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Checking the Reliability of English as a Second Language Learners’ Aptitude: The Use of Achievement Tests as Predictors

Sahal R. Alshammari
Languages and Translation Department
Faculty of Art and Science, Rafha Campus
Northern Border University, Saudi Arabia
Email: Sahal.alshammari@nbu.edu.sa

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Abstract
In Saudi Arabia, high school education has always been blamed for students’ weaknesses in the English language. Teachers have been accused of overestimating students’ scores in English language courses, resulting in evaluations that do not reflect the students’ real levels. Consequently, students believe that they are good enough at English and can survive in an English program at the college level when they are not. The paper is an attempt to bridge the gap between learning English in public schools and at college level. It will try to answer a significant question about whether students’ scores in high school and preparatory years are able to predict their performances at the college level — particularly students majoring in English language. It also explores the factors that affect university students’ GPAs who are majoring English. A total of 107 students participated in the study by providing their grades in the three levels and responding to a survey to explore their attitudes toward activities that encourage them to learn English in the Saudi Arabian education system. The results showed that high school and preparatory year grades aligned with only a small number of the participants’ college grades. This indicates that earlier grades cannot predict students’ performances at the university level. Moreover, the results confirm the dominance of the grammar-translation method in teaching English at all three levels. Finally, the results confirm a strong correlation between practicing more activities and improving second language learning. More research is required to explore the factors that influence students’ English learning.

Keywords: achievement test, English as a second language, high school, preparatory year, Saudi second language learners.

Introduction

The weak outcomes of university English departments as well as public high schools in Saudi Arabia are well known to the government and community. Many studies have indicated poor performance in English, whether in public high schools (Al-Nasser, 2015; Ashraf, 2018) or at the university level (Al-Khairy, 2013; Alrabai, 2014; Alshammari, 2018; Grami, 2010). However, Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 focuses on introducing a new era in which the Kingdom will no longer be a closed country. Recently, the government released a new system whereby tourists can apply for visas and get them in a very short time. This will put further pressure on university English language departments and English courses in public high schools to improve their outcomes. It is expected that students graduating from university English departments will be ready to work in a semi-native environment, such as the tourist field. Unfortunately, although students study English in public high schools for about nine years, the majority of them are unable to speak or write flawlessly in English (Al-Nasser, 2015). Recently, the Ministry of Education announced its intention to step up support and improve the outcomes of first-grade students. The English departments at Saudi universities have the same problems, although they have intensive courses related to language skills and language knowledge. The outcomes of English departments in Saudi universities are not encouraging, and many L2 learners, despite having studied for four years, still struggle with the language (Al-Khairy, 2013; Alrabai, 2014; Alshammari, 2018; Grami, 2010). The Ministry of Education, along with the universities in Saudi Arabia, has an enormous budget to improve outcomes and meet the objectives of their courses. However, there is no easy solution, and in the meantime, public high schools blame the quality of university programs because their teachers are the universities’ outcomes.

This paper will investigate the gaps between teaching English in public high schools, in the preparatory year, and in university English departments. It aims to identify where the gaps are and point out the divergences in students’ journeys through learning the English language. At present, students who earn higher grades in English courses in public high schools as well as in preparatory year are frustrated when they join the English departments of universities because their grades are lower than those in high school or high school. Therefore, the goal of this paper will be to determine whether students’ grade levels in high school English courses reflect their grade levels in university English departments. It is expected that the results will point out the problem and clarify the credibility and reliability of students’ scores in high schools and preparatory year. This will give decision makers in the educational system a crucial vision of teaching in English at three important levels in Saudi Arabia, i.e., public school, preparatory year and college level. Moreover, it will sort out a controversial problem in teaching English in Saudi Arabia (Al-Nasser, 2015; Al-Khairy, 2013; Alrabai, 2014; Alshammari, 2018; Grami, 2010). Finally, it will unwind the factors that affect the performance of students majoring in English at college level.

In light of the above objectives, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1) Do students’ scores in their English courses at public schools and in their preparatory year predict their GPA in a university English department?

2) What are the factors that affect the GPAs of university students majoring in English?
Literature Review

Teaching English in Public Schools

The relationship between high school outcomes and university performance is strong (Cyrenne & Chan, 2012). The chain of public schools, preparatory programs, and university English departments is a one-way process, in which the successive stages build upon the previous stages. Many studies have indicated that students graduate from high school before they have achieved the minimum requirements of university English departments in Saudi Arabia (Al-Nujaidi, 2003; Al-Seghayer, 2011; Ashraf, 2018; Javid, Farooq, & Gulzar, 2012). However, the correlation between teachers’ evaluations and students’ real performances is a complicated one. Two important meta-analysis studies investigated this relationship (Hoge & Coladarci, 1989; Sudkamp, Kaiser & Moller, 2012). Both studies reported high median correlations of .66 and .63, respectively. However, both studies indicated that teachers’ judgments on both levels—direct and indirect judgments—were far from perfect because teachers’ judgments left 57% - 72% of unexplained variation in students’ test performances (Sudkamp et al., 2012).

Teaching English in Saudi Arabia has become a priority for the government because of the language’s importance in the modern world (Al-Nasser, 2015), and Saudi Arabia established Vision 2030 as a means of opening its doors to the outside world. This, however, makes English a crucial element of Vision 2030, since it is a universal language. Along with this, teaching English in public schools has been expanded to include elementary schools, and from the academic year 2021, public schools in Saudi Arabia will teach English in the first grade. The aim is to enhance students’ exposure to the language so they benefit during this critical period. However, despite teaching English in Saudi Arabia for six decades, the outcomes of public schools are not satisfying (Alqahtani, 2021). Students study English for nine years, yet they do not achieve the ability to conduct a short conversation (Alhaisoni & Rahman, 2013).

There are also many barriers to teaching English in public schools—such as depending on international training providers to enhance teaching domestically, a lack of accurate planning, a lack of transparency, and poor quality—with every indication that these aspects are not expected to improve in the near future (Al-Seghayer, 2014; Al-Tamimi, 2019). Some studies have revealed that while students graduate from high school with high grades in English, they are shocked to find themselves struggling to pass their preparatory English courses (McMullen, 2014). This failure has been attributed to many causes, such as a lack of trained teachers, inadequate teacher strategies, students’ lack of aptitude, textbooks, and low exposure to the English language (Fareh, 2010). The efficiency of teachers plays a crucial role in students’ learning, with students seeing their teachers as rescuers (Alqahtani, 2021; Ansari, 2012; Elttayef & Hussein, 2017). Unfortunately, teachers commonly use the Arabic language (their students’ mother tongue) in English lessons to reduce the time needed for instruction (Alqahtani, 2021; Alshammari, 2011). However, since language learning is a cumulative process, it takes only one weak teacher to create a gap that students can fall into to become weak learners.

One of the major causes of the weak outcomes of English lessons in public high schools is combining the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing into one course. Arguably, the core skills should be taught separately to give each sufficient attention (Al-Tamimi, 2019). Teachers and supervisors from the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia have revealed that the
teaching of English in public schools, the training of teachers, low student motivation, overuse of traditional teaching methods, poor technology usage, and a weakness in terms of school supplies are major obstacles to improving public school outcomes (Elyas & Al Grigri, 2014). Other research has indicated that we cannot simplify the problem by boiling it down to one factor, such as the low EFL achievement levels of Saudi EFL learners (Alrabai, 2016). Rather, we should look at the bigger picture. This situation is the result of both internal and external factors.

The Preparatory Year as a Solution

As a result of the weak outcomes of high schools, particularly in terms of English proficiency, a preparatory year was first applied by King Fahad University and subsequently by most other Saudi universities to narrow the gap between high school outcomes and university requirements (Fareh, 2014). The preparatory year adds an extra twelve months to students’ studies, although in some specialties it might be only a semester. Studies show that students value it for improving their language proficiency, and they know that their English proficiency is inadequate (McMullen, 2014). A recent study showed that the preparatory year have a positive influence on students through measuring the relationship between the admission weighted ratio, the college enrollment allocation weighted ratio, and the performance of three batches of male and female students (three consecutive years) (Brdesee & Alsaggaf, 2021).

On the other hand, instructors who teach refreshers in preparatory courses have reported their concerns regarding English proficiency when students exit the program (McMullen, 2014). They blame public schools in general and high school in particular, in the first place, for failing to provide their learners with sufficient exposure to English (Al-Sharqi, Hashim, & Ahmed, 2015). Students also criticise their experiences in schools and attribute their difficulties in the preparatory year to school weaknesses (Al-Sharqi et al., 2015). Regarding their experience in the preparatory year, L2 learners have reported that the preparatory English program has a number of positive aspects, such as improving their listening ability and adjusting them to the heavy work required in their tertiary studies, as well as negative aspects, such as excessive length, poor teacher practices, and poorly equipped classrooms (Gaffas, 2016). Also, it has been reported that, on average, students in preparatory English programs have low learner autonomy (Falah Alzubi, Singh, & Pandian, 2017). One difficulty of the preparatory year program is that it is considered a holistic program and needs all relevant participants to cooperate (Kenedy, 2015, as cited in Keys, 1999). It has also been recommended that technology should be part of English learning since it has become a seamless part of the lives of the current generation (Al-Sharqi et al., 2015).

Despite the huge efforts to improve the English proficiency of students in public schools by adding an extra year to prepare for universities’ requirements, the outcomes for English L2 learners are still inadequate (Al-Khairy, 2013; Alrabai, 2014; Alshammari, 2018; Grami, 2010), and the students in many English departments in Saudi universities lack the required English language proficiency (Javid et al., 2012). One common feature of both high school and preparatory year instructors that may explain part of the problem is that accountability is missing in teachers’ assessments of students’ performances. Unaccountable teachers would activate social categories, such as age, race, and gender, and use them for assessments. On the other hand, accountable teachers focus on students’ individual attributes (Krolak-Schwerdt, Böhmer & Gräsel, 2013). Moreover, a qualitative study revealed that Saudi L2 learners struggle with academic writing due
to the insufficient experience of their instructors in the field of writing as well as a lack of motivation (Alshammari, 2018). The same weakness is obvious in other skills (Al Abik, 2014; Alrabai, 2016; Alshammari, 2011; Jamal et al., 2020; Soomro & Farooq, 2018). This unacceptable weakness has been attributed to many things, but few question the high scores that students usually achieve in high schools. Overevaluation of students in high schools may be one reason behind weak L2 learners joining university English departments. Inflated scores give students false expectations that they are capable of studying in a second language.

**Research Methodology**

**Participants**

In this descriptive cross-sectional study, around 107 participants majoring in English responded to a questionnaire. The participants were from different levels and were majoring in English at Northern Border University. Many participants were excluded because they did not provide their English course grades at high school or in their preparatory year. Those who brought their grades at high school participated the survey. All the participants studied in Northern Border public schools and finished English courses in the preparatory year of Northern Border University. Their ages ranges from 19 to 25. Moreover, the researcher conducted an interview with 14 of them to explore their attitudes toward their experiences of studying English in high school, in their preparatory year, and in the English department. The interview aimed to add more depth to the study and explore aspects that the questionnaire could not cover.

**Research Instruments**

The first instrument is a survey questionnaire consisted of items relating to the courses that students have studied in high school, preparatory year, and English department. Moreover, it includes assessment procedures, teachers’ competence, learning environment, materials, nature of content, activities included, learning, skills-enhancement opportunities, and personal expectations and aspirations. It also recorded participants’ scores in the English language course along with personal details such as family background, age, and exposure to language learning. The second instrument is an interview with 14 participants. The interview consists of open-ended questions to explore the students’ attitudes.

**Research Procedures**

First, learners’ grades in English courses at the high school and preparatory year levels were compared with their achievements in English language skills courses at the foundation levels in the English language department program. Their scores were further compared in terms of age, learning exposure, awareness of the needs and goals of such courses, and motivation. The questionnaire was translated from English into Arabic and independently back-translated into English by a second translator. The few discrepancies between the original English and the back-translated versions resulted in adjustments to the Arabic translation based on direct discussion between the translators. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS, version 10. Descriptive statistics were applied to explore the participants’ views. For each item in the survey, the frequencies of the responses were calculated in percentages. In addition, the means and standard deviations were determined for the various components included in the questionnaire. An Analysis of Variance test (ANOVA) was carried out to see whether the differences among the mean percentage scores of all the variables were statistically significant. P values of less than 0.05 were
considered significant. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the data according to gender. For descriptive statistics, the sample was filtered according to gender, and then the percentage scores were calculated so that the male and female responses could be compared for each item.

**Results**

To answer the third question (“Do students’ scores in their English courses in public high school and in the preparatory year predict their GPAs in university English departments?”), the correlation matrix of students as per their grades in high school, their grades in the preparatory exam, and their current GPAs in English upon graduation were checked (see below):

**Table 1. Correlation between high school, prep year, and English department’s grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation Matrix</th>
<th>Grade in high school</th>
<th>Grade in prep year</th>
<th>Grade in English department</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Grade in high school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade in prep year</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade in English department</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above correlation matrix clearly shows that there is a positive correlation between grade in high school, grade in the preparatory year, and GPA in a university English department. Since there is a positive correlation, we have to check whether there is a cause-and-effect relationship between them. To establish such a relationship, we performed a regression analysis using the Excel built-in function.

From the regression analysis, the linear relationship between grades in high school, grades in the preparatory year, and GPAs in university English departments can be given by the following model:

**Table 2. Linear relationship among the three levels**

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<tr>
<td>Multiple R</td>
<td>0.413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R Square</td>
<td>0.1707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R Square</td>
<td>0.1548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error</td>
<td>0.8075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table two, the multiple R = 0.4132415188, which shows that the correlation between the actual GPAs in English and the predicted GPAs in English, as per Table two, is positive and is 41.32%. The adjusted R-square is 0.154824885, which shows that 15.48 table % values of GPAs in English are explained by the high school scores. The standard error is also very high (80.75%).

Furthermore, as per the third subtest, the p-value for grades in high school is 0.632717305. This is greater than 0.05, which shows that the value of GPAs in English is not dependent on the value of grades in high school. Similarly, the p-value for grades in the preparatory year is 0.00028911. This is less than 0.05, which shows that the value of GPAs in English is dependent on the value of grades in the preparatory year. Therefore, on the basis of the regression analysis,
we can conclude that the equation represented by table two is a weak model, as only 15.48% of the values of GPAs in English are explained by the model (i.e., by the independent variables grades in high school and grades in the preparatory year).

To answer the second question (“What are the factors that affect the GPAs of university students majoring in English?”), we analyzed the activities followed by the 107 students. First, we analyzed whether there was a significant difference in the activities done by students in high school by conducting an ANOVA test using the Excel built-in function. The results of the ANOVA test are as follows:

Table 3. Differences in students’ activities in high school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor (60–69)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average (70–79)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good (80–89)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent (90–100)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F crit</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>18.15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>1.588</td>
<td>0.199</td>
<td>2.7249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>289.4</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>307.55</td>
<td>79</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table three and since the p-value (0.199) is greater than 0.05, and the f-value = 1.588 < F crit = 2.7249, we have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the overall activities done by the students.

Furthermore, we conducted an ANOVA test to find whether there was a significant difference between the activities done by poor-grade and excellent-grade students at the high school level. The results of the ANOVA test are as follows:

Table 4. Differences of the activities done by poor-grade and excellent-grade students at the high school level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.568421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.852632</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F crit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>2.182</td>
<td>0.1477</td>
<td>4.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3.710</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149.1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table four and since the p-value (0.1477) is greater than 0.05, and the f-value = 2.182 < F crit = 4.098, we have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the activities undertaken by poor- and excellent-grade students at the high school level.
Second, we analyzed whether there was a significant difference in the activities done in the preparatory year by conducting an ANOVA test using the Excel built-in function.

Table 5. *Difference in the activities done in the preparatory year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor (60–69)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.776315789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average (70–79)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.776315789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good (80–89)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>4.660526316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent (90–100)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>4.365789474</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F crit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>68.55</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22.85</td>
<td>7.266</td>
<td>0.000238</td>
<td>2.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3.1447</td>
<td>0.000238</td>
<td>2.724</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>307.55</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000238</td>
<td>2.724</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table five and since the p-value (0.000238) is less than 0.05, and the f-value = 7.266 > F crit = 2.724, we do not have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was no significant difference between the overall activities done by students in the preparatory year.

Third, we analyzed whether there was a significant difference in the activities done by university English department students by conducting an ANOVA test using the Excel built-in function.

Table 6. *Difference in the activities done by university English department students.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F crit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>16.337</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>1.638</td>
<td>0.1875</td>
<td>2.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>252.65</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3.324</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>268.99</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table six and since the p-value (0.1875) is more than 0.05, and the f-value = 1.638 < F crit = 2.724, we have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the overall activities done by students in English department.

Furthermore, we conducted an ANOVA test to find whether there was a significant difference between the activities done by poor-grade and excellent-grade students English department. The results of the ANOVA test are as follows:
Table 7. *Difference between the activities done by poor-grade and excellent-grade students in English department*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>3.734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F crit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>3.913</td>
<td>0.0551</td>
<td>4.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>117.5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3.092</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129.6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table seven and since the p-value (0.0551) is more than 0.05, and the f-value = 3.913 < F crit = 4.098, we have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the activities done by poor-grade and excellent-grade students in English department year.

Moreover, we have analyzed the activities done by excellent-grade students in high school, in the preparatory year, and in English department to find out whether there was any significant change. For this, we conducted an ANOVA test using the Excel built-in function.

Table 8. *Activities done by excellent-grade students in three levels*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High_School_Level</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep_Year</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>4.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English dept.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>3.734</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F crit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>0.608</td>
<td>3.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>221.7</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3.889</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>225.6</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table eight and since the p-value (0.608) is more than 0.05, and the f-value = 0.501 < F crit = 3.158, we have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the activities done by excellent-grade students in high school, in the preparatory year, and in the English department.

We have further analyzed the activities done by good-grade students at high school, in the preparatory year, and in their English department to find out whether there was any significant change. For this, we conducted an ANOVA test using the Excel built-in function.

Table 9. *Activities done by good-grade students in the three levels*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High_School_Level</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep_Year</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>4.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English dept.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>3.734</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen in table nine and since the p-value (0.5462) is more than 0.05, and the f-value $= 0.611 < F_{crit} = 3.158$, we have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the activities done by good-grade students in high school, in the preparatory year, and in the English department.

We have also analyzed the activities done by poor-grade students in high school, in the preparatory year, and in the English department to find out whether there was any significant change.

Table 10. *Activities done by poor-grade students in the three levels*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High_School_Level</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep_Year</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English dept.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table 10 and since the p-value (0.662) is more than 0.05, and the f-value $= 0.414 < F_{crit} = 3.158$, we have sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the activities done by poor-grade students in high school, in the preparatory year, and in their graduation year.

To take a closer look at the activities done by the excellent-grade students in the three levels, we analyzed their responses, as shown in the following table:

Table 11. *Activities done by the excellent-grade students in the three levels*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Excellent Students’ Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>We learned grammar through explicit rule teaching and exercises</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>We did pronunciation practice exercises</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Errors were corrected by the teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>We used classroom conversations and discussions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The teacher gave us vocabulary that we were supposed to study (e.g., vocabulary lists)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>We worked and talked in small groups</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The teacher used materials from real life (e.g., TV, magazines, newspaper, radio shows)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The teacher used visual material, such as pictures and movies</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>We used songs and games to learn the language</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We worked and talked in pairs

We did role-play

There were a lot of teacher explanations

We did translation exercises

We gave oral presentations in front of the class

The teacher spoke most of the time

The teacher often explained in the native language

I was encouraged by the teacher to speak during the class

There were English labs in the department

We always used the English lab

I still love English

Discussion

The main finding of this research is that public high schools and preparatory year courses in English have a weak influence on students’ learning. Responding to the first question, the results show that high school and preparatory year English course grades could not predict students’ GPA in a university English department. The study revealed that there is no cause-and-effect relationship between the values of undergraduate students’ GPAs in English and their grades in high school and in the preparatory year. The analysis of the results shows that only 15.48% of the students’ GPAs are explained by the independent variables grade in high school and grade in the preparatory year. This might explain the weaknesses of the English department outcomes (Al-Khairy, 2013; Alrabai, 2014; S. R. Alshammari, 2018; Grami, 2010). Moreover, the results show that although students have graduated from high school with relatively high scores in English, this does not mean that they are excellent in English (McMullen, 2014).

The problem in the preparatory year is more devastating. Although the preparatory year program was created in the first place to improve university outcomes, the results show that its influence on the English department is weak and, along with high school scores, explains only 15.38% of students’ GPAs in university English departments. This requires a full revision of the program in such a way that it achieves its essential goals.

Regarding the second question, which explored the factors that affected the GPA of students majoring in English, the results show that students with high GPA scores tended to engage in more activities than poor-grade students. In fact, the same results can be drawn from high school students as well. The results show a significant difference between good-grade and poor-grade students, where good-grade students tended to do more activities than poor-grade students. It should be mentioned that the results show that teaching grammar skills is one of the top priorities of teachers in high school, in the preparatory year, and in university English departments. This confirms that the grammar-translation method is still favored in Saudi Arabia (Alseghayer, 2005).

An in-depth look at the students’ responses regarding activities and practices inside the classroom at the three levels shows us that high school education is a major reason for the weakness of students in college. The participants responded negatively to items seven, eight, ten, and eleven relating to the teachers’ usage of various strategies and advanced technology in teaching English in high school. This confirms research that has indicated overuse of traditional teaching methods and poor technology usage as the main obstacles to improving public school outcomes (Elyas & Al Grigri, 2014). In the same regard, the participants responded negatively to item six, which
relates to cooperative learning. However, many studies have confirmed the importance of cooperative learning (Alanazy, 2011; Alshammari, 2015; Ellison & Wade Boykin, 2006; Mohamed & Mahmoud, 2014). Still, its application in the classroom is impractical, and this might be due to a lack of training on the part of the teachers (Elyas & Al Grigri, 2014), who do not seem to understand the importance of such strategies when it comes to improving their students’ learning. This shows us the need to evaluate teachers’ efficiency and syllabus quality in high school.

Formal education is a long journey that moves from kindergarten through public school to the university level. Public schools are supposed to prepare students for university studies and, at the end of high school, award them with a certificate that predicts their levels in general (GPA) and specifically in different subjects. In other words, public school grades should have the ability to predict students’ university performances (Cyrenne & Chan, 2012). Unfortunately, the results show that one of the major reasons for students’ weakness in English departments is overestimated evaluations while they are at the high school level. Based on those evaluations, they chose the English language program for their undergraduate studies. When their grades in high school are compared to their performances in the English programs at the university level, it is obvious that students were misguided by their grades in high school. In other words, public schools failed to predict students’ performances as undergraduate English language learners.

**Conclusion**
The study aims to find the reliability of the scores of high school and preparatory year to predict the GPA of students’ majoring in English at the college level. In addition, it investigates the factors that affect students’ GPA at college level. The results of the study confirm that the scores of high school and preparatory courses do not predict students’ performances when majoring in English. The findings show the need to revise the evaluation systems in high schools. The unrealistic high scores that students get in high school mislead students and convince them that their English is good enough to choose an English program in their field, even though they are not. Regarding the factors that affect students’ GPA, the results confirm the strong correlation between practicing more activities and improving second-language learning in high school as well as at college.

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**About the author:**
**Dr. Sahal Al Shammar** is an associate professor at Northern Border University. He holds a Ph.D. in TESOL from University of Kansas, USA. Besides research papers to his credit, he has also authored a couple of fictions in Arabic language, of which *Yasir* has been declared best-seller with more than 40,000 copies sold so far. Being an ELT expert, his areas of research interests include but not limited to second language acquisition, teaching methods, and writing skills of the Arab EFL learners. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6837-164X
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Factors Influencing Secondary English as a Second Language Teachers' Intentions to Utilize Google Classroom for Instructions during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Mohd Haniff Mohd Tahir¹, Mohamad Syafiq Ya Shak², Airil Haimi Mohd Adnan², Dianna Suzieanna Mohamad Shah², Muhamad Fadzilah Zaini¹, Loh Yoke Ling¹, Shushma Devi Piaralal³

¹Faculty of Languages and Communication
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Perak, Malaysia

²Academy of Language Studies
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perak Branch, Perak, Malaysia

³Department of English Language,
Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Buntong, Perak, Malaysia

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Abstract
Google Classroom (GC) is a technical innovation that allows English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers and students to meet remotely to create a more engaging teaching and learning experience. This study investigated factors influencing ESL teachers' intentions to utilize GC for instructions during the Covid-19 pandemic. An exploratory sequential technique was implemented as part of a mixed-methods research design. Eleven prior studies on educators' views toward the use of GC were evaluated for the qualitative data analysis. The data from these investigations were analysed and categorized into topics and categories. The findings revealed that ESL teachers had a positive attitude toward utilizing GC with their pupils. For the quantitative data analysis, a research survey was performed. Technical support, attitude, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and technological knowledge were studied as factors that impacted ESL teachers' intentions to use GC. The sample includes 216 government secondary schools in the Kinta Selatan District of Perak. The outcomes of the study revealed that attitude, perceived usefulness, and technological knowledge all influenced the desire to use GC. The link between technical support and perceived ease of use, as well as the desire to use GC, was found to be negative. In linking the factors that determine GC intention, future research might incorporate a variety of moderating variables. The study's findings might assist educators to understand the challenges of online learning in Malaysian education, as well as how to overcome them.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, Google Classroom, influencing factors, instructions, secondary ESL teachers

Introduction

Higher education institutions have utilized online Learning Management Systems (LMSs) to keep up with the changes in how education is offered throughout the world. LMSs are software systems that "supply content and facilitate learning, particularly as the primary means of online teaching and learning" (Kite, Schlub, Zhang, Choi, Craske, and Dickson (2020, p.183). LMSs are used for more than just delivering learning materials; they also provide a platform for students to connect with one another and with their instructors, as well as the ability to submit assignments online, check grades, receive instructor feedback, and download learning materials (Koh & Kan, 2020).

Some universities, like Universiti Teknologi MARA's "i-learn" and "U-Future" platforms, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris' "myGuru," and Universiti Teknologi Petronas' "U-Campus," have built their learning management systems. Others have used well-known systems like Edmodo, Moodle, Blackboard Learn, and GC to create LMSs. These platforms have lately become the backbone of teaching and learning activities as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak, which has disrupted genuine classroom sessions around the world. ESL educators must be familiar with these platforms to guarantee that instructional materials are given consistently, as both their ESL educators and students are subjected to their own homes.

