in the classroom, they reportedly claimed that they would not mind learning EIL/ELF despite that it is incorrect English but they find it easy to learn and helpful in developing their communication skills, compared to the mainstream Standard English:

It is a little bit confusing [EIL/ELF]. It is not connected very well. There are incorrect sentences. I am going to have break not a break?! There are some mistakes. I think it is possible to learn it because it is easier than the British English. Very easy and you can learn it without any worries about making correct sentences and you would speak without any difficulties (L2).

Some learners also went further showing interest in knowing about EIL/ELF and suggesting that teachers could teach them EIL/ELF beside the mainstream Standard English so as to develop their commination skills.

It is very easy [EIL/EFL]. I feel that sentences don’t follow grammar rules. It is very easy and I prefer that teachers teach it to us. Compared to British English, it is easier. I should find out about this English so that I can learn about it. Teachers can teach it to us for fun after our British English classes. British English is strong and standard. This [EIL/EFL] can help us learn English for communication (L3).

6. Conclusions, implications and recommendations for TESOL
This current small-scale study is phase one of an ongoing large research project investigating the attitudes, preferences and choices of EFL teachers and learners in the MENA region in relation to the mainstream standard English and the international/lingua franca English. The study attempted to explore the attitudes, perceptions and preferences of Sudanese EFL teachers and learners in relation to the debate of whether to teach, learn and identify with EIL/ELF as opposed to MSE in the outer/expanding circle classrooms. Caution should be taken when interpreting the findings of this study as they are not intended to be generalisable due to the small-scale nature of the investigation and its limitation to only one context. However, the findings are still illuminating with significant insights and implications which can be transferable to and applicable in other similar EFL contexts. The study findings suggested that scholarly and intellectual debates in TESOL need to be substantiated with some empirical research in order to
better inform TESOL pedagogy. Applied Linguistics and TESOL researchers and practitioners need to move on from the intellectual debates to the reality and engage themselves into more empirical research involving the main stakeholders (EFL teachers, learners, institutions, policy makers, etc).

As the findings suggest, EIL/ELF, arguably, could be taught and learned but the lack of clear pedagogy has always remained the prime weakness. This is indeed validating the legitimate and powerful questions/arguments raised by the EFL teachers in the study as to ‘how would they teach and learn EIL/EFL and they don’t have a clear pedagogical orientation (e.g., textbooks, materials, assessment)?’ The findings also suggest that the ongoing theoretical/intellectual debates on and the description of EIL/EFL is not sufficient. We need to develop some practical pedagogical materials that can be used in the classroom.

Furthermore, as the findings of this study showed us, it might perhaps be disappointing and shocking news for applied linguistics and TESOL researchers and practitioners to know that, there are some EFL teachers and learners out there in some parts of the outer/expanding circles who have not even heard about EIL/ELF as a ‘competing’ variety to the MSE, let alone their awareness about these ongoing scholarly and intellectual debates about the issue. The study findings also suggested that EFL teachers and learners could have differing views regarding the usefulness of teaching and learning EIL/EFL in the classrooms. Despite the overall resistance and negative attitudes shown by the study participants towards EIL/EFL at first, they later-after I had explained to them IEL/EFL—showed some kind of readiness to try out this kind of English as they viewed it as ‘easy’ and could work out well for developing their communication skills. Such degree of positive attitude and acceptance towards learning of EIL/ELF resonates with some previous studies (e.g., Ahn, 2014; Bernaisch & Koch, 2016) on attitudes of teachers and learners towards local varieties of English due to its high degree of intelligibility and easiness. Such findings suggest that teachers and learners should not shy away from trying out such non-standard mainstream variety of English. On the contrary, they should view the learning and teaching of such varieties as an opportunity and basis for the increase of learners’ level of communicative competence for effective use of language in various domains of life.