Since the start of the Covid-19 outbreak in March 2020, GC has doubled its active users, making it one of the most popular LMSs on the globe (De Vynck & Bergen, 2020). It's a Google Apps for Education feature that allows anybody with a Google account to create and take part in online learning platforms and courses. The first time it was introduced was in 2004. (Kumar & Barvell, 2019). It provides ESL instructors with a virtual platform to develop and share learning materials in a variety of formats, including photos, videos, and links, as well as monitoring and providing feedback on their students' activities and assessments. Students can also utilise GC to communicate with their ESL lecturers. Not only that, but the LMSs now incorporate a video conferencing capability, enabling live ESL teaching and learning sessions.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the link between technical support and the desire of ESL teachers to utilise GC.
2. To see if there is a link between ESL teachers' attitudes regarding technology and their intention to utilise GC.
3. To see if there is a link between Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and ESL teachers' intentions to utilise GC.
4. To investigate the link between Perceived Usefulness (PU) and the intention of ESL teachers to utilise GC.
5. To see if there is a link between ESL teachers' technological knowledge and their intention to utilise GC.
6. To find the most important factor in ESL teachers' intention to utilise GC among all the variables.

Research Questions

1. What is the link between technical support and the intention of ESL teachers to use GC?
2. How is the link between ESL teachers' views about technology and their intention to utilise GC?
3. What is the link between PEOU and the intention of ESL teachers to utilise GC?
4. How is the link between PU and the intention of ESL teachers to utilise GC?
5. What is the link between ESL teachers' technological knowledge and their intention to use GC?
6. Among all the variables, what is the most important one in ESL teachers' intention to utilise GC?

**Research Hypotheses**

H₁ Technical supports positively influence the ESL teachers’ intention to utilise GC.
H₂ The views of ESL teachers regarding technology have a beneficial impact on ESL teachers' intentions to utilise GC.
H₃ PEOU has a beneficial impact on ESL teachers' intention to use GC.
H₄ The intention of ESL teachers to utilise GC is favourably influenced by PU.
H₅ The technological knowledge of ESL teachers has a beneficial impact on their intention to utilise GC.
H₆ Technical supports, ESL teachers' attitudes, PEOU, PU, and ESL teachers' technology knowledge all have a substantial impact on ESL teachers' intention to utilise GC.

**Literature Review**

The popularity of GC has grown due to a variety of factors. To enrol in a course through GC, students only need to create a free Google account, and there is no ongoing membership charge (Inoue & Pengnate, 2018; Ventayen, Estira, De Guzman, Cabaluna, & Espinosa, 2018; Rajendram, 2019). Furthermore, because it has a simple and basic design and provides a one-stop resource centre for students, GC is simple to use (Alim, Linda, Gunawan, & Md Saad, 2019), allowing ESL instructors to better manage their classrooms (Apriyanti, Syarif, Ramadhan, Zain, & Agustina, 2019; Sudarsana, Putra, Astawa, & Yogantara, 2019). GC also offers its clients flexibility (Mafa, 2018), since it is available at any time and from any location via a variety of devices, including its application on a smartphone or its website on a personal computer with internet connectivity.

GC also makes it simple to integrate with other Google Apps (Brown, 2018). Students in GC, for example, may finish their English tasks in the LMS rather than having to upload and re-upload them afterward. ESL teachers may now send grades and comments to their students directly using Google Docs. Students may also use Google Meet in GC to participate in live and virtual lessons through video conferencing, allowing them to converse directly with their ESL lecturers as if they were in physical classrooms. Google Forms, on the other hand, makes it simple to distribute examinations and quizzes to students, while Google Drive offers up to 15GB of free storage for students' English learning materials.

As previously said, GC has a lot of characteristics and benefits that may entice ESL teachers to use it in their classrooms. However, the beliefs of these ESL educators about how useful GC is for their pupils may impact their decision to employ it. It is fascinating to consider why ESL instructors' perspectives are so important in the teaching and learning process, given that they are founded on "experience and personality that assist them in their profession" (Donaghue, 2003, p. 344). This is because, according to Pajares (1992), their perception is defined as their personal beliefs about the curriculum, the subject they teach, the responsibility they hold, and their perspectives on students and the classroom, and this perception can serve as a foundation for their
attitudes and activities (Nurhayati, Tarjana, & Hersulastuti, 2018). According to Ramazani (2012), these ESL instructors’ opinions and viewpoints give input for "reflection and discussion circles in the domains of teaching and learning" (p. 1749), potentially impacting the field of education.

**Theoretical Framework**

To investigate the factors stated in this study, Davis (1989) advocated using the Technology Adoption Model (TAM) to assess technical support, attitude, PEOU, PU, and technological understanding. To utilise this model, the study looked at the direct association between PEOU and PU as external variables. At the same time, one's attitude toward technology will be a factor in deciding whether he or she will adopt GC. Because GC has just recently been introduced in primary and secondary public schools, determining whether ESL instructors intend to use it is critical. ESL instructors, students, and schools all have an impact on the efficiency of such technologies. Technological knowledge, technical support, PU, PEOU, and technological attitudes are all classed as independent factors. This research combines technology factors (technological knowledge, technical support, PEOU, PU, and attitudes toward technology) with the TAM to evaluate secondary school ESL teachers’ willingness to accept GC. Figure One summarizes the framework for this research.

![Figure 1. Research framework](image-url)

**Methods**

In terms of the qualitative data, the researchers employed content analysis by reviewing eleven prior studies that focused on GC and how its users, in this case, ESL instructors, perceived it. These studies were organised and classified using the qualitative software application, ATLAS.ti. It is a commonly used qualitative data analysis application that helps with data analysis.

The quantitative data, on the other hand, were obtained through a non-experimental technique, which was used since the researchers cannot modify the independent variable or assign the study’s participants at random (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). A non-experimental technique, according to Creswell (2014), however, does not lead to a causal link. It aids in the description of data patterns and provides information on the connections between variables.
A self-administered questionnaire was utilised as the research technique in this study, and a survey was used to gather the data at a certain time point. A survey is a type of study in which a questionnaire is used to collect data from a group of individuals (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2013). The goal is to describe the study's dependent variable of interest and look at how it relates to the study's independent variables. Meanwhile, self-administered questionnaires provide respondents privacy while answering questions and allow them to complete them at their leisure and without the presence of the interviewer (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2011).

The variables influencing secondary school ESL instructors' intentions to utilise GC in Kinta Selatan District's daily public secondary schools were studied using a series of questions, and this approach was suited for the research's descriptive and predictive purposes. As a result, this strategy is appropriate for this quantitative study, in which "questionnaires were used to provide answers from a relatively large number of groups" to answer the research questions and determine whether teachers are interested in using GC (Tahir, Albakri, Adnan, & Karim, 2020, p. 162).

**Participants**

The sample size should be representative of the population, according to Tahir and Mohtar (2016). The size of the population should be sufficient to obtain the required accuracy. The goal of this study is to investigate the elements that impact secondary school ESL instructors’ intentions to use GC. The target population was designated as ESL teachers in government secondary schools in Kinta Selatan, Perak. There are 14 secondary schools in Kinta Selatan, with a total of 1103 teachers.

To perform this inquiry, convenience sampling was used. A non-probability sampling approach was used to choose the respondents. The participants were chosen based on their availability at the time and location given (Tahir, Albakri, Adnan, Shah, & Shaq, 2020). This approach is the most popular since it is inexpensive and does not require a list of demographic information. According to Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970) table, a sample size of 278 persons is necessary for a total population of 1000 people. A representative sample, according to the debates, requires a specific proportion of the statistical population to duplicate the quality or feature being examined or assessed as nearly as feasible (Sekaran, 2006). The sample size for this study was 280 samples, which represented 28 percent of the total population of 1103 instructors (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). With the help of school administrators, the questionnaires were provided to secondary school ESL educators in Kinta Selatan District.

**Research Instruments**

The researchers reviewed 11 prior studies on ESL educators' opinions toward the use of GC for the qualitative data. Using the ATLAS.ti Software, the selected studies for this review were evaluated and categorized into several themes and categories.

The researcher designed a five-point Likert Scale questionnaire as an instrument to gather the quantitative data for the study since it utilized a quantitative research technique to describe the relationship between variables. The questionnaire was tagged with a reference to the study's research framework. The participants were asked to rate how much they agreed with the items on
Factors Influencing Secondary English as a Second
Tahir, Shak, Adnan, Shah, Zaini, Ling, & Piaralal

the list. The questionnaire's items were graded on a five-point Likert Scale, with one indicating "Strongly disagree" and five indicating "Strongly agree." The questions were written as statements, with the respondents indicating how much they agree or disagree with each one. The questionnaire for this study was divided into seven sections: (a) demographic characteristics of ESL instructors, (b) technical support, (c) attitudes of ESL teachers, (d) PU, (e) PEOU, (f) ESL teachers' intention to use GC, and (g) ESL teachers' technology knowledge. Part A collects information on gender, age, education level, teaching experience, teacher type, and GC usage frequency. In Section A, which consists of six (6) questions, the respondents must provide their background information. Section B collects information on the respondents' impressions of the help they obtain while using GC, whereas Section C collected the information on the respondents' opinions of GC usage. Sections D and E were designed to gather information on how they use GC in their teaching and learning. Section F is for obtaining information on their plans to utilise GC, whereas Section G is for determining their understanding of GC.

The demographic, technical support, attitudes toward technology, and desire to utilise factors in the questionnaire were taken from AlQudah (2014) and Amin (2008), and the survey contains six questions. Al–Alak and Alnawas's (2011) questionnaires were adjusted for the PU and PEOU. Finally, the technological knowledge variable was derived from Archambault and Barnett (2010). The questionnaires from these studies were retrieved and modified to meet the demands of the current study.

Research Procedures

The quantitative stage of the study began with the researchers performing a content analysis on previous GC-related studies, where the researchers reviewed eleven prior studies that investigated GC and how its users, in this case, ESL educators, perceived it. These studies were based on keywords such as ‘GC’, ‘ESL’, ‘teachers’, and ‘perceptions’. Another keyword that the researchers intended to use was 'COVID-19.' However, because studies on the pandemic's impacts are still ongoing, and current research has mostly focused on students' views of GC uptake, searches for the keyword yielded relatively few results. After that, the studies selected for review were chosen based on the following criteria: (1) the participants in the studies had to be ESL educators; (2) the studies had to use GC as the LMSs in their English teaching and learning discussions; (3) the research findings had to be published in an article or conference papers; and (4) the surveys had to be finished in the last five years.

The quantitative data for this study was then collected using a survey-based technique that was designed to meet the study's objectives. To get access to the schools and ESL teachers, a letter of intent to conduct the study was sent to selected schools. A cover letter was appended to the survey form to inform the respondents about the study’s subject. It is important to prevent the respondents from having any misgivings or suspicions regarding the poll. The enclosed letter's goal is to encourage and instruct the respondents to reply to the study's questions while guaranteeing them anonymity and confidentiality. The survey's aims were explained in the cover letter, which also underlined how essential the survey is. The researchers’ email addresses and mobile phone numbers were also included in case any explanations about the questionnaire were required. The respondents were guaranteed complete anonymity, their honest opinions were appreciated, and the surveys were delivered to each school's management personally.
Data Analysis

In the content analysis stage of the study, the qualitative software tool ATLAS.ti was used to organise and analyse the information from the selected past studies on GC. The studies were imported into the software first. The information from the studies were then divided, classified, and annotated both inside and across documents, topics, and categories. The key themes that came from this method were the benefits of GC, the challenges of using GC, and proposals to improve GC. The themes were then divided into several categories.

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 28 meanwhile was used to evaluate the data gathered from the surveys. The amount of variance in ESL instructors' intention to utilise GC that can be described by the abovementioned independent factors, as well as the relative importance of each in explaining the dependent variable, was determined using multiple regression analysis. Pallant (2016) claims that multiple regression may be used to investigate the connection between a continuous dependent variable and a large number of independent variables. To investigate the relationship between independent and dependent variables, the Pearson correlation was utilised to evaluate all the assumptions in this study.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis was used to establish the profile of the respondents. The findings of this study would aid in detecting any response bias. The mean, standard deviation, maximum, and lowest values were considered in the study.

Pearson Correlation

According to Plackett (1983), the correlation coefficient's objective is to identify if two variables have a significant relationship. Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient, first reported in 1895, is the most often used correlation coefficient. When utilising Pearson's r, the correlation between any two variables will always be between –1 and +1. Plackett's (1983) correlation value of 0 indicates that two variables have no positive or negative association. All the hypotheses in this study were analysed using Pearson correlation to indicate whether there was a positive or negative link between the study’s independent and dependent variables.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression is a set of methods for investigating the connection between a single continuous dependent variable and some independent variables, according to Pallant (2016). It may be used to answer a wide range of research questions and determine how effectively a set of variables can predict a certain result. In this study, multiple regression analysis was performed to evaluate the hypotheses and their relationship to the dependent variable. To test the hypotheses and explain the correlations between the independent and dependent variables, hierarchical regression analysis was utilised. The significance of the hypothesis was determined using the P-value; the lower the P-value, the greater the degree of importance. The R–Square method is used to figure out how much variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable.
Findings

Content Analysis

Eleven prior studies on ESL educators' perspectives on the use of GC were reviewed. Using the ATLAS.ti Software, the materials for this review were evaluated and categorized into several themes and categories. Table One summarizes the findings:

Table 1. Content analysis of the reviewed studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Main finding(s)</th>
<th>Issue(s) raised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iftakhar (2016)</td>
<td>Qualitative (structured interviews; observation)</td>
<td>7 tertiary level educators</td>
<td>The general perception of the use of GC</td>
<td>GC makes learning more effective</td>
<td>Plagiarizing is rampant in the students' assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azhar &amp; Iqbal (2018)</td>
<td>Qualitative (semi-structured interviews)</td>
<td>12 secondary school educators</td>
<td>The general perception of the use of GC</td>
<td>GC is merely a facilitation tool that can be used for document management and basic classroom management</td>
<td>GC does not provide a significant impact on teaching methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaumont (2018)</td>
<td>Qualitative (Case study)</td>
<td>Educators at a tertiary level institution</td>
<td>The general perception of the use of GC</td>
<td>Educators offer positive feedback on the use of GC</td>
<td>It is difficult to access learner analytics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitriningtyas, Umamah, &amp; Sumardi (2019)</td>
<td>Qualitative (interview)</td>
<td>5 secondary school educators</td>
<td>GC as a media of learning History</td>
<td>GC could help in increasing the quality of History learning</td>
<td>Some educators are still reluctant and afraid to use GC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harjanto &amp; Sumarni (2019)</td>
<td>Qualitative (interview)</td>
<td>7 Secondary school educators</td>
<td>The general perception of the use of GC</td>
<td>GC helps conduct their virtual classroom</td>
<td>Need more time and exposure to maximize the features of GC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidhu, Yean, Jean, &amp; Abdelhai (2019)</td>
<td>Mixed method: Quantitative (questionnaire) Qualitative (semi-structured interviews)</td>
<td>61 pre-service educators. 7 pre-service educators</td>
<td>Educators' knowledge and understanding of the use of GC</td>
<td>Pre-service educators have a positive perception of GC as they saw its potential benefits</td>
<td>Educators should equip themselves with knowledge and understanding of GC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumar, Bervell, Osman (2020)</td>
<td>Qualitative (interview)</td>
<td>3 Tertiary level educators</td>
<td>The general perception in teaching IT-related subjects</td>
<td>Educators offer positive views of GC</td>
<td>The safety of personal data. Participants authentication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratiwi (2020)</td>
<td>Qualitative (interview)</td>
<td>4 Secondary School educators</td>
<td>The general perception of the use of C</td>
<td>Educators prefer to use GC to organize digital learning</td>
<td>Teacher’s readiness to provide good technology-based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The design, participants, focus, important findings, and issues given by the selected historical study are summarised in Table One. The majority of the past studies on ESL instructors' views on GC uptake were conducted using qualitative methods. ESL instructors from all levels of ESL instruction, from pre-service educators to those teaching at the elementary, secondary, and university levels, participated in these studies. Most of the studies focused on the ESL educators' general opinions toward the use of GC, with many of the findings indicating that GC is beneficial. Finally, aside from the availability of essential technological equipment and an internet connection, the ESL instructors' preparedness to utilise GC appears to be the most significant barrier to utilizing GC for their lessons.

**Correlation Analysis**

The correlation analysis indicated a relationship between the dependent and independent variables, as shown in Table Two. With a significance level of 0.01 and a correlation coefficient of 0.69, ESL instructors' attitudes, perceived ease of use ($r = 0.68$), perceived usefulness ($r = 0.14$), and technological knowledge ($r = 0.60$) were shown to be positively connected to the use of GC. Because there was no negative value, only positive correlations between the factors and ESL instructors' intention to utilise GC were found.

Table 2. *Pearson Correlations of the study’s variables (N=216)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Technical Support</th>
<th>Teachers’ Attitude</th>
<th>Perceived Ease of Use</th>
<th>Perceived Usefulness</th>
<th>Technological Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical support</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ attitudes</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived ease of use</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived usefulness</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological Knowledge</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention to use</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive Statistics

The mean scores and standard deviations for the variables were calculated using descriptive statistics. A total of 216 appropriate instances were analysed for five independent variables and one dependent variable, as indicated in Table Three.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics (N=216) for all the main variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No of Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical support</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' attitude</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived ease of use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived usefulness</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological knowledge</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention to use</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.843</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average score appears to be more than 3.0 in every case. The mean for ESL teachers' attitudes, as shown in Table Three, was the highest, at 3.50. This means that ESL teachers should have a favourable attitude about their desire to use GC because it is essential in carrying out their daily activities in the classroom. The lowest mean is for technological expertise at 3.01. It can be implied that to encourage students to use GC, ESL teachers' technological knowledge has to be updated too.

The standard deviations of the five independent variables and one dependent variable ranged from 0.570 to 0.843. This implies that there is a significant degree of small variability in the data set. The variance value shows that the respondents' responses to the study’s variables supplied in the questionnaire did not differ substantially from one another. This demonstrates that there are only slight inconsistencies among the responses.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6 were evaluated using multiple regression. This strategy was used to look at the direct link between independent and dependent variables to see which variable was the most important in deciding whether or not an ESL educator intends to apply GC in his or her practice. Table 4 shows the regression findings, and hypotheses 1–6 (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6) were examined to see if the dependent variable (intention to use) had a direct relationship with all of the independent variables (technical support, teachers' attitudes, PEOU, PU, and technological knowledge).

Table 4. Multiple regressions used to examine the characteristics that influence ESL instructors' intention to use GC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variable</th>
<th>Intention to Use</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical support</td>
<td>-0.067</td>
<td>-1.421</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table Four displays the results of a multiple regression analysis that included all the independent factors (technical support, ESL teachers' attitudes, PEOU, PU, and ESL teachers' technological knowledge) as well as the dependent variable (ESL teachers' intention to utilise GC). The F value = 92.461 indicates that the ESL instructors' attitudes, PEOU, and technological knowledge are statistically significant, with a p<0.001 significance. With p>0.001 statistics, technical support, and PU are statistically insignificant. In nine cases, outliers were removed, and regression tests confirmed that the inference was correct, with an R square of 0.697. All the variables combined may explain 69.7% of the variance in intention to use GC. 0.68 is the modified R-value. The Durbin-Watson coefficient of 1.949 was within the permissible range of 1.5 to 2.5. The beta value (standardised coefficients) of technical support (=-0.067) and the beta value for perceived usefulness (PU) (=0.477) are both adversely related to the ESL instructors' desire to adopt GC, as shown in Table Four. As a result, hypotheses H2 and H5 are ruled out. The ESL instructors' attitudes (=0.403), perceived usefulness (PEOU) (=0.303), and technological knowledge (=0.278) are all positively connected to their desire to utilise GC, implying that H1, H3, and H4 are supported.

Table Five reveals that the tolerance was larger than 0.1, the variance inflation factor values were less than 10, and the condition limit indices were less than the safety limit of 30, implying that there were no worries about multicollinearity. The following research constructs were statistically significant at p>0.001 with 99.9% confidence levels, according to the regression analysis result.

Table 5. Statistics of collinearity for factors influencing ESL instructors’ intention to utilise GC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Tolerance</th>
<th>Collinearity Statistics</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical support</td>
<td>0.680</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ attitudes</td>
<td>0.295</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived ease of use (PEOU)</td>
<td>0.306</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived usefulness (PU)</td>
<td>0.904</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological knowledge</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.634</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A bell shape histogram was used to confirm the samples' normality requirement, as shown in Figure Two, and the P-P plots indicated no hint of error normalcy.
Among all the factors, a multi regression analysis was performed to discover the most relevant factor determining the ESL instructors' intention to utilise GC. According to the beta value from Table Six, the most important factor impacting the ESL instructors' intention to use GC is the ESL teachers' attitudes, which has a value of $=0.369$. Figure Three, on the other hand, presents the P–P Plot of the factors that influence the ESL instructors' intention to utilise GC.

Figure 2. A histogram of the parameters influencing ESL instructors' intention to utilise GC

Figure 3. P–P Plot of the factors that influence ESL instructors' intention to utilise GC
### Table 6. Coefficients for factors influencing ESL instructors' intention to utilise GC that aren't standardised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical support</td>
<td>-0.077</td>
<td>0.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' attitudes</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>0.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived ease of use</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived usefulness</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological knowledge</td>
<td>0.275</td>
<td>0.049</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summary of Hypothesis

Six possibilities have been investigated in all. Three of them were approved, and the other two were turned down. The most important factor in $H_6$ has been found. The following is a summary of the hypothesis:

### Table 7. Hypothesis testing summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$H_1$ Technical supports positively influence the ESL teachers' intention to utilise GC.</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_2$ The views of ESL teachers regarding technology have a beneficial impact on ESL teachers' intentions to utilise GC.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_3$ PEOU has a beneficial impact on ESL teachers' intention to use GC.</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_4$ The intention of ESL teachers to utilise GC is favourably influenced by PU.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_5$ The technological knowledge of ESL teachers has a beneficial impact on their intention to utilise GC.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_6$ Technical supports, ESL teachers' attitudes, PEOU, PU, and ESL teachers' technology knowledge all have a substantial impact on ESL teachers' intention to utilise GC.</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Discussion

Based on the content analysis, it can be concluded that ESL educators in general think highly of GC because of its ease of use, flexibility, and ability to help ESL educators in managing their classes remotely and more efficiently, encouraging creativity and innovation, fostering collaboration, and improving educator-GC interaction. However, ESL teachers are hesitant to use GC in their classrooms because of its ugly design and interface, limited storage capacity, and safety and privacy concerns. Furthermore, several ESL teachers have expressed concerns about their readiness to employ GC, as well as their students' attention and academic dishonesty as the GC sessions progress. Nevertheless, these ESL teachers have great expectations for GC. After all, a challenge should always be welcomed because it aids in one's development. Finally, ESL educators from the reviewed studies made several recommendations that could help GC to provide a more meaningful experience to its users, especially in terms of providing extensive guidance on how to use GC, improving safety and privacy measures for student enrolment in GC, and more monitoring and communication features.

Our findings reveal some significant managerial implications in meeting the 21st-century educational demands. PEOU, ESL teachers' technological knowledge, and ESL teachers' attitudes are all important predictors of ESL educators' desire to use GC in everyday instructions. As a
result, school, district, state, and national administrations should define and prioritize the development of these educators’ attitudes and knowledge. This step is necessary to encourage ESL instructors to utilise the GC effectively. Consequently, all stakeholders should pitch in to help ESL teachers to become more motivated to use technology to its maximum potential. The assistance or support provided should consider the challenges of constantly changing educational policies and classroom practices. The link between the components that define ESL teachers' purpose varies dynamically from time to time as a result of ongoing technological developments. To stay up with technological developments, administrators and lawmakers should encourage ESL educators to retain and develop a passion for technology.

Professional development is important in the lives of ESL instructors when it comes to technology in the classroom to make this happens. According to Alim, Linda, Gunawan, and Md Saad (2019), educators must engage in a significant professional development practice to build a world-class education system. Another reason for its relevance, according to Apriyanti, Syarif, Ramadhan, Zaim, and Agustina (2019), is that professional growth is about transformation and reinvention. It is an "indispensable vehicle" that ESL instructors employ in their daily teaching. Its goal is to improve our communication skills with children and their families, as well as our professional experience and enjoyment. It also aids ESL instructors in achieving their school-based objectives, as well as the MOE's district and state-level objectives (Sudarsana, Putra, Astawa, & Yogantara, 2019). Staff development seminars for instance should be held regularly to benefit all attendees. All of these objectives will be met in a fun, relevant, and professional manner. ESL instructors must participate in training, professional development, and other activities to equip themselves with a high level of information, particularly technological knowledge, to fulfill the needs of the "technology world" of the 21st century.

To help with this, the government should make a deliberate effort to increase the efficacy of ESL teachers, which would help pupils to learn even more. Because the government's major concern is the quality of school instructions, this step must be considered. For ESL instructors to create professional alliances to improve education systems in Malaysia, schools must have a good learning organization. A crucial component of the learning organization is creating a space where people may learn new things regularly. As a result, learning can help them to improve their performance and come up with new ideas. Another important component is curriculum development to meet the needs of the workforce in a knowledge-based economy. As a result, Malaysian schools need to grasp and fulfill those goals as soon as possible. Since everyone must perform successfully in their roles, schools act as a learning organization devoted to enhancing the learning capacity of ESL students and instructors.

Despite their positive attitudes, ESL teachers sometimes find it difficult to incorporate technology into their classroom practices. Few studies have stressed the need for ESL instructors to receive professional development to get them to use technology in their classes. Mafa (2018) for example investigated ESL teachers' views on the use of ICT with special education students and found that a large number of special education ESL instructors were enthusiastic about the technology. Simultaneously, the survey discovered that half of ESL teachers do not use ICT with their students since it is difficult to use ICT for educational purposes. To put it in another way, they have not been taught to use ICT with their pupils to deliver their courses, and as a result, they...
require further professional development support. Despite having a positive attitude, Ribeiro, Moreira, and Almeida (2011) discovered that Portuguese ESL instructors had a low degree of ICT usage with special needs students owing to insufficient training. Ndibalema (2014), who studied ESL teachers' perspectives on ICT use in Tanzanian secondary schools, also emphasized the need for training. The majority of ESL instructors, according to the study, do not properly integrate ICT into their lessons. Despite their positive attitude toward the use of ICT, this might have occurred due to a lack of training in the use of ICT.

According to the findings of this study, ESL instructors' attitudes and perceived ease of usage impact their desire to utilize GC. Attitude acts as a personal belief, self-motivation, and self-satisfaction when ESL instructors build their desire to use GC. As a result, ESL teachers may be encouraged to use personal experiences to motivate students to use GC. In reality, factors like technical support, utility, and infrastructure availability might hinder this situation. Understanding ESL educators' attitudes in dealing with students of different origins, socioeconomic situations, and abilities are essential in today's educational system. As a result, authorities should assist in the creation of an environment in which ESL teachers may keep their good attitudes while providing exceptional service to their students. If ESL educators struggle in using GC, they may conclude that it is difficult to use and acquire a dislike for it. Strategies and support mechanisms that provide favourable experiences for ESL teachers in using GC should be designed and executed to favourably affect ESL instructors' beliefs and attitudes. When ESL educators feel supported and have positive experiences using GC, they are more likely to have favourable opinions of the LMS, increasing their desire to utilise it in the future.

Not only that, but according to Nurhayati, Tarjana, and Hersulastuti (2018), effective ICT integration in educational institutions is mostly dependent on teachers and principals, who, owing to their limited ICT knowledge and abilities, require considerable professional development. As a result, in-service teacher training must be prioritized by both teachers and principals. Furthermore, newly recruited teachers should get pre-service training before commencing regular sessions. This is to familiarize them with the important role of technology in educational settings, as well as to educate them on how to prepare and utilize ICT successfully. Ramazani (2012) also championed professional growth. ESL teachers must be given the skills they need to use technology successfully to assist their students to learn more effectively. This matter should be planned collaboratively, with inputs from ESL instructors and the requirements of a school. This will assist ESL instructors in learning how to use technology effectively in their practices. The acquisition of necessary knowledge and skills will be aided through training. Inoue and Pengnate (2018) then suggested that rather than a single event, training should be done through a series of experiences that keep ESL students and teachers up to date with the rapidly changing technology. Not only that, but ESL instructors should be allowed to experience utilizing technology more practically during their teacher training programmes so that they may learn how to utilise technology to enhance their classroom activities (Ventayen, Estira, De Guzman, Cabaluna, & Espinosa, 2018).

Moreover, according to Rajendram (2019), the deployment of a complex system such as an LMS entails significant changes to organisational structure, human roles and duties, control and coordination systems, and work processes. As a result, ESL educators may believe that educational institutions should assist in the form of commitment and communication. Aside from commitment
and communication, providing the required infrastructure and training for the installation of an LMS like GC will hasten its acceptance. The presence of managerial support for GC will act as a motivation for adoption.

In a school setting, individuals may also be subjected to pressure from others to discourage them from using technology according to Wechsler (2003). Furthermore, because the concept of GC is not completely imagined and understood within the school environment, ESL educators may face demotivating school pressures, and as a result, ESL educators may resist altering their work routines because the benefits of the GC system are not well recognised. Therefore, to assist ESL educators in boosting the efficacy of employing GC, authorities should make GC handling training a priority for all ESL educators.

**Conclusion**

Previous studies on ESL educators' perceptions of GC have concluded that the ease of use, flexibility, and ability to help ESL educators manage their classes remotely and more efficiently while encouraging creativity and innovation, nurturing collaboration, and instilling a better interaction between ESL educators and their students. However, owing to its ugly design and interface, low storage capacity, and safety and privacy issues, ESL teachers are hesitant to utilise GC in their classrooms. Not only that, but these ESL teachers have raised worries about their readiness to use GC, as well as their students' concentration and academic dishonesty as the GC sessions progress. Despite this, these ESL teachers remain upbeat about GC. Several recommendations made by the ESL educators involved in previous studies could help GC to provide a more meaningful experience to its users, particularly in terms of providing extensive guidance on how to use GC, improved safety and privacy measures for student enrolment in GC, and additional monitoring and communication features in the application.

According to the survey results, ESL instructors' attitudes, usefulness, and technological knowledge all had a substantial effect on their readiness to use GC. It was shown that technical support had a negative association with the perceived ease of use and desire to utilise GC. This study's findings also contribute to and enhance our understanding of the elements that influence the intention to utilise GC; nevertheless, further research is required to improve on this study and address its weaknesses. Consequently, it is expected that this research would provide a foundational understanding of the factors that impact the desire to use GC in Malaysia. A bigger sample of ESL educators and randomly selected samples would be useful and encouraged in future studies, which might result in a more inclusive outcome. The study should also be broadened to cover all Malaysian states, particularly Sabah and Sarawak. This will make it easier to extrapolate the conclusions of the study.

**Recommendation for Future Research**

Future research might include a range of moderating variables to analyse the relationship between the variables that determine GC’s usage intention. The gender and the personality of ESL educators could be two of these traits. As of this writing, a Movement Control Order (MCO) has been imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All national and international public and commercial institutions were obliged to postpone all courses and seminars. Instead, beginning in April 2020, all teaching and learning sessions in all these institutions were completed using online
learning platforms. When conducting these online lessons, ESL educators have encountered several difficulties. As a result of this unique situation, the researchers believe that more studies should be conducted based on the experiences of these ESL educators. The findings of the study might be shared with interested parties and educators to help them understand the many obstacles of online learning approaches in the Malaysian education system and the best ways to overcome them.

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**About the Authors**

**Mohd Haniff Mohd Tahir**, Ph.D., is a Senior Lecturer and internationally recognized researcher at the Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Malaysia. His focus area includes materials development and evaluation, interactive language teaching curriculum design, digital learning, and quantitative research related to ESL classrooms. Currently, he is exploring emerging ideas and concepts for vocabulary learning. ORCID ID https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5411-1000

**Mohamad Syafiq Ya Shak**, is a member of the Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perak Branch, Malaysia. His research interests include material development and evaluation, digital learning, corpus-based studies, and media. He holds a Master of Education (TESL) and is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Education (TESL), examining CEFR-aligned textbooks in Malaysian schools. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4702-6633

**Airil Haimi Mohd Adnan**, Ph.D., is a Senior Lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies (APB), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam and a Senior Principal Assistant Director at the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia. His focus areas include languages-in-use and educational technologies. As a linguist and multidisciplinary social scientist, he has authored many books and chapters, and hundreds of articles. ORCID ID https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7916-5021

**Dianna Suzieanna Mohamad Shah** lectures at the Academy of Language Studies (APB), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam and she is a university-wide Fellow for 360-degree and Video Learning with the Centre for Instructional Delivery and Learning Development (CIDL), UiTM. She holds a Master of Education (TESL) and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Education (TESL). ORCID ID https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0367-1577

**Muhamad Fadzllah Zaini**, Ph.D., is a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Malaysia. His areas of specialization are Corpus Linguistics, Computer Linguistics, and Machine Learning. He is active in industry
grant research and international associations related to the Digital Humanities, Learner Corpora Association, and IEEE.
ORCID ID https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8760-4912

Loh Yoke Lin, Ph.D., is a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Malaysia. Her area of research includes studies on broadcasting and production, visual literacy, and documentary films.
ORCID ID https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3873-3253

Shushma Devi Piaralal, Ed.D., is a member of the English Language Department, Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Buntong, Malaysia. She teaches and coaches high school learners for the past 20 years in technology and English language. Her research interests include ESL learning and teaching and the usage of technology in education.

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The Effects of Reading Habits on Test Performance by Foundation-level Omani Students

Sarath W. Samaranayake  
Department of International Language Teaching  
Silpakorn University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand  
Corresponding Author: Samaranayake_s@su.ac.th

Suneeta Kositchaivat  
Department of International Language Teaching  
Silpakorn University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

Vachira Jantarach  
Department of International Language Teaching  
Silpakorn University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

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Abstract
The purpose of the current study was to investigate the effects of reading habits among college-level foundation Omani students and their impact on the participants’ performance in tests. The study used a qualitative and quantitative research method in which 70 participants from the foundation level were included. A survey questionnaire was used to collect qualitative data, while two college-based reading tests were used to collect quantitative data from the college-based tests. The main research question this study attempted to answer was whether foundation-level students have positive reading habits and attitudes towards books. At the end of the study, the data were analyzed quantitatively, using descriptive and inferential statistics to ascertain whether there was a correlation between positive reading habits in English and the participants’ performance in an examination setting. The results indicated that positive reading habits correlated positively with the participants’ test scores on two consecutive tests. Given the positive effects that emerged from the current study, the researchers would like to recommend that English reading teachers guide and encourage their learners to engage in reading as much as possible, as such habits will help them improve all aspects of literacy and succeed in achieving their educational and life goals with ease.

Keywords: Academic achievement, literacy development, reading habits, tertiary Omani learners, test performance,  
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Introduction

Rapid change is being experienced in information, information resources, and access to information in the current society, where change is unavoidable, just as it is in every other field. It can be assumed that a person who keeps their knowledge up-to-date would be able to adapt quickly to this transformation and succeed in life and any career. The relevance of reading in adjusting to this changing era can be better understood when you consider that reading accounts for a significant amount of learned knowledge. Reading is a complex process that involves several phases of development. It is defined as "the act of the brain analyzing and making sense of signs and symbols observed through the eyes" (Pulvermüller, 2013, p. 464). Bamberger (1990) maintains that reading is a perceptual process in which symbols are identified. Krashen (2020) writes that reading habits will improve all aspects of literacy and increase school success. One of the school's primary goals is to teach positive habits among its students and keep them going throughout their lives.

A habit is a typical behavioral pattern learned and reinforced automatically in every circumstance (Erdem, 2015). Habits creep into our lives gradually and become established after some time. If patterns are not broken, they become set with time (Wood & Rünger, 2005). When it comes to reading, which is the most basic method of absorbing information, it becomes a habit, and a new concept known as "reading habit" will emerge. The act of reading is carried out in a consistent, regular, and crucial manner throughout life due to the individual's perception of it as a need and source of pleasure (Verplanken, Myrbakk & Rudi, 2005).

Students at the tertiary level are expected to read academic resources such as textbooks and scholarly journals because such readings help them to expose themselves to different viewpoints, arguments, facts, and information, which allows them to consider the validity of such opinions, perspectives, and, as a result, students can perceive a better understanding of how others’ ideas and views differ from their own (https://courses.lumenlearning.com/waymaker-collegesuccess/chapter/text-the-purpose-of-academic-reading/). Tertiary-level youth are curious and have developed a scientific mentality; have created a unique youth culture, and tend to be future leaders of society. Given all that has been stated above concerning the positive effects of reading habits and test performance, the researchers decided to conduct a study to investigate whether there is a correlation between the students’ reading habits and their arrangement on reading tests, given the critical role that reading plays in Omani tertiary education, Tuzlukova, Eltayeb, and Gilooly (2003) state that teaching reading skills in English in tertiary educational institutions in Oman is considered vital for all academic courses taught through the medium of English. Therefore, it is mandatory for the students studying at the colleges of technology in Oman to be proficient in academic reading skills. The college where this study was conducted falls under the purview of the Ministry of Manpower in Oman, and it is one of the seven colleges that offer professional courses in Engineering, Information Technology, and Business Studies, leading to a certificate, diploma, and bachelor’s degrees. It is a requirement for the foundation-level students to acquire a satisfactory level of competence in all four primary language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) to function well in the post-foundation program. The students are instructed medium of English.
Reading Habits of Omani Students

The researchers, English teachers in the English foundation program at the English Language Center (ELC) of the college for the past three years, have observed that a great majority of foundation students from all the four levels (Levels 1 to 4) demonstrate low performance in the college-based examinations (Mid-Semester and Level Exit exams) carried out during the past three academic years from 2017 to 2018 (Quality Assurance Department (2018). Test result analysis (2017–2018) indicated that 1142 students from the four levels (1, 2, 3, and 4) sat for the Level Exit Exam, and 915 (80%) of them were promoted to their respective levels as a total (Test result analysis, 2018). However, 227 (19%) students failed the LEE. Compared to the pass rate of students on the Level Exit Exam, it is obis evident the failure rate high. A condition of this nature indicates that many students from all four levels (levels 1 to 4) have not performed well in the LEE. In addition, according to data from the Higher Education Admission Centre, 10725 students dropped out of school during the academic year 2016–2017. Among them, many students who studied in colleges of technology have withdrawn from engineering and technology majors at 31.3 percent, followed by administration and commerce majors with 28.9 percent, while information technology recorded 12 percent of students’ withdrawal. One of the reasons for the exit from the colleges is that some students find it challenging with the education level they enter into higher education institutions ("Oman Education: More than 10,000 students dropped out of colleges," 2018). A condition such as the one described above can have pernicious effects on individuals and the whole country’s socio-economic development in the future. Therefore, it is the onus of all educators to see that these issues are adequately addressed at the grassroots. Given the conditions prevailing in Omani education set up in general and the colleges of technology in particular, the researchers decided to conduct a study to examine possible reasons that negatively impact the performance of foundation-level students in reading test performance.

Research Problem

Foundation-level students must sit for two college-based examinations, and, in general, commercially produced textbooks are used as instructional materials for foundation-level English programs. During the first semester (September–December) of the 2017-2018 academic year, the researchers taught reading skills to four different groups of level two students and found that their performance in reading was low in that test results analysis for the academic year of 2016-17 indicated that most students had received low marks for reading skills in both mid-semester and level exit exams. Therefore, the researchers who are also reading teachers in the foundation program hypothesized that there might be a possible link between the students’ positive reading habits and performance on reading tests. They then decided to test the hypothesis postulated at the beginning of the study by conducting a survey and an analysis of the reading test results obtained from the study sample (Level Two-Foundation program).

Literature Review

This section will provide an overview of the research investigating the reading habits and students’ performance in reading tests concerning the published literature. A growing number of studies indicate that promoting reading can significantly affect children’s and adults’ academic and social lives. A study conducted by Clark and DeZoya (2011) found a significant positive relationship between enjoyment and educational attainment, indicating that pupils who read more are also better readers. In addition, evidence from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and
Development (OECD) (2002) showed that reading enjoyment is more important for children’s educational success than their family’s socioeconomic status. Likewise, Clark and Rumbold (2006) argue that reading for pleasure could be one meaningful way to help combat social exclusion and raise educational standards, while Twist, Schagen, and Hodgson (2007) observe that children with the most positive attitudes towards reading were more likely to do well on the PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) reading assessment. Clark (2011) and Clark and Douglas (2011) also reported a relationship between reading frequency and attainment. Another study by Sheorey and Mokhtari (1994) examined the habits of 85 college students at a Midwestern University in the USA. The researchers found the students who engaged in reading an average of 4.75 hours per week had scored higher on a reading comprehension test.

The researchers found one study partly relevant to the current study since it was conducted in tertiary education in Oman. Al Mansalli (2004, p. 212) wanted to refute the common perception of expatriate teachers working at the English Language Center of Sultan Qaboos University that "Omani students do not have a reading culture and Omani students are not motivated to read." Based on the findings of her study, the researcher refuted the claims made by expatriate teachers. However, Al Masalli’s study did not investigate any effect of the reading habits of university students on their performance in the context of an examination setting.

The students at this college of technology are expected to master academic reading skills. They will study Engineering, Information Technology, and Business Studies during their post-foundation programs. The responsibility of the reading instructor is to expose students to various reading strategies, which include a set of steps that good readers use to make sense of the text. Comprehension strategy instruction helps students become purposeful and active readers who control their reading comprehension (Adler, 2001). As a result, considering the importance of reading in higher education, the section following will look at the importance of reading.

**Importance of reading**

This literature review informs us that in any higher-level learning context, reading is considered one of the most crucial academic skills for both second and foreign language learners (Noor, 2011), while Loan (2009) observes that individuals with good reading habits have the chance to widen their mental horizons and multiply their opportunities for academic goals. Supporting Loan’s view, Noor (2011) stresses that reading is essential in teaching individuals how to cope with new knowledge in today's technologically changing and developing world. Holte (1998) also emphasizes that reading increases the quality of life and creates a reading culture. According to Ndikubwayezu (2009), learners become skilled and adaptable readers who can enhance their chances of success at school and beyond. In the context of higher education in Oman, it seems necessary and crucial to creating a reading culture since the common perception of academia in Oman is that there is no reading culture among Omani students studying both at schools and higher educational institutions (Al-Musalli, 2014). In addition, several authors claim that reading is not just for school; it is for life and is vital to our becoming better informed, having a better understanding of ourselves and others, and our development as thoughtful, constructive contributors to a democratic and cohesive society (Adler, 2001).
In light of previous research studies and the motivation for the current study, the research questions are as follows.

**Research Questions**
1. Do foundation-level students have positive reading habits and attitudes towards books?
2. Do positive reading habits affect foundation-level students’ test performance?

**Research Hypothesis**
The following hypotheses were investigated in the present study:

1. Foundation-level students have positive reading habits and attitudes towards books.
2. There will not be a possible link between positive reading habits and reading test performance.

**Methodology**

**Participants**
The participants for this study were selected from the general foundation English program (level-2), which consisted of 14 groups, and each group had 22 students of both sexes. The reason for selecting the participants from level two was that the researchers were assigned to teach reading skills for level two for the given semester. The 14 groups of the level two section had 308 students in the first semester of the academic year 2017-2018. Using the students’ list of names, five participants were randomly selected from 14 groups, making a total of 70, of which 37 were female, and 33 were male students. Random selection of participants was made as follows: The first five students were selected as per the list of names of the first group, and then the second five students from group 2. The last five students from group 3 and the same selection pattern were followed up in group 14. All participants had finished studying English skills (listening, speaking, reading, grammar, and writing) for one semester at level one at the college and learning at school for 12 years. Given the participants’ age (17–18) and educational and social backgrounds, they were homogeneous in the current study.

**Data Collection Procedure:**
Before conducting the study, the researchers received permission from the English Language Center to conduct the research. Before distributing the questionnaire, the researchers explained the purpose of the survey to the participants in both English and Arabic (Researchers sought the assistance of an Omani English instructor to explain the purpose of the study to the participants). A questionnaire was used to gather information about reading habits among the level two students. The researchers asked the students to write their college ID numbers in the questionnaire instead of their names because the researchers felt that the respondents would feel comfortable answering the questions frankly. Having collected the questionnaire from the respondents, the researchers used the SPSS statistical program (Version 20) to analyze the data gathered from the respondents. Scores obtained from the participants for the MSE and LEE Exams during the first semester of the 2017–18 academic year were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.
**Questionnaire**

The questionnaire for this study was extracted from the Booktrust Reading Habit Survey (2013), a national survey of reading habits and attitudes to books among adults in England conducted by Gleed (2013). However, some questions were adapted to suit the context of the respondents in the current study. To improve the reliability and validity of the research instrument, the researchers piloted the questionnaire with a similar but smaller sample of students (N = 10) from level 2 in the foundation program during the second semester of the academic year of 2015-16. Some of the observed errors required corrections, and rewording was incorporated into the main questionnaire. The revised questionnaire version included 14 closed-ended multiple-choice items to yield three types of data from the respondents: factual, behavioral, and attitudinal (Dörnyei, 2007). During the fifth week of the first semester (September–December 2018), the researchers distributed the questionnaire to 70 participants, and after responding, they collected them all on the same day. The participants' responses were then organized and examined using proper statistical tools, with simple percentages being generated to estimate response frequency.

**Reading scores on the Mid-Semester and Level Exit Exams**

After the mid-semester and level exit exams were over, the researchers obtained the reading test results. They copied the study group’s reading scores into an excel sheet for data analysis. Both reading tests were scored out of 25, and two examiners rated each answer script. The agreement between the two raters was calculated using Pearson’s Product Moment ($r = 0.93, n = 70, P 0.01$). The statistics showed that the general agreement between the two raters concerning the reading test scores of the study groups (70) was 0.93, which was a high agreement. The examination results for reading were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to answer the second research question. The results obtained from the survey and the analysis of the reading scores of the participants in the MSE and LEE are presented below.

**Results of the questionnaire**

The first question in the questionnaire asked about the students’ reading habits of English books. According to responses, only 5% of students read English books very often, while 57% would sometimes read. However, 20% of students rarely read, and 17% of responses were negative in that participants expressed that they do not read English books. The second question dealt with the frequency of reading an English text by respondents who answered negatively, indicating that they were reluctant readers. When students were asked how often they read an English book, 15% responded, "Every day," while 21% said, "Once a week." The choice of 10% was "Twice a week." Thirty-seven percent chose to read when a need arose, while fifteen percent expressed that they did not like to read in English.

Question three concerns the amount of time the respondents spend reading English when it is their choice. The choices for this question ranged from more than ‘one hour of reading’ to ‘not reading at all’ unless it was required for them to do so. Only 15% of students spent more than one hour reading, while 32% spent between 15 and 30 minutes. Thirty-eight percent of participants spent less than 15 minutes reading. The fourth question sought to investigate the different reading preferences of the participants in that their preferences ranged from storybooks, fiction, and magazines to reading no material. The respondents equally preferred to read stories and vision,
and their next choice was magazines. Fifteen percent of respondents tended to read magazines, and ten percent said they liked to read e-books, with 5% of students opting to read on websites. However, twelve percent of students did not choose any reading material, indicating that they liked reading "Nothing."

Question five in the questionnaire asked the participants’ motivational factors for reading in English. Twenty percent of students found college assignments as a motivational factor for reading in English, while 4% of students chose recommendations from lecturers. However, 24% of students wanted to read because of their friends. A clear majority of students (35%) were prompted to read to find out the information they needed, while a small proportion of students (13%) took to reading for pleasure and relaxation. Given the responses gathered from the study sample, it could be concluded that a significant motivational factor for most students was that they read in English to get information. In contrast, the minor motivational factor for reading was relaxation.

Question six was meant to explore the degree the students enjoyed reading English. Most of their responses to this question were positive in that 41% said that they enjoy reading very much in English, while 18% of students believed that they enjoy reading quite a lot. Ten percent of students found reading joyful, while a similar number (10%) reported that they do not enjoy reading much. However, 20% of students were highly negative, stating that they did not consider reading to be a form of entertainment.

Table 1. Attitudinal questions and responses of the participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement (Check the choice that best applies to you)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel reading is relaxing.</td>
<td>9 (12%)</td>
<td>47 (67%)</td>
<td>9 (12%)</td>
<td>5 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I read to learn new things.</td>
<td>22 (31%)</td>
<td>30 (42%)</td>
<td>14 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel happy if I receive a book as a present.</td>
<td>26 (37%)</td>
<td>18 (25%)</td>
<td>16 (22%)</td>
<td>10 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reading improves my academic and social life.</td>
<td>26 (37%)</td>
<td>25 (35%)</td>
<td>9 (12%)</td>
<td>10 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I often start reading a book but get bored after a few chapters.</td>
<td>14 (20%)</td>
<td>28 (40%)</td>
<td>21 (30%)</td>
<td>7 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I can’t find the time to read.</td>
<td>11 (15%)</td>
<td>25 (35%)</td>
<td>17 (24%)</td>
<td>18 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can’t find reading materials that interest me to read.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 (7%)</td>
<td>49 (70%)</td>
<td>16 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I read all day at the college, so I don’t want to read when I get home.</td>
<td>16 (23%)</td>
<td>14 (20%)</td>
<td>25 (36%)</td>
<td>14 (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The attitudinal statements were presented in a random order, but they can be grouped into two areas such as 1. benefits and positive views of reading. 2. Reading impediments and negative attitudes. However, these statements asked about their general attitudes to reading, including both Arabic and English. When asked about the extent to which they agreed with "I feel reading is relaxing," very few (12%) of the respondents said they strongly agreed, and 67% confirmed they agreed. Twelve percent of them responded that they did not feel relaxed when reading. However, students (7%) strongly disagreed with "I feel reading is relaxing."

Regarding the second statement, "I read to learn new things," researchers found that most of the students strongly agreed (31%) while (42%) agreed. Twenty percent, however, disagreed, while five percent strongly disagreed with the second statement. Sixty-two percent of the participants felt happy when they received a book, while 47% were not pleased to welcome a book as a present. "Reading improves my academic and social life" received positive responses where 72% stated that they agreed. At the same time, twenty-seven percent responded that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the perceived benefits of reading. Sixty percent of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that they feel bored after reading a few chapters of a book, while 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the fifth statement.

Statement number six, presented to the respondents, was about finding time to read. Forty-three percent of students strongly agreed or agreed that they could not find the time to read, whereas 49% did not agree or strongly agreed with the sixth statement, meaning they could find time for reading. Statement seven asked for their opinions on reading materials that piqued their interest. A large percentage of students (92%) believed they could find reading materials that piqued their interest. Only a small percentage (7%) said they couldn't find reading materials that piqued their interest. The last statement in the attitudinal category was as follows: 43% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they read all day at college and they do not want to read at home. In comparison, 56% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that they should skip reading at home after college.

The sections below present the descriptive and inferential test results for the participants’ reading skills in the MSE and LEE. According to the bylaws of the college of technology (2004), foundation students are awarded 20 marks in MSE and 25 in LEE for reading. To find out whether the students’ reading habits had any effect on their performance in reading in the MSE and LEE exams, the students were grouped into two based on the marks they had received in the MSE and LEE exams as follows: The two groups were named Group A and B. The students who belonged to group A were those who received 15 marks or above for SE and LEE, and group B were those who received less than 15 for MSE and LEE. A case where a student who received a mark of 15 or above for MSE but below 15 for LEE and vice versa was exempted from the descriptive and inferential test analysis. Then, the students’ responses in group A were given to the following questions: "How often do you read when it is your choice?" How much time do you spend reading when it is your choice? What do you usually choose to read? What motivates you to read? Do you read English books? ") were tallied with their marks in MSE. The same procedure was followed with group B. The researchers hypothesized that the answers given to the questions above were directly related to the positive reading habits of the students. Tables 2 and 3 below indicate the
descriptive and paired-sample t-test results of MSE and LEE of the participants. Test results were analyzed using SPSS statistical software (version 20).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of Mid-semester and Level-exit exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSE</td>
<td>12.78</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEE</td>
<td>15.92</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Paired Samples T-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSE</td>
<td>-3.14</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>-3.88</td>
<td>-2.40</td>
<td>-8.44</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 3, a paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores between MSE and LEE. According to the test results, there was a significant increase in scores between the MSE (M = 12.78, SD = 3.33) and the LEE (M = 15.92, SD = 3.74); t (69) =-8.44, p =.001. This shows that students in the study group improved their reading scores more in the LEE than in the MSE, with a mean difference of -3.14.

Table 4. Pearson’s correlations test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MSE</th>
<th>LEE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSE</td>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>.619**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEE</td>
<td>Pearson correlation</td>
<td>.619**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2. tailed).

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the test scores and reading habits. As shown in Table 4 above, there was a strong positive correlation between the test scores and the reading habits, r = 1.000, n = 70, p = .001.