Finally, MSE and the critical EIL/EFL should not be viewed as mutually exclusive varieties of English. Critical TESOL researchers and practitioners should be flexible and they:

“need to be constantly careful lest critical theory come to play a role that is equally unchallenged as the ideas it seeks to challenge. Thus, critical pedagogy in TESOL must not become a static body of knowledge but rather must always be open to question” (Pennycook, 1999, p. 345).

In the researcher’s view, there should be some sort of a reconciling and non-confrontational relationship between the advocates of the critical TESOL and those of the Standard mainstream TESOL. As TESOL researchers and practitioners, we should think of a third way out. For example, we could adopt a critical pragmatic approach to teaching and learning English in the outer/expanding circles. That is, we could start off with teaching and learning MSE. Then, we can move on to teach, learn and raise learners’ awareness of the existence of other global
Englishes that are also realistically spoken, in the outer/expanding circles, by and among non-native speakers of English who have different L1 backgrounds. Indeed, the study findings on that students would somehow prefer to be taught the EIL/ELF would further support this critical pragmatic approach to TESOL and EFL teachers should find some ways whereby they could raise learners’ awareness of and expose them to EIL/ELF varieties of English by for example, as Matsuda (2003, p. 723) suggests, bringing speakers of multiple verities of English into the classroom or instated use these verities with learners via e-mail exchanges, projects and also through movies and video clips of World Englishes speakers.

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References


Appendices
A: Interview schedules

Interview schedule for EFL students/learners

Background questions

1. What is your area of study/specialty/profession?
2. Why do you want to learn English?
3. How long have you been learning English?

Materials and learning methods

1. How do you learn English?
2. What materials/textbooks do you use to learn English, and why?

Attitudes towards the mainstreams & International English (IE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

1. What variety (s) of English do you prefer to learn, and why?
2. What do you know about International English (IE) and English as a lingua franca (ELF)?

Perceptions and attitudes towards the mainstreams & critical approaches to teaching and learning of English: discourse-based interview questions

1. Here are some examples from IE and ELF:
A. Would you like to be taught this English by your teachers in the language classes? why/why not?
B. What types of English(s) do you think your teachers should teach you in the classes, Why?

C. If you were given the chance to learn this IE and ELF varieties, how would you learn them? Why

Additional comments

1. Do you have any other comments or would you like to add anything to what we have been talking about throughout this interview?

Interview schedule for EFL teachers

Background questions

1. What is your area of specialty/profession?
2. How long have you been teaching English?
3. Can you tell me a little bit more about your educational/professional background?

Materials and teaching methods

1. How do you teach English?
2. What materials/textbooks do you use to teach English, and why?

Attitudes towards the mainstreams & International English (IE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

1. What variety(s) of English do you prefer to speak, and why?
2. What do you know about International English (IE) and English as a lingua franca (ELF)?

Perceptions and attitudes towards the mainstreams & critical approaches to teaching and learning of English: discourse-based interview questions

1. Here are some examples from IE and ELF:
   A. Would you teach this English to your students in your language classes? why/why not?
   B. What types of English(s) do you think your students want to learn, Why?
   C. If you were given the chance to teach this IE and ELF varieties, how would you teach them? Why?

Additional comments

1. Do you have any other comments or would you like to add anything to what we have been talking about throughout this interview?

B: An example prompt card

Examples of EIL/ELF
1. She look very sad/ He like pizza very much.
2. Who book is this? The boy which you met is my friend.
3. Moon is nice today. I am going to have break.
4. I will go back the home after the class/I spoke to the nice lady. I met her in the restaurant yesterday.
5. They should arrive soon. isn’t/? He like pizza, isn’t it?
6. We have to study about physics...and can we discuss about physics.
7. My shirt is black colour/How long time are you going to stay here?
8. I do carpenter/ I do pizza/I make my homework/ I have smoking/
9. I have many infromations for you. He is one of the staffs. I need your advices, teacher.
10. I want that we discuss about my dissertation. I need that I go now.