Discussion of the findings related to the first research question

As described above, the current study was conducted to investigate whether the foundation level students have positive reading habits in English and attitudes toward reading in general and also to ascertain whether there is any relationship between the positive reading habits in English and the students’ performance in reading skills in an examination setting. To answer the first research question, the researchers hypothesized that the foundation-level students have positive reading habits in English and attitudes toward reading in general. According to the responses obtained through the questionnaire circulated among the respondents of the study, taking all their
answers together, it can be concluded that a clear majority of students do not spend a considerable amount of time on reading. If students tend to spend more time reading, as Krashen (1993) has pointed out, students will be able to develop reading comprehension ability, writing style, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. One of the possible reasons for such kind of behavior can be ascribed to the fact that most students nowadays tend to spend more time watching TV or using a computer for surfing the internet for primarily entertainment purposes rather than reading a book or any other printed material (Liu, 2005; Neuman, 1982; Ramirez, 2003).

This study found evidence that most Omani students are not motivated to read for academic purposes or pleasure. As noted in the literature review, evidence from studies suggests that reading for pleasure leads to increased attainment and academic success. Given the assumptions above, this study provides concrete evidence as to why most students in the foundation program do not perform well on reading tests.

Taken all the responses provided to the attitudinal questions as indicated in Table 1 by the respondents together, it can be established that the learners’ attitudes towards reading habits are positive in that a clear majority of students thought that reading books is essential for them to improve their academic skills while at college and in social life when they are out of college. These attitudes indicate that students love to read and want to be a part of a reading culture. Given the mixed results that emerged from the survey, the hypothesis that the researchers formed at the beginning of the study that "Foundation level students have positive reading habits and attitudes towards books" cannot be accepted in terms of reading habits because the survey results showed that a majority of students did not have positive reading habits. However, regarding attitudes, it can be accepted because the responses that the students provided to the attitudinal questions were positive in that most students believed that reading books and other materials is essential for them to improve their academic skills while they are at college and in social life when they are out of college. Such attitudes reflect students’ love for reading and their desire to become a part of a reading culture in their society. Given the mixed results that emerged from the survey, the hypothesis that the researchers formed at the beginning of the study that "Foundation level students have positive reading habits and attitudes towards books" can be refuted in terms of reading habits because the survey results showed that a clear majority of students did not have positive reading habits. However, concerning attitudes, the hypothesis can be accepted because the responses that the students provided to attitudinal questions were positive.

**Discussions of the findings related to the second research question**

As described above, the second research question examined whether positive reading habits affect foundation-level students’ performance on reading tests. To answer the second research question, the researchers formed a null hypothesis that there would not be a possible link between the positive reading habits of students and their performance in reading tests. According to the descriptive and inferential statistics, (inferential test statistics as shown in Tables 2 and 3) there is a significant increase in scores between the MSE ($M = 12.78, SD = 3.33$) and the LEE ($M = 15.92, SD = 3.74$); $t(69) = -8.44, p = .001$. This shows that students in the study group got greater gains in LEE than in MSE, with a mean difference of -3.14. Therefore, given the results described above, the null hypothesis that the researchers formulated at the beginning of the study that "There
will not be a possible link between positive reading habits in English and their performance in reading tests" can be disproved. Moreover, as described in the Results section, when tallying the reading scores of (group A) students (those who received 15 and above for both MSE and LEE) with the responses that they had provided to the questions in the questionnaire, it was found that students in group A had specifically answered positively to the five questions below.

1. Do you usually read English books?
2. How often do you read an English book?
3. How much time do you spend reading English when it is your choice?
4. What do you usually choose to read in English?
5. What motivates you to read in English?

Similarly, when tallying the marks of group B (those who scored below 15 sports for both MSE and LEE) students with their responses to the same five questions as above, it was evident that they had explicitly given adverse reactions to the five questions. Moreover, the results of the current study are in line with the studies conducted by Clark and DeZoya (2011); Clark and Rumbold (2006); Twist et al. (2007); Clark (2011); and Clark and Douglas (2011), who reported that there is a relationship between reading frequency and attainment. In addition, Sheorey and Mokhtari (1994) also said that students engaged in reading for 4.75 hours per week. The students who scored higher on a reading comprehension test had spent more time on non-academic reading. Similarly, Cunningham and Stanovich (1991) and Krashen (1993) state that students who read in their spare time become better readers, score higher on achievement tests in all subjects, and have more content knowledge than those who do not. What Cunningham and Stanovich (1991) and Krashen (1993) have expressed concerning students’ performance and their positive reading habits were further confirmed as accurate in the current study because we found the participants who did not read English books, who read in English very rarely, who spent very little time reading English materials, and who were not motivated to read English materials had performed poorly in both the MSE and LEE reading tests. Given the results of this study, it becomes imperative for EFL/ESL tertiary level instructors to provide more opportunities for their learners to read for pleasure and academic purposes in English.

Limitations and delimitations of the study

As noted above, the current study mainly focuses only on reading performance in a college-based examination setting. It did not deal with other language skills such as speaking, listening, and writing, even though they are also critical language proficiency skills. This study presents an overview of what reading habits the foundation level students have because it will allow the researchers to see the weaknesses and strengths of the current reading course and make necessary modifications to help EFL foundation level students inculcate positive reading habits and attitudes to reading in English.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to investigate the existing reading habits of tertiary level students who study English in a foundation program in the context of technological education in Oman, as well as to determine whether there was any link between the participants’ positive reading habits.
and their performance in reading skills in an examination setting. The study’s key findings indicated that positive reading habits affected students’ performance in an examination setting. Therefore, based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that students should be guided and encouraged to read as it will particularly help learners achieve higher attainments in education and, in general, they can lead a happy and contented life in the future.

About the Author:
Sarath Withanarachchi Samaranayake is an English lecturer at the Department of International Language Teaching, Silpakorn University, Thailand. He received his doctoral degree in General Linguistics from the University of South Africa. He has published several research articles in peer-reviewed international journals. His interests include teaching and researching in the domains of ESL and EFL. ORCid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6352-726X

Suneeta Kositchaivat (Ph.D.) is an assistant professor at the Department of International Language Teaching, Silpakorn University, Thailand. Her primary interests include communicative language teaching, English camp activities, and English project work. ORCid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8300-727X

Asst. Prof. Vachira Jantarach (Ph.D.) is an English lecturer at the Department of International Language Teaching, Silpakorn University, Thailand. His primary interests include English teaching methods, language acquisition, and research. ORCid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2263-6857

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Development of Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Process of Teaching English to Future Interpreters

Svitlana Dvorianchykova
Department of Philology and Translation, Institute of Law and Modern Technologies, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine

Julia Bondarchuk
Department of Philology and Translation, Institute of Law and Modern Technologies, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine

Olga Syniavska
Department of Russian Language and Literature, Faculty of Slavic Philology, Kyiv National Linguistic University, Ukraine,
Department of Philology and Translation, Institute of Law and Modern Technologies, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine
Corresponding Author: olga.sinyavskaya1989@gmail.com

Kseniia Kugai
Department of Philology and Translation, Institute of Law and Modern Technologies, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine

Abstract
The successful functioning of both the state and individual in the conditions of updated intercultural communication is impossible without adequate mastery of the universal language of international communication, which is currently the English language. The development of intercultural abilities of future interpreters in the field of business communication is aimed at continuous improvement of existing educational programs of institutions of higher education. The relevance of our research is due to the growing demand in modern business society for highly qualified interpreters with intercultural communication competencies. The purpose of the study is to develop and practically implement a model of intercultural communicative competence in the process of teaching business English. The mentioned educational program is for applicants for higher education in the field of translation who are studying in a bachelor’s degree program at Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design. Changes in the development of intercultural communicative competencies of students were recorded experimentally using diagnostic techniques. The research results are reflected in the educational program “The English language: translation in business communications” and designed on the principles of developing the intercultural communicative competence of future interpreters. It is created to train highly qualified specialists who can analyze, organize and conduct interlingual and intercultural business communication, plan and carry out successful complex translation projects, and act as intermediaries in the process of interlingual and intercultural communication of business partners.

Keywords: Business communications, communicative competence, educational program, intercultural communication, interpreter training, quality of education, the English language, Ukrainian context

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Introduction

Life is impossible in the modern world without making business contacts. English has become the universal language of international communication: “English has ‘traveled’ to many parts of the world <...> This phenomenon has created positive interactions as well as tensions between global and local forces and has had serious linguistic, ideological, sociocultural, political and pedagogical implications” (Sharifian, 2009, p. 1).

Therefore, teaching business English as a means of intercultural communication is especially important for the effective implementation of communication with representatives of different cultures. In the current context, teaching foreign languages should be based on the principles of intercultural communication.

The development of intercultural abilities of future interpreters in business communications is aimed at continuous improvement of the existing educational programs of institutions of higher education. The relevance of this research is due to the growing demand of modern business society for highly qualified interpreters with intercultural communication competencies. In addition, for philological universities, both all over the world and in Ukraine, there remains a clear need for training competitive specialists who carry out practical professional and communicative activities in business translation.

Literature Review

In the era of globalization, the problems of intercultural communication have acquired special significance since the interaction of representatives of different linguistic cultures in business, public and socio-political spheres has become an integral part of modern reality. Consequently, the issues of the effectiveness of the intercultural communication process are central in some contemporary researchers’ works.

The emergence date of intercultural communication as an academic discipline is considered to be 1953 when Hall & Trager’s book “The Analysis of Culture” was published. The authors first suggested for general use the term “intercultural communication,” reflecting, in their opinion, a unique area of human relations.

Nowadays, intercultural competence is traditionally viewed as “a complex of analytical and strategic abilities that expand the interpretative spectrum of an individual in the process of interpersonal interaction with representatives of other cultures” (Knapp, & Knapp-Potthoff, 1990, p. 66).

It is generally accepted that intercultural competence prepares people to interact effectively with other interlocutors from different cultures (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2012). In the development model of the intercultural component of background knowledge, Bennett (2009) describes the internal process of transition from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism that happens to students.

The components that make up the model of intercultural communicative competence vary depending on the preferences of a particular researcher. Byram (1997) develops a
multidimensional model of intercultural communicative competence that considers knowledge, values and skills to be essential elements of successful intercultural interaction. Thus, he identifies five main components of this model:

1) attitudes (for instance, curiosity, open-mindedness);
2) knowledge (for instance, knowledge about social groups in the business partner’s country);
3) skills of interpreting and relating (for instance, the ability to interpret documents of representatives of other cultures);
4) skills of discovering and interacting (for instance, the ability to acquire new knowledge about the culture of another country);
5) critical cultural awareness / political education (for instance, the ability to critically assess the attitudes, models and results of own and foreign culture).

The cluster model of intercultural communicative competence developed within The Global People project (Spencer-Oatey, & Stadler, 2009) has become the most widely represented. It has four main clusters: knowledge and ideas; communication; relationships; personal qualities and dispositions, which contain 22 competencies, which, in turn, are divided into 68 components.

Many researchers (e.g., Mai, 2017, 2018; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; Tran & Duong, 2015) reiterate the urgent need to develop more effective lingo-didactic methods for teaching English as an international language. Intercultural communicative competence is expected to be integrated into the English language teaching process to prepare students “to be both global and local speakers of English and to feel at home in both international and national cultures” (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996, p. 211).

According to the study by Bakum, Savchak, Kostiuk, Zhumbei & Poznanskyy (2021), the development of cultural competence “forms positive motivation; improves intellectual and professional qualities; enriches students’ experience in the practice of resolving professional problems under their own and social-cultural needs; develops skills of intercultural interaction for the effective implementation of tolerant communication in professional activities” (p. 83).

While intercultural competency provides a solid foundation for intercultural communication, and some scholars use this term interchangeably for intercultural communicative competence, it is often argued that these two notions should not be considered equivalent (Byram, 1997; Moeller & Nugent, 2014; Wilberschied, 2015). Comparing intercultural communication and intercultural communicative competence, Byram (1997) emphasizes the skill set required to acquire competence “in attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to IC while using a foreign language” (p. 71). According to Wilberschied (2015), people with intercultural communication competence have the ability “to manage interactions of a greater variety and complexity as a result of self-study, foreign language proficiency, and analysis of one’s own culture and that of those who speak the target language” (p. 3).

Despite some disagreements in the definition of intercultural communicative competence, many scholars have agreed that intercultural communicative competence is a process that continues to be evolved and improved throughout life (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Moller, &
Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to developing intercultural communicative competence and how a person acquires the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities. This made it necessary not only to form and develop a high level of students’ language proficiency at the phonetic, lexical and grammatical levels, but also to provide them with the necessary knowledge about intercultural communication and to create a solid foundation for developing ability and willingness to productively participate in such communication.

Since the universal language of business intercultural communication so far is English, the works devoted to analyzing differences in the speech behavior of native English speakers are of the most significant interest. Informative observations on this issue are presented in the studies of Bryson (2015), Wisson (2015) and others. They compare the communicative behavior of the British, Americans, Russians and representatives of other linguistic cultures.

Thus, it is generally recognized that intercultural interaction in the context of modern integration and globalization processes plays an important role in implementing effective business communication in the international environment.

Methods

The research has been carried out in several stages. The first stage was devoted to the study and analysis of scientific and methodological literature on lingo-didactics, methods of teaching a foreign language, and monitoring the development of intercultural abilities of future interpreters in business communications in the educational process. In the second stage, a model was formed for the effective development of intercultural communicative competencies of future interpreters in business communications, verified using questionnaires and testing and diagnostic methods. According to our previous study, Dvorianchykova, Bondarchuk, Syniavska & Vyshnevska (2021), the effectiveness of the development of these competencies, as well as the effectiveness of teaching English in general, is a multifunctional multidimensional system that characterizes a qualitative level of learning outcomes achievement. We evaluate the effectiveness by analyzing objective and subjective indicators, for example, the level of formation of the necessary competencies among students, the quality of scientific and methodological support of the taught discipline and the degree of satisfaction with the activities of stakeholders in the educational process (p. 240). The final stage was devoted to summarizing the research results, their implementation in the educational process by improving the educational program “The English language: translation in business communications” of Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design (KNUTD), considering the need to form and develop students’ intercultural communicative competence.

Participants

The research participants were 45 first-year philology students of KNUTD enrolled in the bachelor’s degree program “The English language: translation in business communications”. They were divided into three groups of equal numbers.

Instruments and Procedures

In the research course, a model was designed to develop intercultural communicative competencies of future interpreters at English classes. It is a complex structure of mutually
defining competences: linguistic (phonetic, lexical and grammatical), discursive, sociolinguistic, sociocultural and strategic (Table 1).

The linguistic component contributes to the correct formation of thoughts with the help of lexical and grammatical correctness of foreign language usage, and adequate understanding of information by the interlocutors. It acts as the foundation for the formation of other competences.

The discursive component provides the ability to form utterances directly in the process of verbal communication. This competence underlies all additional competences.

The sociolinguistic component helps to perceive the surrounding reality in all the variety of linguistic features due to the knowledge of various sociolinguistic concepts (for example, dialect, accent, linguistic gaps, etc.).

Table 1. Component constitution of intercultural communicative competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intercultural Competence</th>
<th>Strategic Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociocultural Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociolinguistic Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discursive Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linguistic Competence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sociocultural component provides knowledge, understanding and tolerant attitude towards representatives of different cultures, their national and cultural values, traditions, customs, etc.

The strategic component provides a person with the ability to use various techniques, tactics and strategies of verbal and non-verbal communication adapted to a specific situation to achieve the desired communicative result.

Changes in the development of intercultural communicative competencies of students in three groups were reflected under the levels of participation in intercultural communication in a
foreign language. Thus, the set of criteria allows us to distinguish three main levels of a student’s readiness to enter into intercultural communication.

The first level is characterized by elementary, basic foreign language knowledge. It corresponds to the so-called level of “survival” in the process of intercultural communication.

The second level can be characterized as an adaptive one. The student gets used to the intercultural communication environment and participates in it with uncertainty.

The third level indicates the formation of the student’s intercultural communicative competence and readiness to participate in intercultural communication effectively.

At the initial stage of the study, the first assessment for the development level of students’ intercultural competence was carried out using diagnostic methods. It demonstrated the following results (Table 2). All groups are approximately at the same level of development of intercultural communicative competencies and do not have significant differences. Most of the students have an intermediate level. The percentage of students who scored the required number of points for a high level of intercultural communicative competence is relatively small.

Table 2. Students’ level of intercultural communicative competence at the initial stage of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>I (low)</th>
<th>II (intermediate)</th>
<th>III (high)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>27,3%</td>
<td>69,7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>28,4%</td>
<td>71,6%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the initial stage of the experiment demonstrate the need to improve the existing educational programs by including the disciplines that form the students’ intercultural communicative competence.

In order to confirm our hypothesis, the next stage of the experimental study, which took place in the natural learning environment, was carried out. Individual lingo-didactic learning environment was purposefully varied in different groups. The work in the first group was carried out with additional motivation for students to conduct future professional activities, activation of creative tasks, and attitude to the relationship between cultures. There was students’ involvement in the process of acquiring knowledge about the national and cultural characteristics of the native country and the country of the target language, and the rules of speech etiquette. Exercises for developing skills of intercultural communication were actively used.

In the second group, this work was carried out with less intensity. The emphasis was placed only on the formation of linguistic and discursive competencies, and partly on the sociolinguistic component of intercultural communication.

In the third group, none of the additional activities were purposefully implemented, and the training was conducted according to the traditional method.
After four months of the experiment, the knowledge cross-section was conducted in three groups, which allowed to record the dynamics in the development of students’ competencies in intercultural competence.

The comparative analysis showed that in the first group, where all additional methods of teaching intercultural competence were fully implemented in English classes, students had significantly improved their previous results (Table 3).

Table 3. Comparative results of dynamics in the development of students’ intercultural communicative competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>I (low)</th>
<th>II (intermediate)</th>
<th>III (high)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>initial stage</td>
<td>control stage</td>
<td>initial stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5,5%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>27,3%</td>
<td>10,5%</td>
<td>69,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>28,4%</td>
<td>18,4%</td>
<td>71,6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is especially evident against the results from the other two students’ groups. Thus, experimental and methodological work on developing intercultural communicative competence of future interpreters generated the following results: the number of low-level students four times decreased in the first group, in the second group – 2.6 times, in the third group – only 10%. The number of intermediate and high-level students in all groups has increased.

Results

The improvement of students’ intercultural communicative competence took place in several stages. Each stage was characterized by the implementation of an increasing number of competencies and more active participation in the process of intercultural communication (Table 4).

Table 4. Compliance with the specialist’s participation degree in intercultural communication (IC) and the competencies that make up intercultural communicative competence (ICC)
All components of the intercultural communicative competence model are interrelated. Thus, in the context of professional translation activities, basic communicative competencies (linguistic and discursive) allow the student to adequately, logically, understandably and grammatically correct form utterances, understand the speech of other culture representatives. A low level of these basic competencies’ formation leads to low quality of professional activities and negatively affects efficient communication.

Insufficient mastery of sociolinguistic, sociocultural and strategic competencies leads to communicative failures in professional and business communication due to specific barriers in the background knowledge about culture, traditions, and rules of behavior of other cultures representatives.

Forming a high level of the student’s intercultural communicative competence takes place in several stages.

The first stage is motivational and adaptive. Its goal is considered to be the formation of a student’s value attitude to future professional activities, motivation to develop intercultural communication skills and participation in intercultural communication. The preference is given to the student’s linguistic preparation since language proficiency is the primary task for an interpreter. At this stage, it is relevant to conduct topical seminars, business conversations, discussions with action-gaming elements.

The second stage is situational and practical. It is aimed at further deepening the student’s knowledge on the intercultural issues, its actualization in various situations of professional communication. At this stage, students are individually involved in the process of familiarizing themselves with the national and cultural characteristics of the native country and the country of the target language. The priority is given to sociocultural competence during the development of specific projects by students, and participation in conferences.

The third stage is devoted to testing and consolidating the student’s intercultural communicative competence by deepening his knowledge of the issue, and updating it in various cases of professional and business communication. The ability to use a foreign language at this stage is characterized by independence, awareness and creative rethinking in professional situations. The emphasis is put on exercises for the development of intercultural communication skills and various training.

Discussion

The professional activity of an interpreter is closely related to proficiency in the target language and thorough knowledge of the peculiarities of the other culture. Consequently, the intercultural communicative competencies of future interpreters are formed and developed in the process of purposeful intercultural communicative activity, which makes it possible to successfully carry out interlingual business translation at a high professional level.
Intercultural communicative competence ensures successful mutual understanding with representatives of other cultures, even with an average level of proficiency in a foreign language due to knowledge, experience and adherence to the rules and norms of business communication and behavior adopted in the other culture. This competence is a part of the future interpreter's integral social and professional competence, which allows him to carry out professional activities effectively.

The model of intercultural communicative competence developed as a result of a multi-stage experimental study formed the basis of the educational program “The English language: translation in business communications”, created at the Department of Philology and Translation of Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design. This program aims to train highly qualified competitive specialists who have deep knowledge of the target language, general and special competencies in the field of translation in business communications from English into Ukrainian and vice versa in written and oral forms. They also should be able to analyze, organize and conduct interlingual and intercultural business communication, plan and execute successful complex translation projects, act as intermediaries in the process of interlingual and intercultural communication of business partners and provide support for international information services.

In the process of learning according to the created program, students must develop skills and abilities to perform oral and written translations in the field of business, as well as accurately and adequately convey the meaning of statements of different styles, types and genres, considering the situation of interlingual and intercultural communication. Teaching English as the language of intercultural business communication fulfills the students’ need for interpersonal, intercultural, interethnic communication with native speakers of the target language and people who speak English as a means of communication.

These tasks are implemented in a complex of disciplines included in the educational program “The English language: translation in business communications”. They contain information about the peculiarities of intercultural communication in Ukrainian and English business areas: Business Ukrainian language in the translation aspect, Theory of linguistic communication, Country studies through language, Business English, Theory and practice of text translation in business communications, Theory and practice of text interpretation in business communications, Theory and practice of translation and interpretation of business negotiations and conferences. The principles of intercultural communication are the key ones for disciplines aimed at forming, developing and improving the skills and abilities of translation professionals in business communications.

Based on the study of English as a foreign language, the main task of disciplines of the educational program “The English language: translation in business communications” is to reveal its phonetic, lexical and grammatical features, reflecting the cultural identity of native English speakers. The undoubted advantage of this program can be considered the fact that all the linguistic and speech characteristics of the English language are studied in comparison with the peculiarities of the native language and culture of students within the framework of comparative disciplines: Comparative grammar of English and Ukrainian languages, Comparative lexicology of English and Ukrainian languages, Comparative stylistics of English and Ukrainian languages. Students’ awareness of their cultural background and their native language is a prerequisite for the interaction.
of cultures. This enables them to predict to a certain extent those situations and areas of implementation of intercultural communication in the process of translation activity, which can cause difficulties due to a large number of discrepancies in the linguistic cases of the same type through English and Ukrainian languages, as well as to think over strategies and tactics to prevent possible communication failures.

Conclusion

Intercultural communicative competence is becoming increasingly in demand in teaching a foreign language since it creates the preconditions for the formation and development of professional mobility for a future specialist, introduces him to the standards of world achievements, and increases the possibilities of personal fulfillment. The students’ intercultural competence is effectively formed with the help of special programs for preparing students for intercultural interaction, training on the formation of intercultural communication skills and competence, lectures and practical courses on cross-cultural psychology. Mastery of complex business communication skills in English in combination with intercultural communicative competence has become one of the mandatory requirements for highly qualified competitive modern specialists.

About the Authors:

Svitlana Dvorianchykova, Ph.D. (in Philology), associate professor at the Department of Philology and Translation, Institute of Law and Modern Technologies, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine. Research interests: methodology of teaching foreign languages, text linguistics and onomastics. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8854-2933

Julia Bondarchuk, Ph.D. (in Philology), associate professor, head of the Department of Philology and Translation, Institute of Law and Modern Technologies, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine. Research interests: teaching foreign languages, mass-media communication and text linguistics. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4851-8701

Olga Syniavska, Ph.D. (in Philology), associate professor at the Russian Language and Literature Department in the Faculty of Slavic Philology of Kyiv National Linguistic University, associate professor at the Department of Philology and Translation, Institute of Law and Modern Technologies, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine. Research interests: mass-media communication, cognitive linguistics, onomasiology, foreign language teaching. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3241-1854

Kseniia Kugai, senior lecturer at the Department of Philology and Translation, Institute of Law and Modern Technologies, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine. Research interests: modern technologies of teaching foreign languages, text linguistics, history of pedagogics. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9838-904X

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An Exploration of Voice in the Writing of Arab Learners of English as a Second Language

Asmaa Alshehri  
Department of English, College of Sciences & Arts  
University of Bisha, Alnamas, Saudi Arabia  
Corresponding Author: afadel@ub.edu.sa

Muhammad Alasmari  
Department of English, College of Sciences & Arts  
University of Bisha, Alnamas, Saudi Arabia

Fawaz Qasem  
Department of English, College of Sciences & Arts  
University of Bisha, Alnamas, Saudi Arabia

Rashad Ahmed  
Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville USA.

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Abstract  
Developing a writer’s voice is a challenging task for second-language writers who are new not only to the culture but also to the values associated with the target language. This study aims at exploring the writer’s voice of Arabic-speaking learners who study English as a Second Language. The study mainly discusses the following question: Do L2 learners who learn to write in both first and second language have an individual, collective, or depersonalized voice? Investigating the impact of culture and society on language and identity will facilitate the discovery of voice in second language writing. Methodologically, the study employs a qualitative research design in which data are collected via a discourse analysis of written texts. The analysis of the data adopted the holistic and dynamic perspective (Zhang & Zhan, 2020) by examining the various factors affecting Arabic-speaking learners of ESL including cultural factors, linguistic resources, and educational/academic pedagogy. Moreover, the study followed the analysis of the writer’s voice proposed by Lehman (2018) and used further Lehman and Anderson’s study of voice in academic writing (Lehman & Anderson, 2021). Lehman proposed three main topics to classify the writer’s voice: (a) individual, (b) collective, and (c) depersonalized. The findings of this research showed that approximately 55.96% of the voice of Arab learners of ESL fell in the individual category, 29.97% fell in the collective category, and 14.07% fell in the depersonalized category.

Keywords: Arab learners, English as Second Language, identity, writing voice

Introduction
Human communication revolves around exchanging information, influencing others, and expressing sentiments. We use the language daily basis to connect with others and to express our views. As language users, our voice is crucial in establishing and negotiating our identities. The process of writing in a second language is by itself a challenging task, but it is more challenging to adhere to more nuanced conventions such as voice. The rise of social media and global digital connection have reshaped our perceptions and articulation of our selves and the world. The impact of this connectivity encourages us, as researchers, to examine the voice in the writing of new generations of Arab learners of English as a second language. Although Arab communities can be classified as collective, a concept we had in mind when we first initiated this research, the results of our studies created a shift in the study of voice in the writing of learners of English as a second language. However, considering the global transformation of people’s communication, we recognize the necessity of examining how new generations of Second Language Learners (SLL) employ voice not only in academic writing but also in general writing discourse. Since English and Arabic languages represent different societies and distinct cultures and have divergent value systems, we have come to realize the significance of pinpointing the impacts of these differences on writing for both learners and educators of English as a second language. Thus, the researchers hope that this study will assist language instructors in their future efforts to teach English writing and better guide learners of English as a second language. Further, this study is expected to be an informative resource for language textbook designers as they develop sociocultural awareness and a deeper understanding of the nature of voice in cross-cultural discourses. One of the main questions this study seeks to answer is the following: Do L2 learners who learn to write in both Eastern and Western traditions have an individual, collective, or depersonalized voice (Lehman, 2018)? By exploring the influences of sociocultural and sociolinguistic factors in terms of identity and native language, this study will contribute to the current discussion of voice by uncovering the presence of the voice in the writing of English learners.

Literature review
There appears to be no clear, universally accepted definition for the term ‘voice’ in the literature of writing in L1 and L2. For instance, Bowden (1995) defined voice as “style, persona, stance or ethos” (p. 173). Some recent researchers have used this definition as they recognize the voice as a part of the author’s normal writing style, the rhetorical stance, and the self-repetition in his/her text (Sperling & Appleman, 2011). Although these definitions could be perceived as insufficient, they could help inform the purpose of this study. It is worth mentioning that Elbow (1994) has contributed significantly to the study of voice in stating that “the term [voice] has been used in such a loose and celebratory way as to mean almost anything” (p. 2). Thus, he has attempted in several works to use the term voice more precisely, although he also admitted the following:

When it comes to our own writing, then, we can scarcely avoid noticing whether the words we put down on the page feel like our words—whether they sound like our voice or one of our owned voices. Yet even here, I hope I’ve persuaded you that we write best if we learn to move flexibly back and forth between on the one hand using and celebrating something we feel as our own voice, and on the other hand operating as though we are nothing but ventriloquists playfully using and adapting and working against an array of voices we find around us. (p. 30)
Elbow (1994) has claimed that when people write about the term voice, this term has five metaphorical meanings: “audible voice; dramatic voice; recognizable or distinctive voice; voice with authority; and resonant voice or presence” (p. 4). As Elbow tried to draw clear distinctions between these five meanings, he strongly suggested that people “make voice a practical critical tool that we can use rather than just fight about” (p. 21). He clearly supported the idea of making voice solidly understood and widely acknowledged in our writing and reactions in both written and spoken language.

Bowden (1995) attributed voice to the notion of self-autonomy, stating that it is related to values of individualism as a result of counterculture movements in the West in the late 1960s. She further claimed that “voice, evolving as it has from its 1970s’ affiliations with powerful writing, carries with it connotations of an authentic and unitary self” (p. 109). Similarly, Scollon (1991) claimed that voice has been influenced by the Western concept of self-expression in writing, which is based on individualist values. More specifically, Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999) correlated the notion of voice to the “ideology of individualism” (p. 46), which can be problematic for writers who are not familiar with individualist values. They asserted that voice is “[a principle and a practice] of U.S. university writing pedagogy in which the ideology of individualism appears to be strongly, if tacitly, implicated” (p. 46). They also claimed that voice is considered individual as it is “clear, overt, expressive, and even assertive and demonstrative” (p. 48). After defining the term voice in writing and reviewing some theoretical perspectives on voice, this paper proposes an empirical study to investigate the presence of the voice in the English writing of Arab natives. Since English and Arabic languages represent different societies and distinct cultures and have divergent value systems, pinpointing the impacts of these differences on writing can help both learners and educators of English as a second language. As a result, the researchers hope that this study will assist language instructors in their future efforts to teach English writing to Arabic-speaking students. Further, this study is expected to be an informative resource for language textbook designers as they develop sociocultural awareness and a deeper understanding of the nature of voice in cross-cultural discourses.

Several studies, such as Mustada (2001), Ivanič and Camps (2001), Zhao (2012), Que and Li (2015), and Javdan and Dastjerdi (2014), have studied the notion of voice by recording written data of learners coming from different cultural contexts. However, each of these studies has measured voice for various purposes and by using different methodologies. Zhao (2012) developed and validated an analytic rubric to measure the strength of voice in second language writing. According to Zhao, his study has bridged the gap between the conceptualization’s framework and past empirical attempts to study voice in written texts. As Zhao introduced researchers to reliable tools for examining voice in written texts, he identified voice in three dimensions to provide a reasonable alternative for the concept of voice. These dimensions are “(1) the presence and clarity of ideas in the content; (2) the manner of the presentation of ideas; and (3) the writer’s and reader’s presence” (p. 201). The study employed a mixed-methods approach designed to investigate the understanding and assessment of voice in L2 writing. Que and Li (2015) conducted a study on Chinese post-80s’ voice in academic writing by examining the discursive features that were used by Chinese graduate students as they wrote in English for academic purposes. More specifically, they investigated the following features: “the placement of topic sentences, the use of transition
words, the employment of first-person pronouns, the use of quotations from famous revolutionary leaders, and the influence of the traditional Chinese eight-legged essay” (p. 2).

Que and Li (2015) chose to measure voice by studying these linguistic features because they believed them to be fundamental to the construction of voice in academic writing. The findings revealed an alteration in the voice of participants as they were attempting to employ linear logical patterns and move out of collectivism in their writing. Therefore, their study introduced pedagogical implications for Chinese and English academic writing programs. The study could be useful in increasing awareness of voice in English academic writing among Chinese language teachers and learners, as well as for Western instructors who teach English to international students. Including Que and Li’s (2015) study all previous considerations of voice have positioned voice within the sphere of individualism. However, this positionality raises questions regarding other cultural traditions in terms of whether the voice of L2 in writing is considered individualist or not. One of the main questions this study seeks to answer is the following: Do L2 learners who learn to write in both Eastern and Western traditions have an individual, collective, or depersonalized voice (Lehman 2018)? By exploring the influences of sociocultural and sociolinguistic factors in terms of identity and native language, this study will contribute to the current discussion of voice by uncovering the presence of the voice in the writing of English learners.

**Methods**

**Participant selections**

The participants of the study are undergraduate students in their final year of the BA English program in the Department of English, University of Bisha. The participants have been selected according to their good academic records with their overall and accumulative grades ranging between 4 and 5. This selection was made to ensure the high level of English proficiency of all participants. The criteria selection of participants was not established based on gender consideration. The participants are bilinguals of Arabic and English. Participants are closely homogenous with similar educational and cultural experiences as they all belong to the same educational institution and are influenced by the monolingual context of the Arabic language.

**Data Collection**

The study is based on an analysis of students’ writing samples. The writing prompt gives participants the space to write in a narrative style about their life (see Appendix A). The researchers use ‘the impact of COVID-19’ as the main topic for its ongoing impact on the participants and its relevancy to these times. The researchers also wanted to examine participants’ voices through a topic that connects them to a global context. The samples were written at home, and outside of classrooms, and the participants were given sufficient time to write the samples.

The qualitative analysis of the writing samples indicated the variation between L2 who read carefully the writing prompt and responded precisely to it and L2 who overlooked the prompt details and responded inattentively to its questions and requirements. The analysis of the data adopted the holistic and dynamic perspective (Zhang & Zhan, 2020) to look at the factors
affecting Arabic-speaking learners of English as L2. Moreover, the study followed the analysis of writer’s voice proposed by Lehman (2018) and was used further by Lehman and Anderson (2021).

Lehman introduced three main topics to classify the writer’s voice: (a) individual, (b) collective, and (c) depersonalized. The researchers used a similar rubric scoring analysis to examine the characterization and influence of the learner’s written voice in L2 (English) in the Arabic context (see examples in Appendix B). Based on the coding and data analysis, the written voice included approximately 55.96% of the individual category, 29.97% of the collective category, and 14.07% of the depersonalized category. The researchers found that there are three factors influencing the writers’ voice in L2: cultural, linguistic, and educational (for examples, refer to Appendix C). The research, presented and reported based on these factors, aims to identify commonalities in the voices of Arab learners of L2.

The participants of the study are undergraduate students in their final year of the BA English program in the Department of English, University of Bisha. The participants have been selected according to their good academic record with their overall and accumulative grades ranging between 4 and 5. This selection was made to ensure the high level of English proficiency of all participants. The criteria selection of participants was not established based on gender consideration. The participants are bilinguals of Arabic and English. Participants are closely homogenous with similar educational and cultural experiences as they all belong to the same educational institution and are influenced by the monolingual context of the Arabic language.

Findings and Discussion

Studies on the presence of the voice in written discourse have found that the use of voice can differ depending on the language spoken because not all languages share the same linguistic features and ideologies (e.g. Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Canagarajah, 2004). In this study, the researchers attempt to examine the written voice with its association to the culture of the writers of the first language, the linguistic sources, and the academic pedagogy.

Voice and Arab Culture

Shukri (2014) associated collective culture with learning, claiming that “religious conformity, cultural resistance to self-expression, and pedagogical background” impact Arab students including those who write in L2 (p. 200). Running parallel to Shukri’s statement, Hofstede (2015) asserted that societies that have strong collective values tend to adopt a “tightly-knit [social] framework” in which people depend on their community for support and protection. In these societies, as Hofstede (2015) noticed, a member’s self-image is reflected in the collective pronoun ‘we’. Although Hofstede explored culture’s impact on the workplace, his ideas on collectivism and individualism intersect with Shukri’s views and have been used in other contexts by other researchers including Kaur and Noman (2015) who applied his ideas to educational settings.

In this study, the researchers have also explored the collective culture through Hofstede’s lens. For example, collective and individual pronoun use is investigated. Although the researchers had expected the collective pronoun to dominate the participants’ writings, the use of the individual pronoun prevailed by approximately 56% in comparison with the use of the collective pronoun which did not exceed 30% in participants’ writings. This might reflect the dominance of Western
culture which boosts individualism over collectivism, yet the use of the collective pronoun is still strong and varies from one participant to another. The use of the collective pronoun “we” in their writing is a reflection of the impact of the participants’ collective culture in which Arabic speakers tend to use collective patterns such as the plural pronoun ‘we’ to confirm their collective belonging and to reflect their commitment to the cultural norms. Nevertheless, there was one participant who did not use any individual pronoun, showing that even though all participants came from the same educational and cultural background, the impact of culture on each individual is dissimilar.

This agrees with the perception of Shukri (2014), who resisted the Western view of Arab students as “knowledge tellers” which dismissed their individual uniqueness; however, she simultaneously confirmed the importance of education as a way to strengthen L2 students’ individualism. Her insight might also explain the dominance of the individual pronoun in this study’s writing samples. Further, she recognized the impact of Arab students’ collectivist culture on their life and admitted its transfer to education. Her recognition of the collectivist culture’s transfer to education is visible in this study through participants’ writing as they used specific cultural terms. For example, in extract One, the participant used the cultural and religious terms “Al-Isha prayer” and “Allah Al-Mighty,” thereby sharing the collective identity through rhetorical voice.

**Extract One**

Then I performed Al-Isha Prayer and took a nap for 2 hours. When I wanted to wakeup, I was shocked that I couldn’t do so and I was not having the strength to wake up. I decided to take Covid-19 taste as my whole body was racked with pai……. I returned to my work and gradually regaining my full strength and returning to my old self. I think it is a natural reaction to be extremely powerful that I overcame this pandemic and thanked Allah Al-Mighty for His blessings bestowed upon.

In his remarkable assessment of “voice and textual ownership,” Hyland (2003) proposed that rather than reflecting their individual selves, L2 writers tend to pass on acquired knowledge which may at times be perceived in all educational institutions as plagiarism. In fact, in most educational settings in Arab countries, students are still required to memorize and convey the information they gain by imitating the original sources. In Saudi educational institutions, this practice could be attributed to the impact of Islamic culture in which memorization and precise transmission of information are required skills. These cultural practices continue to influence the existence of Arab L2 writers’ individual voices to some extent. In analyzing participants’ writing, the researchers find one case in which the participant copied 13% of their writing from the internet. Although there is not enough evidence to explain the participant’s act, we assume that this was due to the impact of Arabian and Islamic cultures on memorization and transmission. When this participant found a clear intersection and overlap between her ideas and the sentences published on the internet, she copied them into her essay. In explaining the impact of COVID-19 on the world, she wrote:

**Extract Two**

With schools closed and children staying at home, families can use the time to strengthen the family relationship by engaging in group activities such as games,
sports or cooking. These activities bring family members closer together and may be an opportunity to forget differences and solve problems together.

From a Western perspective, this act is seen as a violation of academic ethics codes, but if explained from the participant’s unique cultural perspective, this act might reflect how she has been impacted by the collective culture of memorization and transmission. The participant has evidently looked at the way English natives express the impacts of COVID-19 on their lives and probably observed and embraced the resemblances. Chien (2014) investigated plagiarism in a Chinese educational context. Liu (2005) wrote: “plagiarism by Chinese students when writing in English can be primarily attributed to their lack of language proficiency, writing skills, and educational training” (p. 121). This could be the case for some of the participants’ writing samples. However, being the only participant who copied others’ words without citation does not dismiss the strong effect of collective culture on different participants as this effect might take on different forms.

Voice and Arabic Language

Arabic and English belong to completely different language families and therefore have different linguistic systems. Arabic is a Semitic language with rich and complex morpho-syntactic and inflectional features and categories in comparison to English, which belongs to the European language family. The most common linguistic differences between Arabic and English are subject realization and word order. Arabic allows the subject to be dropped or overt, while in English, subjects are realized overtly in the sentence. Arabic allows two variations of word order, namely Subject-Verb Object (SVO) and Verb-Subject Object (VSO), whereas English has one word order of Subject-Verb Object.

Since the participants in this study are Arabic-speaking learners of ESL/L2, in this section we look at the linguistic voice/identity factor. The researchers believe that participants have various individual linguistic identities, not only cultural voice identities. Such linguistic voice identity in the participants’ writing of English as L2 reflects the influence of L1, Arabic. For Arab learners of English as L2, the construction of voice is influenced by the unique linguistic experience of Arabic. Considering the major role played by linguistic features in voice construction (Que & Li, 2015), Arab learners of ESL are impacted by their first language. Influenced by the L1, Arab learners of ESL tend to make errors associated with grammar and structure in their writing (Alhaysony, 2012; Alshayban, 2012; Al-Zahrani, 1993; Qasem, 2020; Younes & Albalawi, 2015). According to Albalawi (2016), Al-Jarf (2008), and Allaith and Joshi (2011), writing errors in the early stage of learning English might be attributed to the different orthographic and phonological systems of Arabic and English which can be seen in the participants’ writing. According to Zhao (2019), the student’s voice is greatly impacted by several factors that include their L1 background. Overuse of the conjunction particle ‘and’ at the beginning of sentences is common in our participants’ writing samples. This reveals the impact of the Arabic language since starting a sentence with a conjunction is common in the Arabic linguistic system (see extracts Three and Four from participants’ writing samples below). Several studies support our research result, thus showing the overuse of connectors in the writing of Arabic-speaking learners of ESL (Abdul Rahman, 2013; Fareh, Jarad, & Yagi, 2020; Khalil, 1989). The common use of connectors in Arabic helps achieve semantic units, text harmony, and writing flow.
Therefore, the use of connectors by our participants is evidence that the voice of Arab ESL learners’ writing is influenced by their first language constructions.

**Extract Three**

It was a unique and completely different experience that taught us to organize our times and that education is important and that we are able to learn in the most difficult times and circumstances. And also Understanding the scale of this crisis and what lies ahead is a challenge for all of us.

**Extract Four**

First At the beginning, it (COVID-19) was something very unexpected when the epidemic began to spread. I was attending university naturally and I was going through my social life comfortably, but after a month passed in the middle of the second term, the epidemic spread in the Arab world and the government issued strict decisions to confront the pandemic, the study was suspended for a period and then the markets were closed And the shops and it was a difficult thing that we did not face in our whole life, especially when we allotted some time to go out.

Nevertheless, the data analysis of participants’ writing samples has uncovered that Arab learners of ESL are strongly influenced by the culture, writing style, and patterns of native English speakers. This can be seen in the result of their tendency to use individual pronouns at close to double the rate of collective pronouns (55.96% in comparison to 29.97%). This finding is in alignment with similar studies on Chinese’ learners of ESL who attempted to imitate native English speakers’ style by being clear, direct, and to the point (Ji, 2011; Kirkpatrick 2002; Kirkpatrick & Xu, 2012; You, 2004). The existing influence of the rhetoric style of native English speakers could be a result of the spread of new media and the dominance of English-speaking countries like the USA.

In addition to the previous factors, research has shown that academic background may have an impact on the construction of voice in writing (Yu & Cao, 2015). Although the emphasis on developing a writer’s voice and motivating the emergence of distinct autonomy in writing is not prevalent within the Arabian academic context, ESL instructors who were educated in Western institutions are apparently transforming the traditional educational settings as the construction of voice and reflection of unique identity in the writing samples of this study are noticeable. Moreover, although the structure of participants’ writing samples varies, they all share the lack of titles. Though creating a title is not required by the prompt, even in participants’ native language of Arabic, having a title for a story or an essay is necessary. This lack of titles could be attributed to the pedagogy used to teach ESL in the institution including using a blackboard and online forums instead of traditional ways of writing.

**Conclusion**

The current study aimed to explore the voice in the writing of Arab learners of English as a Second Language (ESL). The analysis of the written samples of Arabic speaking learners of ESL showed that a writer’s voice could be constructed and informed by cultural, linguistic, and academic factors. The written voice of L2 writers is dependent on the learner’s cultural aspects,
individual experiences, and linguistic repertoire of their first language. The findings of this study indicated that the individual (personalized) category dominated participants’ writing samples. Researchers found that the participants’ written voice was influenced by L2, English, through academic practices and environment, exposure to Western culture, and English texts. This influence was revealed through the frequent use of the personalized ‘individual’ category in the written samples. The present study supports the fact that the voice of Arab learners of ESL is to some extent informed by English writing conventions, expressions, and patterns. This voice is also influenced by the collective cultural background.

**Limitation and Suggestions**

This study has certain limitations and suggestions. Conducting a follow-up interview with the participants about their choice of certain writing features and styles would add more depth to the interpretation and analysis of voice in addition to the qualitative data collected from the participants through the writing samples. Furthermore, the researchers did not consider the gender factor in this study. Looking at the gender factor would offer interesting insights and comparisons into the use of voice by male and female learners. Conducting a further study on writing samples in L1 and L2 with a similar target group would greatly contribute to the study of the ESL writers’ voice.

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**About the Authors:**

**Dr. Asma Alsheheri** is presently working as an Assistant Professor of literature at the Department of English, College of Science and Arts, University of Bisha. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7531-5600

**Dr. Muhammad Alasmari** is an assistant professor at English department, University of Bisha, Saudi Arabia. He got his PhD in Applied Linguistics from University of Memphis, USA. He is currently working as the dean of College of Science and Arts, Al-Namas Branch. His research interests and experiences revolve around language policy and planning, discourse analysis and sociolinguistic. ORCID https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4749-5525

**Fawaz Ali Ahmed Qasem** is currently working as an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at the Department of English, College of Science and Arts, University of Bisha. His research interests include Linguistics, Applied Linguistics and Acquisition of First and Second language, Psycholinguistics, Sociolinguistics, Corpus Linguistics, and ESP. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2314-1768

**Dr. Rashad Ahmed** is an applied linguist with a multidisciplinary background in TESOL and Composition Studies. He has a wide range of research interests that involve Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Language Assessment, Digital Literacy, TESOL Methods, Sociolinguistics, and First-Year Composition. Among his recent publications are Enhancements and Limitations to ICT-Based Informal Language Learning: Emerging Research and
Opportunities and Peer Review in Academic Writing: Different Perspectives from Instructors and Students. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7834-2148

References


Appendices

Appendix A
Dear participant,
Write a story or an essay at least 500 words in response to the following questions: What is your experience with COVID-19 since it started in 2020? How it has impacted you and your family or your society positively or negatively? How did you overcome the challenges of this pandemic?

Appendix B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual voice ‘I’</th>
<th>Collective voice ‘C’</th>
<th>Depersonalized voice ‘D’</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discursive resources that communicate the individual self</td>
<td>Discursive resources that communicate the collective self</td>
<td>Discursive resources that communicate the depersonalized self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular self-mentions</th>
<th>Plural self-mentions</th>
<th>Pronoun mentions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The use of first person singular ‘I’ and verb</td>
<td>Use of plural person: we, us, our</td>
<td>2nd person, 3rd person singular and plural: he, they, you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I+ opinion verb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples from the data

Appendix C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic factors</th>
<th>Cultural factors</th>
<th>Educational and academic factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The misuse of language structure in L2 due to the influence of L1 (Arabic). This could be syntactic or semantic (The overuse of the ‘connective ‘and’ or the use of adverbs/ prepositions</td>
<td>The use of words and expressions related to Arab culture in the writing samples</td>
<td>Weakness of presenting ideas due to the less educational input. The errors in the copular be-structure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

**Then** I performed Al-Isha Prayer and took a nap for 2 hours. When I wanted to wake up, I was shocked that I couldn’t do so and I was not having the strength to wake up.

Examples: Then I performed Al-Isha Prayer and took a nap for 2 hours. When I wanted to wake up, I was shocked that I couldn’t do so and I was not having the strength to wake up. My health condition were normal in the next eight days and my life was literally saved by the ultimate kindness and generosity of Allah Al-Mighty.
Examination of the Pre-service Teachers' Experiences and Perceptions on Teaching Practices: English Language Teaching Case

Veysel KARSLİ
Department of English Language Teaching
Ataturk University, Erzurum, Turkey
Corresponding Author: veysel.karsli@atauni.edu.tr

Oktay YAĞIZ
Department of English Language Teaching
Ataturk University, Erzurum, Turkey

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Abstract
This study aims to evaluate the pre-service teachers’ experiences and perceptions on teaching practices provided within an internship program carried out at a major state university in Turkey in a holistic way from various aspects. The participants of the study were 65 pre-service teachers studying in the English Language Teaching department at a state university in Turkey. For this purpose, in the study, an explanatory mixed-methods research design was used. A Likert scale questionnaire was conducted with the pre-service teachers to collect quantitative data. Then a semi-structured interview was conducted with eight pre-service teachers to support the quantitative data with qualitative data. The results show that the teaching practice offered within the scope of the internship program is effective as it responds to the needs of pre-service teachers in terms of professional development and mentoring support regarding their teaching professional skills. However, the findings also show that according to the pre-service teachers, there are some issues such as the length of the teaching practice, the inadequacy of mentorship support, organizational problems, and the limited freedom given during teaching practice need to be considered. Finally, the study concludes by presenting some recommendations in line with the results to improve the quality of the teaching practice provided to pre-service teachers in Turkey.

Keywords: English language teaching, internship program, mentorship, pre-service teachers, pre-service teacher education, teacher education, teaching practice

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Introduction

Teacher education has been acknowledged as an important part of the education system since it is assumed to influence the quality of the educational setting and learners (Öztürk & Yıldırım, 2014). This assumption has been supported by relevant studies (Goldhaber, 2007; Rockoff, 2014). If the quality of teacher education provided to pre-service teachers is increased, these prospective teachers will probably offer higher quality education to their students (Krumsvik, 2011; Røkenes & Krumsvik, 2014). Therefore, teachers play a key role and teacher education is important for every country (Azar, 2011; Instefjord & Munthe, 2016; Rafique, 2014).

In almost every country, teacher education is carried out by higher education institutes such as universities within internship programs (Wedell, 2017). The teaching practice in pre-service teacher education is considered a vital part of higher education as it provides professional preparation and development for pre-service teachers by connecting the theory and practice of the teaching profession (Capel, Leask, & Turner, 2006; Batool, Ellahi, & Masood, 2012; Fetherson, 2009; Grudnoff, 2010; Parveen & Mirza, 2012). Teaching practice is also a stage that may affect pre-service teachers’ beliefs (Yuan & Lee, 2014), feelings, and decisions about the future (Merç, 2015). In addition, it enables pre-service teachers to develop an awareness of teaching-related issues and apply them in real teaching environments (Yağız & Ilin, 2018).

Teaching practices differ in each country in terms of their implementation, method, and structure. In Australia, universities carry out pre-service teacher education courses and they also provide teaching practice to pre-service teachers by cooperating with schools. Pre-service teachers who are at the final stage of their undergraduate education are required to attend schools for 10 weeks to practice teaching. They are also assigned experienced teachers from the internship school to mentor the pre-service teachers during this teaching practice (New South Wales Institute of Teachers, 2009). In the United States of America, teacher education is mostly carried out by the universities that offer a four-year education with a teaching certification at the end of the undergraduate education. However, some of the states offer a teacher education model called Professional Development Schools (PDS). In this model, universities and schools work together and pre-service teachers work as intern teachers at the schools with the guidance of a mentor teacher (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2011). In Turkey, similar to Australia and the US, teaching practices are carried out by higher education institutes (universities), in coordination with internship schools. Currently, pre-service teachers in the final year of their education are assigned to schools for 13 weeks and they practice teaching under the supervision of a mentor teacher. During this period, they get regular feedback from both their mentor teachers and faculty instructors regarding their teaching performances.

As mentioned above, teaching practices are carried out in various but fundamentally similar ways. The relevant literature shows that the number of studies evaluating the teaching practices is limited both locally (Seferoglu, 2006; Coskun & Dalgıç, 2010; Akcan & Tatar, 2012, Karakas, 2012; Öztürk & Yıldırım, 2014; Celen & Akcan, 2017; Yağız Arslan & Ilin, 2018; Babanoğlu, 2021), and globally (Fetherson, 2009; Peacock, 2009; Grudnoff, 2011; Jackel, 2011; Batool, Ellahi & Masood, 2012; Caires, Almeida & Vieira, 2012; Alamri, 2018; Karim, Shahed, Mohamed, Rahman, & Ismail, 2019; Yin, 2019; Khatib & Rahgoshay, 2021). However, to improve and
maintain the effectiveness and quality of teaching practices offered in pre-service teacher education, regular evaluation is needed (Musset, 2010). In addition, teaching practice which is the main component of pre-service teacher education should be evaluated in terms of its strengths and weaknesses to improve and develop the teaching practices (Mehdinezhad, 2008; Peacock, 2009). Therefore, at this point, it is essential to examine the views, experiences, and reflections of pre-service teachers, one of the most important stakeholders of pre-service teacher education, on these practices (Ulla, 2016; Mangila, 2018). In this context, this study aims to include pre-service teachers as an informative group for teaching practice and to examine their experiences and perceptions holistically from different aspects such as “pedagogical knowledge, learning and professional development, socio-emotional aspects, professional and institutional socialization, support/resources/supervision, and vocational aspects”. For this purpose, the study tries to seek answers to the following research questions. According to pre-service teachers;

1. What are the perceived effects of teaching practices on pedagogical knowledge?
2. What are the perceived effects of teaching practices in terms of learning and professional development?
3. What are the perceived effects of teaching practices in terms of socio-emotional?
4. What are the perceived effects of teaching practices in terms of Professional and Institutional Socialisation?
5. What are pre-service teachers' experiences and perceptions of the Support/Resources/Supervision services provided in their teaching practices?
6. What are the effects of teaching practices on pre-service teachers' perception of vocational development?

Literature Review

It is widely accepted in the literature that teaching practice plays a very significant role in the professional development of pre-service teachers. Accordingly, teaching practice has recently become the focus of many studies, as it is considered one of the most important elements of pre-service teacher education (Çelik, 2008; Babaoglu, 2021; Ariza-Quinones, Hernandez-Polo, Lesmes-Lesmes, & Molina-Ramirez, 2022). Qazi, Rawat, and Thomas (2012), state that teaching practice is a process that helps pre-service teachers to gain the necessary pedagogical development together with the skills required for the teaching profession (e.g. lesson planning, testing, classroom management, etc.)

The impact of teaching practice on pre-service teachers’ professional development has been discussed in many studies (Şahin, Kartal, & İmamoğlu, 2013; Gore, Lloyd, Smith, Bowe, Ellis, & Lubans, 2017; Yang, Liu, & Gardella Jr, 2018) and its significance in pre-service teacher education has been acknowledged. It is accepted that teaching practice also provides the necessary opportunity for pre-service teachers in terms of developing professional knowledge and skills necessary for the teaching profession (Wikan, Klein, 2017; Celen & Akcan, 2017; Babanoğlu, 2021; Khatib & Rahgoshay, 2021). Therefore it is believed that as pre-service teachers’ knowledge and skills regarding the teaching profession are developed, their perspectives toward the teaching profession change in a positive way, thus improving the quality of teachers (Caires et al., 2012; Tarman, 2012). At this point, it can be said that the quality of teachers is related to the quality of teaching practice (Haigh & Ward, 2004). The relevant literature also shows that factors such as
effective mentor support (Sim, 2011; Garza, Reynosa, Werner, Duchaine, & Harter, 2019; Phang, Sani & Azmin, 2020), the relationship with school administration, mentor teachers, and feeling like a valuable member of the community during teaching practice (Grudnoff, 2010), affect the quality of teaching practice.

In the literature, researchers have discussed the effectiveness of teaching practices from different perspectives. Öztürk and Yıldırım (2014) aimed to investigate the views of novice teachers on the effectiveness of teaching practice. Their results showed that the beginner teachers’ views on pre-service teacher education changed significantly by the faculty they graduated from, the amount of teaching practice during their internship, and the support of the mentor teacher. On the other hand, Tüfekci-Can and Baştürk (2018) found out that pre-service teachers enjoyed the teaching experience in a real classroom and they also developed some traits regarding the teaching profession such as classroom management. Similar to their findings, the studies conducted by Celen and Akcan (2017) and Tindowen, Bangi, and Parallag (2019) highlighted that pre-service teachers regard the teaching practice as very effective as it was responsive to helping pre-service teachers to develop the necessary skills for the teaching profession by providing enough opportunity for teaching practice and providing mentor support. In another study, Seferoğlu (2006), aimed to explore pre-service teachers’ reflections on the teaching practice they were offered. She revealed that the pre-service teachers pointed out the inadequacy of the opportunity to practice teaching. Also, they stated that if they were offered more teaching practice, this would be more beneficial for their professional development as teachers. Supporting her findings, Jackel (2011) in the study conducted to investigate the effects of internship practices on pre-service teachers’ development as teachers, suggested that the amount of teaching practice during internship and the quality of support affect the quality of learning how to teach. In a similar study, Mirici and Ölmez (2017) found that pre-service teachers demanded more teaching practices to develop their teaching skills. On the other hand, in the study conducted to identify the perceptions and experiences of pre-service teachers about teaching practice, Caires et al. (2012) found that pre-service teachers emphasized both some difficulties (e.g., stress and weariness) and some benefits (professional development, efficacy, flexibility) of teaching practice. It is also indicated in the study that the support provided by the supervisors positively affects the teaching efficacy of pre-service teachers.

The studies mentioned above (Öztürk & Yıldırım, 2014; Tüfekci-Can & Baştürk, 2018; Celen & Akcan, 2017; Tindowen et al, 2019; Mirici & Ölmez, 2017; Caires et al, 2012) show that teaching practices have been evaluated from various perspectives. At this point, it has been seen that the challenges and difficulties encountered by pre-service teachers during teaching practices show both similarities and differences. These challenges and difficulties are very important in terms of making teaching practices more effective. For this reason, reflections and perceptions of teacher candidates about teaching practice are very important as they are one of the most important stakeholders of pre-service teacher education (Ulla, 2016). However, it is necessary to evaluate the perspectives and reflections of pre-service teachers from more perspectives in a more comprehensive, that is, a holistic way as the number of studies concerning the effectiveness of teaching practices is very limited, especially in the Turkish context. Thus, this study aims to holistically evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching practice in various aspects.
Methods

In the light of the literature, the study aimed to examine the experiences and perceptions of English pre-service teachers regarding teaching practices within the scope of the internship program in a holistic way in terms of “pedagogical knowledge, learning and professional development, socio-emotional aspects, professional and institutional socialization, support/resources/supervision, and vocational aspects.” For this purpose, an explanatory mixed-methods research design was used. Explanatory research design is used to understand a topic or a problem more efficiently (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In the explanatory design, there are two stages. In the first stage, quantitative data is collected and analyzed. Then, in the second stage, the qualitative data is used to make an in-depth explanation of the quantitative data (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). In the study, as the first step, quantitative data were collected and analyzed. Then, the qualitative data were collected from pre-service teachers through a questionnaire, and then interviews were conducted with the selected pre-service teachers.

Participants

A total of 65 participants, 39 female, and 26 male, aged 20-31 studying in the ELT department at a state university in Turkey, participated in the study. The necessary permissions were taken from the ethics committee of the university, and the participants voluntarily took place in the study. Demographic information of the participant is given in Table one.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-23</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-27</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-Above</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Practice Procedure

In Turkey, teaching practices are carried out in coordination with universities and schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education (MED). According to the instructions determined by MED (2020) on teaching practice to be made by pre-service teachers in internship schools; in each term, pre-service teachers actively teach at least four times in different weeks under the supervision of the mentor teacher. However, in the study calendar of the course, 13 weeks are specified for pre-service teachers to practice teaching. Out of these 13 weeks, four weeks are determined in cooperation with the pre-service teacher and the mentor teacher. The pre-service teacher plans and implements the lesson in these four weeks and receives feedback on its performance from both the practice instructor and mentor teacher. The pre-service teacher can ask the pre-service teacher to practice teaching more than four lessons "if necessary" and observe their performance. Pre-service teachers have to fill out a self-evaluation form for each lesson they teach during the term and evaluate their performance. In addition, they have to listen to the lessons of their friends with whom they practice in the same
Examination of the Pre-service Teachers' Experiences and Perceptions  

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class and evaluate the teaching skills of their friends with the peer assessment form. The responsible faculty member observes each pre-service teacher during this process and provides feedback about their performances with the mentor teacher. The teaching practice process can be seen in the list below (MED, 2020).

The weekly teaching practice process in Turkey is designed as follows:
✓ School observation (Observation of the mentor teacher's professional and institutional duties in the school)
✓ Review of curriculum and annual plan
✓ Lesson planning, selecting, and sequencing activities
✓ Teaching methods and techniques
✓ Selecting materials, and designing activities (Technology use)
✓ Management of the learning process, in-class communication, and interaction
✓ Questioning techniques
✓ Observing studies for knowledge-based and skill-based learning outcomes,
✓ Preparation and implementation of a lesson plan (four weeks)
✓ Evaluation of teaching practices

Research Instruments

In this study, to collect the quantitative data, a Likert scale questionnaire adapted from the "Inventory of Experiences and Perceptions of the Teaching Practice" developed by Caires and Almeida (2001), was used. It consisted of 30 5-point Likert-type questions (from “1: Strongly Disagree” to 5: “Strongly Agree”) under the dimensions; "Pedagogical Knowledge", “Learning and Professional Development”, “Socio-Emotional Aspects”, “Professional and Institutional Socialization”, “Support/Resources/Supervision” and “Vocational Aspects”. It also had two multiple-choice questions for demographic information of the pre-service teachers. To support the quantitative data with qualitative data, a semi-structured interview form with nine open-ended questions was used. The questions in the interview form were created to obtain comprehensive data on the pre-service teachers' experiences with each of the dimensions in the questionnaire. Eight pre-service teachers (four males, and four females) participated in the interviews. They were chosen among the pre-service teachers who attended teaching practices, and were volunteers to participate in the interview.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires was analyzed descriptively, and percentage, frequency, and mean scores were calculated. Data were analyzed using SPSS 22 software. Qualitative data obtained from the interviews were first transcribed, then using Nvivo 12 Pro software, content analysis was carried out. As a result of the content analysis, the themes, categories, and codes were created by the researcher. To ensure the reliability of these themes, categories, and codes, another researcher checked the coding of the analysis. Then, the final form of the coding of all data was given. In the findings section, sample statements of the participants were presented. While presenting these statements, participants were coded as P1, P2...

Results
The findings regarding the experiences and perceptions of the pre-service teachers on the teaching practice for each dimension were presented separately. First, the quantitative data obtained through the questionnaire, and then the explanatory information obtained as a result of the interviews about each dimension was presented.

**Pedagogical Knowledge**

The data obtained for the pre-service teachers’ views on the effects of the Internship Program on pedagogical knowledge was analyzed, and the mean and standard deviation scores of their responses are presented in Table two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>“I know how to organize and maintain classroom management”</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“I know how to assess student performance in a classroom”</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“I can adapt my teaching based upon what students currently understand or do not understand”</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>“I am familiar with common student understandings and misconceptions”</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“I can assess student learning in multiple ways”</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“I can adapt my teaching style to different learners”</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>“I know how to select effective teaching approaches to guide student thinking and learning in language learning”</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“I can use a wide range of teaching approaches in a classroom setting (collaborative learning, direct instruction, inquiry learning, problem/project-based learning, etc.)”</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The views of pre-service teachers on the effect of the internship program on pedagogical knowledge are seen that they consider the effect of the internship program on providing classroom management ($\bar{X} = 4.29$, $Sd=0.63$), evaluating student performances ($\bar{X} = 4.28$, $Sd=0.67$) and adapting teaching processes according to students ($\bar{X} = 4.28$, $Sd=0.54$) is high. On the other hand, it is seen that they view that the effect of the internship program on using various teaching approaches in classroom environments is relatively less than the other items. However, in general, the level of responses in all items is above the medium level. In the interviews with pre-service teachers, it was seen that the effect of internship practices on assessment of learner performance, teaching different types of learners, using different types of teaching methods and approaches, effective classroom management, and effective teaching were emphasized. Sample statements of pre-service teachers regarding these effects are given below.

“I learned how to manage a classroom, how to prepare for lessons, and how to use teaching approaches more effectively.” (p.1)

“To be honest, before practicing teaching I thought that I would never teach a subject to students because I had no experience in teaching. After I practiced teaching I realized that I could teach any subject to any student.” (p. 6)

“One of the benefits of the teaching experience was learning how to understand whether I taught effectively to students and whether they learned or not by learning how to assess their performances.” (p. 7)
"The biggest contribution of the internship program during my teaching practice was that I learned how to make a lesson plan and prepare for my classes. This will help me too much when I start to teach professionally in my future life." (p. 4)

Learning and Professional Development

The data obtained for the pre-service teachers’ views on the effects of the Internship Program on learning and professional development was analyzed, and the mean and standard deviation scores of their responses are presented in Table three.

Table 3. Learning and professional development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>“Teaching practice is an important complement of the first years of Initial Teacher Education”</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>“The teaching practice has contributed to my personal development”</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>“The first years of teacher education have prepared me for the demands of the teaching practice”</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>“I’m developing the necessary skills for the autonomous and competent exercise of teaching”</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>“Teaching practice was sufficiently varied to prepare me for the different challenges of the teaching profession”</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table three, when the views of pre-service teachers on the effect of the internship program on learning and professional development are examined, it is seen pre-service teachers have positive opinions about the teaching practice offered in internship practices is an important part of teacher education. They also consider teaching practice is also important for personal development ($X$ =4.26, Sd=0.73), and providing the necessary skills for the teaching practice ($X$ =4.15, Sd=0.83) is high. On the other hand, it is seen that pre-service teachers think the effect of the teaching program on other items is slightly lower. However, in general, the level of responses in all items is above the medium level. In the interviews with pre-service teachers, they stated that internship practices were very beneficial for their professional development, teaching practice, empathizing with teachers, and helping to feel like a real teacher. Sample relevant statements are given below.

“I think it was a very significant and useful process. It helped me to improve myself professionally and personally. It also allowed me to practice what I learned in the classroom. For instance, I learned how to manage a classroom, how to prepare for lessons, and how to use teaching approaches more effectively.” (p. 1)

“One of the main benefits of the Internship Program was allowing me to practice what I learned. So, I was able to see my strengths and weaknesses” (p. 7)

“The teaching practice was a good and beneficial experience for my future teaching. It helped me to develop myself both personally and professionally because I learned new teaching strategies and how to cope with difficulties.” (p. 2)

However, in the interviews, one of the participants (p.8) stated that the internship practice was a challenging process for him. He stated;
“I think it was a challenging experience for me. I had many difficulties during the internship. I felt very excited while teaching and sometimes I forgot what to say and what to do. Sometimes I thought I would not be a teacher in the future. Because I thought it would be a waste of time for me. Because I thought that I would not learn anything through the internship practices as it is just a compulsory process to be able to graduate, not a process to develop us as good teachers.”

**Socio-Emotional Aspects**

The data obtained for the pre-service teachers’ views on the Internship Program in terms of socio-emotional aspects was analyzed, and the mean and standard deviation scores of their responses are presented in Table four.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>X̅</th>
<th>Sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>“The teaching practice is positively affecting my self-concept and self-efficacy”</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>“The teaching practice has been responsible for high levels of psychological weariness”</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>“The teaching practice has been responsible for high levels of physical weariness”</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>“The teaching practice has been causing disturbances on my diet patterns (schedules, appetite, type of food consumed...)”</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>“I’ve been having sleeping problems during the teaching practice (insomnias, nightmares, insufficient hours of sleep...)”</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Table four is examined, according to the views of pre-service teachers on the effect of the internship program on socio-emotional aspects; It is seen that they consider the effect of the internship practices on their self-concept and self-efficacy (X̅ =4.09, Sd=0.91) is of high level. However, pre-service teachers think that internship practices have an above-average effect on physical (X̅ =3.72, Sd=1.11) and psychological (X̅ =3.52, Sd=1.17) weariness. On the other hand, it can also be seen that pre-service teachers think that the effect of internship practices on their daily life is quite low. However, In the interviews with pre-service teachers, it was seen that some pre-service teachers indicated that during the internship program, they had some problems. Sample statements of pre-service teachers regarding these effects are given below.

“I had many difficulties during the internship. For example, I had to wake up too early to go to the Internship school, and it was far from my house. Therefore, I had some sleep problems and felt tired during the internship. Also, I felt very excited while teaching, and sometimes I forgot what to say and what to do. Sometimes I thought I would not be a teacher in the future.” (p. 8)

“I do not think I was able to practice teaching sufficiently. It was only one day a week. I needed more time to practice teaching.” (p. 4)

**Professional and Institutional Socialization**
The data obtained for the pre-service teachers’ perspectives on the Internship Program in terms of professional and institutional Socialisation was analyzed, and the mean and standard deviation scores of their responses are presented in Table five.

Table 5. Professional and institutional socialization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>“Working closely with experienced teachers has been very important to my learning process”</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>“I’ve got a good relationship with the school board”</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>“I feel welcome in my school”</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>“I’m satisfied with the resources that the school provided for my teaching activities”</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>“It’s difficult to develop teamwork in the school where I teach”</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the Table five, when the views of pre-service teachers on the effect of the internship program on professional and institutional are examined, it is seen that they think that the effect of the internship practices on the benefits of cooperation with experienced teachers on their learning process ($\bar{X} = 4.15, Sd = 1.17$), and their relationship with the school board ($\bar{X} = 4.06, Sd = 1.06$) is high. Another notable finding is that pre-service teachers’ views on the item regarding the development of teamwork in the internship school are relatively lower ($\bar{X} = 3.01, Sd = 1.05$) than the other items. However, in general, the table shows that the level of responses in all items is above the medium level. Sample statements of pre-service teachers regarding these findings are given below.

“The organization of the Internship Program was awful at the very beginning. Our schedule changed a few times, and it was annoying because there was a conflict with our courses at the university. But the school administration helped us to solve this problem.” (p. 4)

“My mentor teacher and school administrators were very kind and supportive of me, therefore I didn’t have any problems during my internship processes.” (P. 1)

Support/Resources/Supervision

The data obtained for the pre-service teachers’ views on the Internship Program in terms of Support, Resources, and Supervision was analyzed, and the mean and standard deviation scores of their responses are presented in Table six.

Table 6. Support/resources/supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>“The supervision has been an important source of emotional support”</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>“My teaching practice is being closely followed by my supervisors”</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>“There is a good articulation between the university and school supervisor”</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table six, while it is noteworthy that the level of participation in the item, which emphasizes the significance of mentorship in terms of emotional support, is high ($\bar{X} = 3.74, Sd = 1.00$), it is seen that the level of participation of the other items is above the medium level.
In the interviews with pre-service teachers, they stated both positive and negative opinions regarding support, supervision, and resources provided during the internship practice. Feedback, advice, and support provided during their internship practice constituted their positive statements. Some of their positive statements are given below.

“My mentor teacher helped me with preparing for the lesson. Also warned me about the mistakes that I did while teaching and always encouraged me.” (p. 4)

“After practicing teaching my mentor teacher gave timely feedback about my experience. This allowed me to correct my mistakes and teach more effectively.” (p. 6)

However, interruption by the mentor teacher, not being given responsibility during teaching practice, and apathy of the mentor teacher was the main focus of their negative statements. Some of these statements can be seen below.

“My mentor was a very cold person, and usually ignored me when I asked for help or guidance. I usually experienced communication problems with my mentor teachers. I felt very worthless.” (p. 2)

“While I was trying to practice teaching, my mentor always interrupted me for the mistakes I made and warned me in front of the students. I was also not given full control of the classroom. This made me feel demotivated, and I even forgot what to say and what to do. My mentor affected me badly.” (p. 8)

**Vocational Aspects**

The data obtained for the pre-service teachers’ perspectives on the Internship Program in terms of vocational aspects was analyzed, and the mean and standard deviation scores of their responses are presented in Table seven.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>“I’m beginning to feel like a teacher”</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>“I think that teaching may fulfill my expectations in terms of: Personal satisfaction/ Social status/Professional satisfaction/Economical stability/ Quality of life (holidays, free time...)”</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>“The teaching practice experience is making me believe that I have no vocation to be a teacher”</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>“If I could go back, I would have chosen another course/profession”</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen in Table seven that pre-service teachers have a high level of perspective regarding the feeling like a teacher during the Internship Program ($\bar{X}$ =4.40, $Sd$=0.93). In addition, they also have a positive attitude towards the item that teaching will meet their expectations in terms of personal satisfaction, social status, professional satisfaction, economical stability, and quality of life ($\bar{X}$ =4.17, $Sd$=0.63).

On the other hand, it is also seen that pre-service teachers’ perspectives towards the sufficiency of the Internship Program to prepare them for different challenges of the teaching profession are at a medium level. In the interviews with pre-service teachers, they stated the teaching practice provided within the Internship Program helped them to love their profession and
to feel like a real teacher. For example, Participant one stated, “Even if I do not think I adequately improved myself pedagogically, I am beginning to feel like a teacher.”

Discussion

In this study, the experiences and perceptions of English pre-service teachers regarding teaching practices within the scope of the internship program in a holistic way in terms of pedagogical knowledge, learning and professional development, socio-emotional aspects, professional and institutional socialization, support/resources/supervision, and vocational aspects were examined.

The general results of the study in terms of “pedagogical knowledge” and “learning and professional development” revealed that the teaching practice offered within the Internship Program adequately responds to the needs of pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers believe that teaching practice contributed significantly to their professional development as they learned how to prepare a lesson plan, how to maintain classroom management, and how to teach effectively using various teaching methods and approaches. The results support previous findings of the studies that emphasize the multiple gains and achievements that take place during teaching practice (Caires & Almeida 2005). Similarly, Capel, Leask, and Turner (2006) indicate that teaching practice is the stage where pre-service teachers can improve their proficiency more than at any other professional development stage. Khatib and Rahgoshay (2021) state that teaching practice prepares pre-service teachers for the teaching profession and helps them overcome the challenges and issues that may be faced in the future. On the other hand, in the pre-service teachers stated that teaching practice allowed them to experience how they can teach the language skills in a real teaching environment as it provided the necessary teaching practice of what was learned in classroom education which is supportive of the findings of the studies conducted by Ulla (2016), Wikan and Klein (2017), Ariza-Quinones et al. (2022). As this result can be explained in general, it can also be evaluated in terms of English language teaching. English teaching covers the teaching of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills at almost all levels (Marlina, 2018). Therefore, English pre-service teachers may need both more observation and more teaching practice to gain sufficient experience in teaching processes. In the study, pre-service teachers also emphasized this situation in the interviews by stating that the length of the teaching practice is not sufficient and an extended period of teaching practice is necessary for a better experience. This suggestion is consistent with the research suggesting that providing an extended teaching experience provides pre-service teachers with the opportunity to assume the responsibilities of a teacher (Ewart & Straw, 2005; Seferoglu, 2006; Ngai, 2009).

The introduction of pre-service teachers into the teaching environment is described as a dynamic process that includes the adaptation and interactions of pre-service teachers with the experienced members of this environment (Caires et al., 2012). During this process, pre-service teachers try to adjust to the teaching environment and gradually develop the feeling of “belonging” with the help of the support they get from the school administration and mentor teacher. The feeling of “belonging” or in other words, acceptance and recognition to the community, gained by pre-service teachers has significant effects on their professional development, as well as their future teaching performances (Flores & Day, 2005; Krecic & Grmek, 2008; Lamote & Engels, 2010, Grudnoff, 2010). In the study, in terms of socio-emotional aspects, and professional and
institutional socialization, the results showed that pre-service teachers generally had good relationships with their mentor teachers, and school administration in the internship schools. They indicated their mentor teachers supported them in many ways such as teaching how to maintain classroom management, and how to prepare a lesson plan and teach more effectively. However, some pre-service teachers had some negative experiences since their mentor and other school staff ignored them and did not help them during teaching practices.

On the other hand, it can be understood from the results that the support provided by mentor teachers to pre-service teachers plays a significant role in pre-service teachers’ professional development. Pre-service teachers expect the support of their mentor since mentoring is beneficial as it includes feedback on teaching practice and professional development of pre-service teachers (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh & Wilss, 2008). In the study, the support the pre-service teachers received from their mentor teachers had both negative and positive effects on their teaching practice. Some pre-service teachers stated that their mentor teacher ignored them or frequently interrupted them while practicing teaching. They also indicated that they were not given full control of the classroom and they could not feel like a teacher. It is important that pre-service teachers feel free and have a full teaching experience in this process. At this point, the mentor teacher should guide the pre-service teachers towards independence to create their understanding of teaching and learning strategies and thereby help them improve their self-confidence and professional development since mentoring is one of the best and most effective ways to prepare teachers for the teaching profession (Portner, 2003; Alabi, 2017; Garza et al., 2019; MacGee, 2019). Although pre-service teachers need the support and feedback of their mentor teachers to improve their teaching practices (Hudson, 2014), literature shows that if not given effectively, in some situations, feedback may even hinder academic benefit (Dowden, Pittaway, Yost & McCarthy, 2013). This situation can be related to the approach and attitude of mentor teachers, and since almost every pre-service teacher works with a different mentor teacher, there is no standard for the way feedback is given, and each mentor teacher may have a different way of giving feedback. This is also emphasized in the interviews with the pre-service teachers. While some of the pre-service teachers indicated that their mentor teacher always encouraged them by supporting them with lesson plan preparation, classroom management, and also by providing feedback about their mistakes during their teaching practice; some pre-service teachers stated that they were uncomfortable with the constant intervention of mentor teachers. Finally, the findings in terms of vocational aspects of the pre-service teachers showed that despite some negativities, thanks to the teaching practice provided within the internship program, the pre-service teachers had the opportunity to practice what they learned in the classroom and this helped them to start to feel like a real teacher.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the experiences and perceptions of English pre-service teachers regarding the teaching practices provided within the scope of the internship program in terms of pedagogical knowledge, learning and professional development, socio-emotional aspects, professional and institutional socialization, support/resources/supervision, and vocational aspects. Considering the results obtained from the study in general, it can be said that the teaching practice provided within the internship program was useful since it was responsive to the needs of the pre-service teachers and also effective in helping pre-service teachers to develop themselves for their
profession professionally. However, despite their mostly positive experiences and perceptions, there are still some challenges, and issues that pre-service teachers experienced during their internship processes, especially in the mentorship support, length of the teaching practice, and organizational problems of the internship program. For this reason, regular feedback, and evaluation should be obtained from all the stakeholders of the Internship program and solutions should be sought to the identified problems. For example; the length of the teaching practice could be extended for a more effective internship program. Moreover, further research could be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of internship programs in different aspects to identify the issues and possible solutions for these issues.

About the Authors

Research Assistant Veysel KARSLİ works at Atatürk University, School of Education, English Language Teaching Program, Foreign Languages Education Department in Turkey. His research interests are computer assisted language teaching, foreign language speaking anxiety, instructional technologies and teaching language skills. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7381-3702

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Oktay YAĞIZ works at Atatürk University, School of Education, English Language Teaching Program, Foreign Languages Education Department in Turkey. He gained his doctoral degree in 2009 in the field of English Language Teaching at Atatürk University. His research interests are English academic writing, educational research, and pronunciation studies. Dr. Yağız conducted many research studies into the English language and its pedagogical aspects, particularly at the tertiary level. He also teaches at undergraduate and graduate levels in the fields mentioned above. (ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7076-7774)

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The Role of Lexical Chunks in Promoting English Writing Competence among Foreign Language Learners in Saudi Arabia

Rashidah Albaqami
Department of English language
Turabah University College, Taif University
Taif, Saudi Arabia
Email: r.mohamad@tu.edu.sa

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Abstract
This study examines the effect of enhanced input of lexical chunks on the performance of Arabic-speaking English learners’ writings. Lexical chunks, containing their forms, meanings, and functions, stored and recovered as a single component in brains, may alleviate language processing problems and increase language proficiency. The research examines if enhancing exposure to lexical chunks might advance foreign language learners’ writing in Saudi Arabia. The study attempts to find an answer to the following question: What is the potential impact of rich input of lexical chunks on Arabic-speaking learners of English e-mail writing competence? A total of 34 female university students were divided into two groups and given a pre-test and post-test in which they wrote and composed e-mails in English. The experimental group was then exposed to a treatment (i.e., extensive exposure to lexical chunks available via an e-mail phrase bank). After eight weeks of treatment, the experimental group outperformed the control group on the post-treatment test. The results demonstrate that learners with more lexical chunks are more likely to perform better and vice versa. The results indicate that the experimental group had a favorable attitude about lexical chunks through the e-mail phrase bank. The results suggest that abundant input of lexical chunks aids in improving learners’ writing performance. The findings also suggest that increased input of lexical chunks may lessen the potential negative transfer of the mother language, therefore refining writing in terms of collocations, grammatical structures, and discourse coherence.

Keywords: Arabic, English, input, exposure, Lexical Approach, lexical chunks, Saudi foreign language learners, e-mail writing, competency

Introduction

Lexicon has typically been signified to only words, it is manifest that a considerable amount of lexis is made of sequences of words that function as single constituents, with meanings distinctive from isolated words. Tang (2013) reported several expressions to denote this form of succession: lexical chunks, lexical bundles, formulaic language, and collocations. The term “lexical chunks” is adopted in this study as described by Wray (2002) “An uninterrupted or continuous successions of words or other components that is, or seems to be, inserting: that is, saved and recovered entirely from primary memory of the use, instead of subjected to language grammar production or evaluation” (p. 9).

Lexical chunks are patterns of stable or semi-stable multi-expression entities that frequently appear; for instance, as far as I know, there is no doubt that etc. They are typically stored as a whole, deprived of formation or creation, according to some structural constraints. Thornbury (2017) pointed out that lexical chunks are generated by meanings, not structural rules that are mastered all at once mechanically during language development. The approach of lexical chunks relied on the notion that language is constituted of ‘grammatical lexis’ ideally of ‘lexicalized syntax’, according to Lewis (1993) and Wang (2017) claims. Several lines of evidence suggest that lexical chunks play a substantial role in our daily interaction and trigger confidence, accurateness, and competency in the basic skills, including listening, writing, speaking, and reading. Furthermore, linguistic chunks are a fruitful process to advance learners’ writing of English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL), as White and Delaney (2018), and Al-Khazaali (2019) suggested.

A growing body of literature recognizes the significance of lexical chunks in mastering a foreign language. The current research was advanced to determine the role of direct enhanced input of lexical chunks to endorse EFL writing. One major issue implicates that learners lack of essential lexis for delivering e-mails written in English, resulting in the absence of comprehension of the meaning behind it. Many EFL learners in Saudi Arabia find writing a massive obstacle that has negatively influenced their EFL development. Low levels of writing make it challenging to communicate effectively. If EFL learners suffer from some shortage of required vocabulary, they cannot communicate successfully, whether oral or written. The current study investigates the efficiency of mastering lexical chunks to advance EFL learners’ writing. Whether learning more lexical chunks can efficiently promote EFL learners’ writing competence. The current study not only sheds light on the significance of lexical chunks in enhancing writing competency but also proposes some pedagogy recommendations forwards.

It looks pretty likely that writing e-mails is not a simple task for EFL learners. As an instructor with extensive years of teaching English in Saudi Arabia, I usually notice that learners often avoid sending e-mails in English. As major English students, they must communicate with teachers via official e-mails written in excellent English. This need has increased mainly during the Covid-19 lockdowns, where most office hours had become virtual. Many EFL learners often send e-mails that show some language inadequacy, including several unacceptable grammatical patterns (e.g., lack of subject-verb agreement), a limited amount of vocabulary, evidence of informality, evidence of mother tongue transfer etc.
Furthermore, empirical evidence suggests that EFL learners seem to encounter difficulty with different forms of communication due to the limited number of lexical entries they are familiar with and the shortage of lexical knowledge. Moreover, while writing, they often attempt to translate chunks from their first language (i.e., Arabic) into the target language (i.e., English). As a result, their compositions appear primarily foreign or strange, if not grammatically improper. Sometimes, their e-mails include some traces of interlanguage representations that are not a mirror image of their L1 or the target language.

Although university students in Saudi Arabia are typically introduced to some academic skills embodied in different courses, such as the course titled Study Skills, the provided content is not sufficient. As it lacks authentic and real-life context activities. Lack of familiarity with lexical chunks constitutes a classic learnability problem. The logical problem for Arabic speaker learners of English is that the input is unlikely sufficient to signal the difference between the target forms and their L1-specific forms concerning e-mail writing. Evidence found in the random selection of e-mails written by Arabic-speaking intermediate-level learners of English reveals some traces of L1 transfer, which attributes to initial representation based on their L1. Learners are likely to converge on some neither non-L1 nor non-L2 representation “interlanguage” in specific settings where input is insufficient to motivate adjustment, perhaps incomprehensible or lacking.

Several studies have adapted the Lexical Approach and investigated the receptive skills, mainly speaking and listening, which are documented as worthy of critical prominence and have received considerable attention. However, this research adds to the growing literature knowledge considering the logical problem and investigating the possible impact of lexical chunks in the activities of EFL learners on the productive skill of writing. The findings should make an essential contribution to the field by offering other experimental evidence that gives further support to the proposition that knowledge of lexical chunks is likely to help in advancing EFL learners’ writing proficiency and support in tackling several problems that learners may encounter in writing, e-mail writing in particular.

The growing body of literature recognizes the importance of the lexical chunks approach. This study endeavors to determine the role of lexical chunks in enhancing learners’ writing proficiency. Namely, to determine whether or not increasing the input of lexical chunks will improve Arabic EFL learners writing. Empirically, whether there are any significant differences between the two groups (i.e., control and experimental) mean scores on their performance in the post-test after the treatment (i.e., access to rich input of lexical chunks frequently used in writing e-mails). The lexical approach is adopted here as a remedy for the logical problem, i.e. poverty of the stimulus. This proposal is regarded as a relatively novel field of inquiry.

The current study is guided by the following research question:
RQ1: What is the potential impact of rich input of lexical chunks on Arabic-speaking learners of English writing competence?

To answer this question and determine if lexical chunks are efficient in boosting EFL learners’ writing competence, the researcher examines the number of lexical chunks mastered by EFL learners to determine whether it correlates with their writing scores.
Furthermore, the study set out to test one main research hypothesis:

\[ H_0: \text{The rich input of lexical chunks does not have any significant impact on Arabic EFL learners’ writing levels.} \]

\[ H_1: \text{The rich input of lexical chunks has a significant impact on Arabic EFL learners’ writing levels.} \]

Two scenarios are expected. The first hypothesis states that there will be no statistical significance variations in the mean scores of the two groups in the pre-test e-mail writing performance. On the other hand, the second hypothesis states that in the post-test, there will be statistically significant variations in the mean scores of the two groups' e-mail writing performance.

**Lewis’s Lexical Approach**

Altenberg (1998) claimed approximately 80% of the language elements are ranges of lexical chunks in place of independent expressions, which are the minimum component to function recall, input, and return of the relevant context. As a result, if EFL students can grasp many lexical chunks, considering the meanings and roles of discourse may be valuable. Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) classified vocabulary lexical into three types: social functioning, required topics, and conservation devices. According to Lewis (1997) and Allison, Wee, Zhiming & Abraham (1998), lexical chunks are typically grouped into the forms listed in Table one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of lexical chunks</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poly-words</td>
<td>Brief and fixed lexical expressions with no flexibility are linked with a wide range of functions.</td>
<td>Shifter: <em>by the way</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrasal constraints</td>
<td>Brief to average length expressions with different lexical and phrasal categories are linked with other functions.</td>
<td>Relator: <em>as well as</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalized utterances</td>
<td>Lexical expressions of sentence length, with the flexibility. They are used for specific social interactions.</td>
<td>Accepting suggestions: <em>that sounds great</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence builders</td>
<td>Lexical terms offer the structure for entire presentations, comprising slots for opinions for the expression of whole notions and allowing some substantial flexibility.</td>
<td>Suggesting: <em>the point is that</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lewis (1993) introduced the *Lexical Approach*, which is based on the theory of chunks. The lexical approach in language training denotes the concept that the building blocks of any linguistic system are lexis, or words and their arrangements, rather than syntax, or other components. In the lexical approach, rhetorical components are seen as the essential part and base of understanding the target language (whether it is a second or foreign language); as Lewis (1993) argued “Language is made up of lexicalized lexis rather than lexicalized grammar” (p. 34). Most representations, according to the lexical approach, are not recently generated, and where lexical chunks in the development of
joined word components or learned representations give the production of fluent words that happened in regular contact. Lexical chunks, according to the lexical method, may effectively enhance the pace of language processing and creation. Lewis (1993) claimed that the lexical method is based on three assumptions: 1) language is composed of grammatical lexis rather than lexicalized grammar, 2) structural representations are recognized as beneficial but lexical representations are of critical importance to language instruction, and 3) language is composed of multi-word ‘lexical chunks’. Lewis (1993) accepted the conservational method's efficacy in second/foreign verbalization teaching. As an alternative, he asserted that the lexical technique might enhance and progress the communicative approach. Learners must increase their awareness of lexical chunks and improve their ability to join chunks properly. As Linlin (2004) noted, the lexical method implicitly stresses strengthening language; with adequate repetition and practice, which are critical to assisting learners in retaining and use lexical chunks.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), “the primary components of language communication and interaction, according to a lexical model of teaching, are lexis, or word and word combinations, rather than syntax, function, ideas, or any other part of lesson design” (p. 132). From this vantage point, it is possible to suggest that lexical chunks have a crucial role in language development, particularly in the early stages (Hakuta, 1976). Lexical chunks may aid in managing language output and increasing adequate comprehension. Some of the advantages of employing lexical chunks in writing, according to Sun and China (2014) and Khazaali (2019), include boosting the fluidity of writing, improving creativity, and supporting the structural competency of discourse. Previous studies suggest that lexical chunks are an effective strategy to alleviate anxiety and stimulate motivation in language learning (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992).

Lewis (1993) and Pawley and Syder (1983) discovered that native speakers employ a large number of pre-installed lexical chunks to assure flow and accuracy. Thus, to learn a new language, learners must grasp not just individual vocabulary but also how to connect them correctly. Learners must use many lexical chunks to improve accuracy without resistance or disfluency. Learners can easily remember and generate them without having to assemble them by word selection and grammatical rules. Therefore, lexical chunks may significantly reduce and smooth learners’ language processing. Pawley and Syder (1983) similarly asserted that learners must acquire the capacity of native-like chunking, that learners must be acquainted with correct blocks, and that learners must communicate their ideas like native speakers. As Zhao (2009) claimed, language correctness may be ensured if learners depend on ready-made lexical chunks that make up a significant percentage of native speakers' production.

Previous Studies

The lexical method emphasizes the need to introduce lexical chunks to EFL learners. According to existing empirical evidence (e.g., Cowie & Howarth, 1996), lexical chunks have a significant role in motivating writing skills in a foreign language. Cowie and Howarth (1996) compared the writing of less-skilled native speakers with more fluent non-native speakers. They discovered that such lexical chunks represent a significant component of non-native speakers’ speech. Nonetheless, Granger (1998) found that “learners apply fewer word knowledge and are less attentive to collocational linkages than natural counterparts” (p. 151). Granger (1998) found that low-level and medium EFL learners created fewer lexical chunks than native English speakers.
Previous research suggests that lexical chunks are beneficial to foreign language development because they promote fluency, correctness, innovativeness, and consistency, as well as considerably increasing learners' motivation. Sun and China (2014) claimed that lexical blocks stored as a complete component have a vital function in lowering anxiety and increasing confidence. Low levels learners are more prone to experience anxiety and, as a result, have low levels of confidence.

There have been many studies done on lexical chunks to determine whether they affect mastering foreign languages (e.g., Yu Xiulian, 2008; Hou, Loerts & Verspoor, 2016), including competence in listening (e.g., Zeng Qingmin., 2012) and speaking in particular (e.g., Chen, 2010). Early studies focused on the importance of the lexical approach on EFL learners' speaking proficiency. However, the small number of studies that have been done to the lexical approach concerning foreign language learners' writing did not account for the function of lexical chunks as triggering input that promotes adapting the target systems (Tang, 2012; Abdulqader, Murad & Abdulghani, 2017; Mohamad, Mohaini & Nath, 2020).

Zhao (2009) conducted a study to explore the effect of lexical chunks on English mastery. Zhao (2009) investigated the possible association between learners' skills with lexical chunks and their production by evaluating the results of numerous written exams and a writing test. The data showed that students with high lexical chunks are more likely to perform well on the writing test. Zhao (2009) found that lexical chunks are substantial in learners' development of the target language. According to Zhao (2009), lexical chunks promote vocabulary smoothness, increase vocabulary accuracy, allow for the formation of novel terms, govern language output, and increase learners' motivation.

Abdulqader (2016) examined the impact of lexical chunks on the performance of Kurdish college students' English writing, i.e., descriptive essay. Abdulqader (2016) attempted to determine whether drawing learners' attention to the lexical chunks in different contexts aid in better performance in EFL essays writing versus the traditional instruction approach. The researcher adapted the two groups pre-test post-test design. Following three weeks of treatment, the findings suggest that the experimental group statistically outperformed the control group in their essay writing. Similarly, Abdulqader, Murad & Abdulghani (2017) examined the impact of using the Lexical Approach on the English essay writing performance of college students. Also, two groups’ (i.e., control and experimental) and pre-test and post-test design were used. Following six weeks of treatment adapting the Lexical Approach, the results showed that the experimental group statistically outperformed the control group and significantly gained scores in the post-essay-writing test. The control group, nevertheless, did not show a statistically significant increase in the post-essay-writing test. The Lexical Approach was advantageous to the students’ writing. Abdulqader et al. (20167) concluded with some pedagogic implications.

Furthermore, Al-Khazaali (2019) examined the significance of lexical chunks to the writing proficiency of Iraqi university students studying English as a foreign language. Al-Khazaali (2019) investigated if improving EFL learners' understanding of lexical chunks often used in diverse contexts aids in the advancement of EFL essay writing as compared to the traditional way of instruction. Before and after the test, two groups (i.e., control and experimental) completed a questionnaire. After four weeks of treatment, Al-Khazaali (2019) discovered a significant difference between the two groups.
after the test. As predicted, the experimental group outperformed the control group. Khazaali (2019) observed that using lexical chunks as a language learning strategy improves the writing of EFL learners.

Several lines of evidence suggest that EFL learners' lexical chunks significantly add to their language proficiency. EFL learners can only acquire native-like fluency and accuracy in their language output if they master many ready-made lexical chunks. The more advanced the EFL learners are, the more competent they are likely to be in employing lexical chunks and vice versa. To date; to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no study has examined the role of lexical chunks in promoting Saudi-speaking learners of English as a foreign language in real-life contexts such as e-mail writing.

Methods

The purpose of the current study was to determine the possible impacts of lexical chunks on the writings of EFL learners. This study explores the potential effects of increasing the input of lexical chunks on the writing of Arabic EFL learners. The method used in this study is pre-post e-mail writing tests.

Participants

Two groups’ design was adapted for the study. The researcher randomly selected two parallel groups of female university students at Taif University in Saudi Arabia and carried out the current empirical study that lasts one academic semester (during a summer course that lasts for eight weeks, 2021).

The participants (n=34) were randomly assigned into two groups, experimental and control, each group includes 17 respondents. All the participants are English department majors. Before joining the department, they studied English for at least six years. The two groups’ English demonstrates to be roughly identical. They shared the following features: Part of their entry requirement to the English department. They must attain a particular score (47 as a minimum) in the Standardised Test of English Proficiency (STEP) as evidence that they have a relatively good command of English language proficiency. Thus, the researcher did not need to carry out another placement test. They were all Saudi upper intermediate English learners. So, they are all beyond the initial state of grammar. They learned at public schools before joining the university. All participants were of the same gender (females), and their ages ranged from 20 to 23. Both groups were attending a writing skill course (Writing III) using the same textbook (Oshima & Hogue, 2014) and taught by the same instructor (the researcher) at the same time. All participants signed informed consent. The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Taif University, Saudi Arabia (Application code: 43-105).

The researcher compared the performance of both groups on the pre-test to a random selection of spontaneous e-mails written by native speakers of British English (n=10) studying at the University of Leeds, the United Kingdom. To determine whether there is a noticeable gap between the learners’ performance and that of the non-native speakers of English before the treatment. To test the predictions of Granger (1998) who claims that “in comparison to original speakers, trainees employ fewer lexical pieces” (p. 15).
Research Instruments and Procedures

Stimulus: Pre-task and Post-task (E-mail Writing)

The two tests signify the participants’ performance with lexical chunks in language production and e-mail writing. The two groups took a pre-test and post-test in the research to examine and comparing their English writing proficiency. The experimental group was given the treatment between the two tests. As a starting point, to assess the learners’ competence in writing, the researcher instructed both groups to compose a formal e-mail (word limit: 250) and send it to the researchers’ e-mail on a selected topic of three relevant to some academic issues, e.g., asking for an assignment extension, showing appreciation, apologizing (see Appendix A).

Throughout the treatment, the experimental group extensively used lexical chunks provided by the researcher and composed various e-mails about different topics. They were instructed to make the most of lexical chunks in their writings. On the other hand, the control group did not obtain any instructions or access any input concerning lexical chunks or how to write e-mails professionally. After treatment, the researcher again instructed both groups to compose another e-mail in English and send it to her for the same topics they responded to in the pre-test with the same words limit (250) (see Appendix B). They were given 30 minutes to finish the task each time.

Following the pre-test, the experimental group was subject to treatment. After the E-mail Phrase Bank (EPB) was designed, the participants had access to it, and they were instructed to practice using some of the selected lexical chunks for a diverse selection of purposes for a period of eight weeks that extended from the 15th of June to the 17th of August in 2021. They were extensively exposed to the bank of lexical chunks for two sessions of 20 minutes a week via a telegram channel designed for language development at different skills. In each session, the experimental group was exposed to a different diverse of lexical chunks, mainly those that are frequently used in e-mail communication, such as I hope this e-mail finds you well, It might be worth trying to, I wondered if you had any ideas related to etc.

The experimental group was instructed to underline the lexical chunks and put them into use to master them appropriately. Next, they were requested to practice the lexical chunks by composing e-mails in which those chunks were implemented. The researcher selected lexical chunks according to their frequency and formality, counting more useful lexical chunks in writing formal English e-mails. Following the eight weeks, both groups were post-tested in e-mail writing. The participants were asked to write and deliver e-mails for different reasons and keep using the EPB each time they sent an e-mail to an instructor. During data analysis, the researcher considers the participants’ improvement concerning e-mail writing by concentrating on the number of lexical chunks and their forms, meanings, and functions.

The E-mail phrase bank was planned to offer systematic guidelines for writing professional e-mails, including opening lines, body lines, and closing lines. Furthermore, it aimed to represent a wide range of widely used forms, their meanings, and their functions. That is, the bank was intended to offer limitless commonly used expressions for writing e-mails in English to deliver different functions, including greetings, the reason for writing, requests, reminders, saying what you are attaching, apologizing, gratitude, offering help, and closing (see Figure one). The design considered the degree of formality: the proposed expressions range from formal, neutral to informal.
Throughout the treatment, the experimental group was instructed to make the most of lexical chunks in their e-mail writings. They used lexical chunks and wrote plenty of e-mails on different topics, and later they presented and discussed them in the writing class. The control group, on the other hand, did not access any input regarding lexical chunks. They only accessed the traditional lecturing delivered in the approved textbook.

The experimental group went through the following phases:

a. Recognizing input and noticing the gap: The researcher introduced lexical chunks and drew the participants’ attention to them. They were likely to identify and observe lexical chunks when disclosed to the manipulated input, and that was likely to promote awareness towards using them. The learners were encouraged to recognize some of the non-target-like productions that have previously been generated and to suggest some alternatives from the designed bank. After recognizing lexical chunks, the participants were directed to boost their knowledge of implementing lexical chunks and generate writing on the amalgamation of lexical chunks. Considering the fact that awareness is the essential method of remembrance, awareness of the lexical chunks is critical in the technique to hold and retrieve linguistic information and determine representations. Distinguishing lexical chunks of writing is likely to reduce the memory burden of learners and lead learners to produce native-like writing effectively.

b. Practicing lexical chunks: The researcher designed and developed the EPB to support learners in noticing and practicing using lexical chunks in writing. Writing is a slow and gradual procedure. Thus, mastering chunks must be advanced gradually. The researcher began by...
presenting three or four sentences, after which the participants were instructed to write down the lexical chunks they read. Consequently, the researcher requests the participants to examine lexical chunks and analyze them to be familiar with the construction of lexical chunks, their meanings, and how they function. This procedure allows learners to comprehensively understand the structure of the lexical chunks commonly used in writing.

c. Mastering lexical chunks: Learners have found their knowledge of lexical chunks and bestowed themselves with the competency of recognizing and practicing using lexical chunks in writing e-mails in English.

Following the post-test, the participants were individually interviewed within 10 minutes. The participants were instructed to respond to three questions about their e-mail writing practices and attitudes towards writing using preassembled lexical chunks (see Appendix C). The aim of interviewing the participants is to access further qualitative data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig. (2 tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing scores</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.60</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NNS</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>19.33</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of lexical chunks</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.90</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NNS</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>34.17</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Independent samples test of the results of the NS and NNS

Findings

Some descriptive and inferential statistics are generated to determine the likely effect of the role of lexical chunks on EFL learners’ writing performance. This section presents the major findings.

Table two shows that the non-native speakers (NNS) performance significantly diverges from that of the native speakers (NS) of English. There was a significant difference in the scores of the native speakers ($M=13.60, SD=0.23$) and non-native speakers ($M=2.65, SD=0.54$) conditions; $t (42)=19.33, p = 0.000$. Furthermore, there was a significant difference in the number of lexical items produced by the native speakers ($M=9.90, SD=0.31$) and non-native speakers ($M=3.21, SD=0.60$) conditions; $t (42)=34.17, p = 0.000$. 
The researcher noticed that native speakers of English produced more lexical chunks, such as just to let you know, feel free to, just a reminder, it would be great if you could share, I do not doubt regarding, please advise, just wondering if etc. Interestingly, they produced more phrasal verbs, such as assigned in and out, bring over, let you in, heading down, stick around, coming over, ran over, etc. The learners, on the other hand, produced fewer lexical chunks and fewer phrasal verbs as well. A sensible justification for native speakers’ accuracy and productivity is that they rely heavily on much of the exact representations frequently rather than constructing new representations every time they write.

The Learners’ Performance in the Pre-test

The experimental and control groups are assumed to be comparable in this study, and the difference between the two groups is not signed before the experiment. Putting it differently, the two groups are predictable to show no significant differences concerning their highness of writing. They should be of uniformity regarding their writing proficiency before the experiment.

Table 3. Independent samples test of the two groups on the pre-test and post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2 tail)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>0.514</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>0.781</td>
<td>12.23</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.65</td>
<td>3.463</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table three also reveals that the experimental group and control group’s means are statistically near to one another in the pre-test (2.53 and 2.76). Thus, the results statistically suggest that the learners in the two groups do not vary significantly from each one concerning their mail writing. In outcomes, the t-value of the pre-test is -0.27, and p is 0.212. Table three shows that the value of t is not significant at p (0.212), which suggests that the two groups are roughly equal concerning their EFL writing competency before the study.

The Learners’ Performance in the Post-test

Table three also shows the means of the experimental group (12.65), which is more than the average score of the control group (2.12). The outcomes after the test demonstrate, that the two groups significantly vary at various highness of 0.000 (p<0.05), this can be accounted for after the lexical approach with the rich input is being adopted, the experimental group’s writing is significantly developed. Whereas the traditional approach with a limited input shows no significant development in refining learners’ writing proficiency of the control group.

Table three also demonstrates the difference between the lexical chunks produced by the experimental group more significant than the difference of those produced by the control group following the eight weeks experiment. The experimental group made a large number of English lexical chunks. The performance of the two groups is significantly varied at the highness of 0.00 (p<0.05). Table three demonstrates that the means of the experimental group on the post-test was 9.89, which is above the test. The experimental group is notable t at the level of p = 0.000. Whereas interestingly, the mean of the control group in the pre-test was 2.53 and 2.12 in the pre-test. The findings suggest
that the performance of the control group has significantly decreased. It can be concluded from Table three that only experimental group performance was significantly enhanced in the post-test.

Turning to the critical assumption of the study is that the participants are unlikely to show significantly comparable levels of writing competency after treatment. After extensive exposure to lexical chunks, the two groups perform considerably variably on the highness of their e-mail writing competence. As is indicated in Table three, the mean deviation among the two groups produces bigger in the post-test, with the \( p \)-value of 0.000<0.05. Considering that other factors are under control, different inputs may be the likely factor to explain the observable divergence. The most plausible justification for the difference is that the rich input of lexical chunks is extensively efficient in advancing EFL learners’ performance in writing. Table three reveals that the experimental group can generate more lexical chunks in the post-test. The findings suggest that mastering lexical chunks effectively supports EFL learners to boost their performance in using grammatical rules and forming sentences correctly. A possible justification for these findings perhaps is that the learners had more opportunities of functioning with lexical chunks in different contexts. For the control group, the lack of improvement was because they did not have access to sufficient input of lexical chunks. They just accessed standard input and did not have access to lexical chunks in various contexts. Consequently, the control group did not show any progress in the post-test. Hence, the difference between the control and experimental group’s mean scores in the post-test was demonstrated to be significant owing to accessing rich input of ready-made lexical chunks.

**TABLE 4. Correlation between the number of lexical chunks and EFL learners’ writing scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of lexical chunks</th>
<th>Writing scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing scores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.745**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.(2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Although Table four reveals that participants in the experimental group have significantly developed their writing competency, the elephant is still in the room. Namely, does development in writing correlate with mastering more lexical chunks? To answer this question, a correlation analysis was carried out. Table four shows the relationship between the number of lexical chunks and the participants' writing scores: a close positive correlation that suggests that the many lexical chunks participants master, the higher rates they may attain in their writing. Namely, there was a robust positive correlation between the number of lexical chunks and the writing scores \( r (17) = .745, p< 0.001 \). The findings suggest that when the number of lexical chunks increases, the writing scores increase, evidence that their language proficiency enhances. Namely, learners with higher lexical chunks are more likely to attain higher scores in writing and vice versa. The findings suggest that lexical chunks have a significant positive impact on learners’ production of the target language.

**Discussion**

The results indicate that learners with higher lexical chunks are more likely to score highly in writing and vice versa. The findings suggest that lexical chunks help in reducing the load and the time of selecting individual words and joining them together according to grammatical rules that may not consistenly be successful. Lexical chunks accelerate the process and refine the quality of learners’
production to be more native-like and enhance fluency and accuracy accordingly. The findings support the lexical approach that highlights extensively introducing lexical chunks. These lexical chunks have a substantial role in improving writing, as Cowie and Howarth (1996) claimed. The results suggest that the lexical approach refines learners’ writing skills. The lexical approach emphasizes that knowledge of implementing lexical chunks is beneficial internalizing the relevant input and linguistic development. Just when learners are aware of the gap between their production and that of native English speakers, will they be able to close the gap. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis—concluding that the rich input of lexical chunks have a significant impact on Arabic EFL learners’ writing levels.

Moreover, the findings support the lexical approach, which highlights the importance of mastering individual lexis and observing them as an entire component held in memory. Learners may learn them as a complete if necessary, instead of arranging them consistent with grammatical rules, which can lessen the anxiety of language coding and save much time and effort for information processing, thus boosting language fluency which supports Lewis (1997) claims. Furthermore, as a blend of forms, meanings, and lessons, the findings suggest that lexical chunks learned as a complete can considerably decrease the difference of non-target-like collocations and advance the exact and authenticity of the target language.

The current study provides further empirical evidence that both groups (i.e., experimental and control) do not master a sufficient number of lexical chunks in the pre-test compared to the production of the native speakers, who remarkably use a large number of lexical chunks (Lewis 1993; Pawley & Syder 1983). The data reveals some traces of the L1 effect in the pre-test, which suggests that the EFL learners are still stuck with some of their L1 representations, although they are all beyond the initial state. They overused a limited vocabulary and showed the tendency to repeat certain transitional words and phrases such as also, but, I think, I believe, rather than producing a wide variety of lexical chunks, such as in addition to, apart from this. The findings suggest that they do not master sufficient lexical chunks. This supports Granger (1998), who claimed that EFL learners produce fewer lexical chunks than native speakers of English. A sensible justification for native speakers’ accuracy and productivity is they rely heavily on much of the exact representations frequently rather than constructing new representations every time they write, as Pawley and Syder (1983) indicated.

Learners frequently look for individual English counterparts of Arabic words and then bond them word-by-word to build an English utterance. Misused lexical chunks were relatively frequent in the pre-test, such as in another word ‘in other words’. Sometimes, the participants could not deliver the meaning clearly and fluently, or their production seemed awkward, unacceptable, or non-native-like even if it is grammatically acceptable. Evidence of non-standard expressions and Chinglish found in the data, such as past weekend ‘last week’ and enter the English department ‘join the English department’. If learners have a good command of lexical chunks, they will not waste time relying heavily on grammatical rules while picking up individual words and combining them. Besides, the output of this process is not always guaranteed. The learners’ insufficient lexical knowledge may be attributed to ambiguous input and inadequate exposure to the target language that does not result in the necessary adjustments to accommodate the target representations. Evidence of logical problem was found in the pre-test.
After treatment, the experimental group produced more lexical chunks than the control group and somewhat overcame the L1 effect, and converged on the relevant properties. Their writing sound more cohesive, understandable, and attractive than the control group. This improvement may be due to their recurrent access to abundant input of the target data that triggered the required adjustments. The target representations emerged gradually, triggered by the ample and rich input. The findings suggest that lexical chunks competency plays a significant role in EFL learners’ proficiency. The fact that the control group shows poor performance with insufficient lexical chunks perhaps accounts for why they do not demonstrate higher ability in English compared to the experimental group with native-like language production that embraces an adequate number of lexical chunks. The findings support Abdulqader (2016) and Abdulqader et al. (2017), who concluded that drawing learners' attention to the lexical chunks in different contexts aid in better performance in EFL writing than the traditional approach of instruction.

During the interview, most of the experimental group said that the e-mail bank helped them enhance their confidence when composing e-mails. The findings show that understanding lexical chunks will help EFL learners improve writing confidence. Mastering lexical chunks may help learners reduce a load of recollection, lowering the effort of learning a foreign language. The pragmatic function associated with lexical chunks may assist EFL learners in acknowledging context, which contributes to EFL writing fluency and reduces response time. These may help EFL learners become more confident and relaxed while composing e-mails, which guarantees effective communication. The results back up Al-Khazaali's (2019) claim that lexical chunks kept as a complete portion and that learners with poor language competence are especially prone to undergo anxiety and lack confidence throughout the writing process. Mastering lexical chunks may help reduce anxiety about writing, which is regarded as the most challenging task.

Furthermore, lexical chunks might help learners eliminate target-like perceptions generated by lexical choice, improving language accuracy and fluency. Learners write more smoothly after extended exposure to the vast collection of lexical chunks, which reduces anxiety during the writing process and enhances their confidence. After eight weeks of intensive exposure to lexical chunks, it is clear that learners' EFL writing skill has significantly improved.

The majority of participants reported during the interview that lexical chunks are not given much attention in English classrooms. Because lexis is ignored, grammatical rules get a lot of attention and rely on semantics correlating Arabic and English as the primary way of learning. The majority of participants reported that they devote a significant amount of time learning grammatical rules and specific lexis, yet their English proficiency has not improved. Individuals with high scores recognized the importance of lexical chunks and, as a result, learned the lexical chunks independently. However, they found it difficult to recollect all lexical fragments independently. Participants with low scores, instead, are unaware of the relevance of lexical chunks.

There is a positive association between EFL learners’ proficiency in mastering lexical chunks and their writing. When learners can master adequate lexical chunks and put them into practice correctly, they are more likely to attain better fluency, higher accuracy, and greater cohesion, consequently delivering native-like performance in language production in writing. Moreover, if EFL learners can put lexical chunks into practice correctly, their motivation can be enlarged, which is
advantageous to their EFL proficiency. The experimental group pointed out that their motivation to write e-mails in English has increased because of the EPB. The findings support the findings of Zhao (2009). They find the EPB a good resource and writing e-mails less painful than before. Thus, integrating lexical chunks into English classrooms can have a massive impact on EFL development.

Learners maintained that it is challenging to match Arabic counterparts of their mother tongue words. And that they often literally translate from Arabic into English word by word. They pointed out that it is challenging to deliver the intended meaning of the message, although they have excessively various thoughts to declare. Both groups claimed that word selection is the trickiest task they encounter when writing in the target language. They consider finding words to deliver the intending meanings a waste of time and effort. Furthermore, they mentioned that they often selected the wrong words that did not match their thoughts.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is a positive correlation between EFL learners’ proficiency with lexical chunks and their production. Once EFL learners master adequate lexical chunks and practice them correctly, they are more likely to accomplish better fluency, enhanced accuracy, and cohesion, producing more target-like representations. Moreover, once EFL learners become proficient with using lexical chunks correctly, their motivation towards mastering the target language can be boosted, which is beneficial in terms of language proficiency. Thus, more exposure to lexical chunks is likely to offer countless benefits for mastering EFL.

The findings suggest that enriched input can boost learners’ knowledge of the relevant lexical chunks, significantly advancing their frequency of producing lexical chunks, and hence contribute to advance their EFL writing competency. Introducing individual words and grammatical rules is not sufficient for native-like production. The results of this investigation give some hints to EFL instruction, particularly writing. Initially, the results suggest that rich input of lexical chunks seems advantageous. Concepts related to introducing the lexical chunks must be changed, and awareness of the position of lexical chunks must be emphasized. EFL learners must be guided to determine familiarity with lexical chunks and habitually encourage learners to put lexical chunks into practice productively in everyday interaction to advance learners’ communicative skills. Also, due to the massive number of lexical chunks, it is not adequate to gather, use and master lexical chunks in artificial contexts such as classrooms. Learners are highly encouraged to practice using dictionaries, relevant corpus, and available online resources to master using lexical chunks daily in authentic and real-life contexts. For better fluency and higher accuracy, Arabic-speaking learners of English are encouraged to pick up and keep written records of the different forms of lexical chunks whenever they listen to native speakers of English, such as listening to the radio, watching television, reading newspapers or magazines, watching native speakers via social media platforms etc.

By combining the roles of lexical chunks, EFL learners can be aware of the importance of lexical chunks. In the classroom setting, lexical chunks must be implemented. For example, while delivering the lexical chunks, EFL learners may be reminded of the value of this form of lexical chunks, will not only signal the direction of the whole context but will also make the context more understandable. Furthermore, to enhance linguistic awareness, learners should be urged not to interpret chunk-by-chunk instead of word-by-word. Moreover, as Lewis (1993) proposed, offering more lexical chunk-related input, including more exercises and games, would aid in increasing language proficiency, improving linguistic appropriateness, and smoothing linguistic output.
The most prominent finding to emerge from this study is that rich, diverse, and more sophisticated comprehensible input of lexical chunks can effectively boost EFL learners’ writing competency. The study strongly supports the claim that adequate intake of lexical chunks accompanied by adequate practicing of using them can enhance the storage of language information. The evidence from this study suggests that the difference in lexical chunks nearly correlates with EFL learners writing competency. The current data highlight the importance of expanding the input of lexical chunks to advance EFL learners’ abilities to master lexical chunks during foreign language development.

Conclusion
The main goal of the current study was to determine whether or not lexical chunks play a significant role in mastering writing among Arabic-speaking learners of English. The most prominent finding from this study is that several lexical chunks nearly and positively correlate with EFL learners' writing results. The findings indicate that lexical chunks can simply enhance EFL learners’ writing competence. The findings suggest the input of lexical chunks seems beneficial to EFL instructions as it supports storing the ready-made lexical constituents in learners’ minds, which profits target-like production. The findings of this study have several essential implications for future practice, particularly for pedagogical purposes. Finally, future research should determine how to better apply the lexical approach to all aspects of language to improve learners' inclusive competence.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests
The author declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

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About the Author
Rashidah Albaqami, Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics, Department of English Language, Turabah University College, Taif University, Saudi Arabia. My research is concerned with comparative aspects of language, from both empirical and theoretical standpoints. I am interested basically in Second Language Acquisition, with a special interest in the L2 development by Arabic speakers of English. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9659-9756

References


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**Appendices**

**Appendix A**

Pre-Test. Writing an e-mail

Instructions:
For this section, you are allowed 30 minutes to write an e-mail in English and send it to r.mohamad@tu.edu.sa. You should write 250 words in response to one of the following topics:

1) Asking for an assignment extension.
2) Appreciation
3) Apologizing

**Appendix B**

Post-Test. Writing an e-mail

Instructions:
For this section, you are allowed 30 minutes to write an e-mail in English and send it to r.mohamad@tu.edu.sa. You should write 250 words in response to one of the following topics:
1) Asking for an assignment extension.
2) Appreciation
3) Apologizing

**Appendix C**

Interview

Questions for the interview (lasts for approximately 10 minutes)
Q1: What issues do you usually encounter in writing e-mail in English?
Q2: Do you think it is essential to have access to some knowledge of lexical expressions (e.g., E-mail phrase bank), and does it have a role in advancing your EFL proficiency in writing?
Q3: Do you think access to such knowledge of lexical expressions lowers your anxiety and increases your motivation and confidence while writing?
Investigating the Importance of Conversational Implicature and Violation of Maxims in Daily Conversations

Osman Rabaab Elmahady Musa  
EFL Center, Khartoum, Sudan

Sarvanan subaiah  
Center for Linguistics, Chennai, India  
Corresponding Author Email: sarvanasubaiah71@gmail.com

Sharifa Bahia Afrin Mohammed  
EFL Center, Khartoum, Sudan

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Abstract

According to linguistic theory, conversational Implicature (CI) is the original intent of the speech expressed by a speaker. The assumption is that both the speaker and the receiver understand and respect the communication rules. In conversation theory, this is the significant component that has been the subject of discussion. This study investigates the importance of CI in various contexts of daily conversations. The focus of this study is to identify the violation of Grice's theory in the conversation. There is a shortcoming in literature to investigate CI in everyday conversations. Moreover, some studies focussed on specific discussions, which led to a literature gap. The study's outcome will assist researchers in exploring new ideas in conversational implicatures. In addition, it reveals the shortcomings of the usage of implicatures. In this study, the researchers analyzed a set of 77 daily conversations. The study showed that context is critical in determining the meaning of a person's thoughts. In addition, the finding suggests that particularized CI are primarily employed in daily conversations.

Keywords: Conversational Implicature, cooperative principles, pragmatic analysis, daily conversations, Grice's maxim

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Introduction

Conversational Implicature (CI) is one of the speaking abilities that require the participation of both communicator and communicator. An implicature is something that a speaker indicates or implies with an utterance, even if it is not explicitly stated in the speech. It is possible to communicate more effectively via the use of implication than it is through the use of explicit language. Pragmatics is a subdiscipline of linguistics that deals with this phenomenon. The notion of conversational implicature may be traced back to the work of Grice (1975), and in particular to his paper "Logic and Conversation," which was presented in 1967 and immediately became immensely influential, despite the fact that it was not published until 1975. CI effects have been one of the significant pragmatic issues (Khairunas, Siauruk, Desi, & Dwi, 2020). It is an important conceptual and methodological problem in semantics. The degree to which the context of the sentence decides what is said is a related topic. To anticipate and understand CI and clarify how they occur and are understood, Grice developed a theory (Diliana, 2019). The core function of this theory is the Cooperative Principle (CP) and related maxims (Abdul-Kareem, 2019; Allan, 2001; Akmal & Yana, 2020). To some degree, Neo-Gricean theories change the concepts of Grice. The relevance theories substitute them with a communicative efficiency theory. The limitations such as effervescent, lack of determinism, collisions cause complexities to the communication. Usually, CI presents properties, including calculability, cancelability, and indeterminacy (Suryadi & Muslim, 2019). These characteristics evaluate whether a putative implication is correctly defined in a way to offer a fail-safe test.

Curiosity includes various ideas people typically have about language and their influence on how they conduct their daily affairs (Milad, 2019; Khairunas et al., 2020). It explores the benefits of creating good language skills, a conscious understanding of how languages function, how people learn and use them (Abdel-Karim, 2020; Amirsheibani, Ghazanfari, Pishghadam, 2020; Diliana, 2019). Language awareness covers the facets of human life (Akmal & Yana, 2020; Yolanda, 2020). Multiple research studies were published in the linguistic field. Levinson (1983) stated that implicature is one of the instances of the linguistic phenomenon. He argues that implicature is an additional meaning that indicates the influential aspect of pragmatics as a linguistic feature. It presents the possible explanation for the utterances. Also, it affects the semantics of a sentence. It should be employed in a proper environment (Levinson, 2000). It reveals that the importance of implicature depends mainly on the consideration of different basic facts about language. Sometimes, the implicature can be meaningless for a specific conversation (Sadock, 1978; Pagin, 2019; Paltridge, 2006). Furthermore, he asserts that implicature is a type of pragmatic inference related to some general principles of cooperative conversation (Song, 2010). It goes above and beyond what is expressed explicitly in the process of interpretation.

An utterance is supported by a implication (Yule, 1996). A word or phrase might express more than what is uttered. In other words, even if the speaker does not state it clearly, there are specific implicit meanings that the speaker intends to convey. Allan (2001) agrees that CI is the primary method for reducing the number of vocabulary speakers use. Non-truth functional components allow the addressee to infer the speaker's opinions and intentions based on the utterance's non-truth-functional elements. According to Chen (2020), speaker communication is
significantly more complex than a speaker's explicitly communicated. The linguistic meaning of a discussion profoundly influences the message transmitted and perceived.

The study aims to identify the impact of CI in daily conversations. In addition, it classifies everyday conversations into Generalized Conversation Implicatures (GCI), Particularized Conversation Implicatures (PCI), and Scalar Implicature (SI). Furthermore, the proposed study will attempt to integrate the conversations from academic and internet sources.

The goal of this research is to provide both theoretical and practical insights. For the sake of academic advancement, it is anticipated that the findings of this study will widen pragmatics analysis to include more CI and develop new hypotheses that will enhance the current theory. Researchers believe that the proposed research expands knowledge on pragmatics and CI. Moreover, the outcome will be helpful for the readers to extend their research area in pragmatics study. This study's findings are expected to make a difference in the real world.

Additionally, it can serve as a resource for future academics interested in evaluating conversational implicature. Meanwhile, this work may help linguists, teachers, and students. The research questions of the proposed study are as follows:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): Why CI is applied in the conversation?
Research Question 2 (RQ2): How to classify the frequently used implicates in conversations?

The organization of this study is as follows: The first section addresses the role of CI in expressing emotions and the objective of the research. The second section provides information about the existing literature and theoretical background of Pragmatics and CI. The third and fourth section covers the materials and methods used in the research. The fifth section highlights the outcome of the study. Finally, the investigation is concluded with its future perspectives.

Review of Literature

Martini (2018) focused on the everyday conversational Implicature of Indonesian students of the English Education Department of the University of Kuningan. Authors stated that individuals regularly use utterances that are not informative or don't convey enough or too much information. Observation and recording were the primary data collection methods in this qualitative study. These findings show that around 40 percent of the 80 utterances in this study belong to generic conversational implicature, while the other 60% belong to particularized conversational implicature.

Ali (2019) presented a study in which CI and Grice theory were applied to Arabic dialogue. After translating it from Arabic to English, the author used Grice's CP to analyze the discussion. On the one hand, semantics is concerned with the meaning of a word or phrase. On the other hand, practical ideas are concerned with how a term or word is used in a sentence. The similarities and contrasts between semantics and pragmatics were examined by the author. Researchers found that Arabic speakers disregarded the cooperative principle and instead used CI in their discourse.
Diliana (2019) proposed CI research to examine Brebesinese friends' communication. The author discussed the type of CI and the proportion of its use in conversation. Both GCI and PCI are often used in the discussion. As a result, the proportion of PCI is more significant than that of the GCI. According to the findings, PCI accounted for 72.2% of the total, while GCI accounted for 27.7%. As a result, only a small number of people participated in the study. As a result, the percentage of GCI and PCI may vary with more participants.

Elizabeth & Radhika (2020) presented a study on an annotated CI dataset. It is from the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and IMDb (Internet Movie Script Database) that these discussions have been taken from. It was suggested by them that a speaker may avoid an implicature by explicitly stating a discussion. They also divided the CI into SI, GCI, and PCI categories. Researchers may now use the dataset for even more linguistic investigations, thanks to the study's findings.

Ali (2020) proposed a study to investigate CI in English communications. In this study, the author focused on the words used in a discussion to understand better how people communicate. The message was analyzed using a descriptive-pragmatic technique. Cooperative principles and their many forms were examined in detail by the writer. The discussions were primarily gathered via the use of the Internet and YOUTUBE. An essential finding of this research is that functional terms are necessary for CI generation.

Li (2021) investigated the usefulness of implementing the Conversational Implicature Theory in pragmatics to advise English majors on enhancing their listening comprehension capacity. It attempts to identify an effective teaching technique for conversational implicature. The theory of conversational implicature is examined in this paper. The results revealed that the experimental class's capacity to infer conversational implicature is clearly superior to that of the control class, increasing students' listening comprehension.

Astria & Fitrawati (2021) conducted descriptive, qualitative research that focuses on analyzing a single word. The results reveal two forms of Conversational Implicature: Generalized and Particularized Implicature, with the latter dominating. This style is more prevalent in everyday discourse since it is more effective. It is not necessary to have prior knowledge to follow the meaning of what is being said in everyday conversation. Quantity, quality, relationship, and manner are only a few of the many sorts of Maxims examined in this study. In daily communication, the speaker and the listener both need to trust their information.

According to the findings of this study (Simaremare, Nainggolan, & Herman 2021), the Mulan movie has 29 utterances that reveal the consequences of speech in the film. Of the total, 17 take part in the conversation on a broad scale (59%), while the other 12 are more focused. It was included in the overall number of participants (41 % ). Maximum character flouting violations in Mulan (2020) was discovered to be 17 data or 58%, more significant than the top violations except for the maximum manner violations of 9 data or 32%. Besides suspending a limit and violating an ultimate, the characters' dialogue in the movie does not have these other non-observances.
Grice, Searle, and Austin (1989) are the initial supporters of Pragmatics. They have either published a book or essay which has had a significant impact on the Pragmatics research, contributing to the growth of the field of study in linguistics in one sense or another. Many linguists and critics objected to the area rather than linguistics as a branch of philosophy because its proponents and originators are more philosophers than linguists, debating and implementing it from a metaphysical, logical rather than linguistic standpoint. Grice's theory of conversational implicatures (Na'mah & Sugirin, 2019; Yolanda, 2020) is one of the most well-known theories, in which Grice attempts to explain how the Person moves from what is said, or the word from the context, to the implied meaning (Na'mah & Sugirin, 2019; Yolanda, 2020).

Non-literal meaning is a term that includes many others, such as entailments, expectations, and consequences. Among them, special attention among pragmatists has been paid to the implications. According to Grice (1975), social rules play a significant role in implications to define the features of the ideal communicative exchange and decide the expectations of reasonable speakers about the other speakers' linguistic actions. Figure one illustrates the form of pragmatics and implicatures. Figure two outlines the type of CI in conversations.

![Figure 1. Pragmatics and Implicatures](image-url)
Pragmatics illustrates speakers' particular events, deliberate actions at times, and locations, generally with expression. Typically, logic and semantics deal with the characteristics of terms of the token or their usage, nor do they, as we shall say, differ with the specific feature of their utterance to utterance.

Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) are inferences that apply to the non-explicit interpretation that exists by default in any type of situation (Grice, 1975). It is the knowledge in a prototype fashion as long as no specific evidence rejects or contradicts it. Particularized conversational implications (PCI), on the other hand, is intimately connected with specific or specific situations and is sometimes referred to as ad-hoc implicature. The efficiency of these inferences is tied to knowledge of certain contextual facts (Abdel-Karim, 2020; Akmal & Yana, 2020). For instance, if someone asked Person A, "are you going to visit person B tonight," and person A responded, "I have to take care of my kids," it indicates that they cannot visit person B. In contrast to traditional consequences, PCI and GCI have unique characteristics. The scalar implicature (SI) is centred on linguistic terms such as some or must, etc. Such phrases indicate an information-organized scale (Akmal & Yana, 2020; Abdul-Kareem, 2019; Ali, 2020). The scales such as <Must/may>, <Many/some/all>, <Often/always/sometimes>, etc(Chen, 2020). It centred between the utterance and its implication (Grice, 1975). For instance, "Some employees did not get their payment", in this utterance, the term "some" implicates that only a few employees received their payment, not all of them, which generates the SI.

**Properties of Conversational Implicature**

CI contains unique properties. The following part expresess the properties of CI.

i. CP: It indicates that the structure of CI depends on CP. For context,

   a. Person A has a car. b. Person A has one or more cars.
Here, (a) conversationally implicates (b). The hearer assumes that (a) is following the conversational maxims. In particular, the maxim of a quantity indicates that the speaker should be informative enough. In addition, according to the maxim of quality, the hearer understands the speaker. Therefore, the hearer will deduce that the speaker has the correct information.

ii. Cancellable: For instance, I got some compliments from Person A - however, I think I have covered most of the compliments.

In the above statement, the term "some" indicates that the speaker did not get all of Person A's compliments.

iii. Nondetachable: Expressions with the same linguistic meaning lead to similar implicatures relative to a fixed context. For instance,

a. Can you write a letter for me?  
b. Please, write a letter for me.

The above example shows that the two different linguistic expressions convey a similar meaning.

Grice theory attempts to explain that how language is used to enhance efficiency in communication. The new generation of Gricean theorists has advanced the idea. In contrast, Krifka (2008) questioned Gricean explanations and created other theoretical models of meaning, including relevance theory. Alternatives are essential in arranging a clause's content, mainly when focusing on and contrastively presenting themes. Historically, alternative semantics views of focus have been highly influential in explaining linguistic phenomena and the description of language processing (Krifka, 2008).

According to Krifka (2008), the availability of various interpretations for linguistic phrases is indicated by the term "focus". A focus interpretation is anaphoric in that the language context must offer alternatives that can be easily accommodated in the context. Consider Person A chooses the biscuits, in which the capital denotes the importance of the word person A, i.e. the presence of a strong pitch accent. Since English uses prosodic prominence on a syllable within a focus expression to indicate focus, the subject of this sentence is "person A." Our statement assumes that "person A" is part of a larger, non-singular set of possible answers, such as "person A, person B," which may be inferred from the surrounding context. When we say something like, "person B chooses the biscuits," people usually interpret it to suggest incorrect alternative emphasis. Similar to scalar implicature, this excludes all possibilities that are not directly related to the focus. A clause's information structure relies on the usage of alternatives, particularly in emphasis and contrastive themes. When it comes to explaining linguistic phenomena, the alternative semantics approach of focus has been reasonably practical. There are many possible interpretations of a language statement, and concentration implies the presence of these options. Focus interpretation is anaphoric in the sense that the language context must present alternatives, or they must be easily accommodated from the context in which they are said.
Analysis of conversation covers two or more speakers. For instance, look, gesture, body orientation, and combinations are also considered as an utterance. One of Grice's core ideas is to guarantee that communication is a cooperative endeavour. Grice defines such values as the Cooperative Principle. As per the maxim of quality, one cannot utter something without proper proof or evidence. A speaker should present a significant amount of knowledge and not more than the requirement. According to the maxim of relevance, only a speaker should convey only relevant information. Lastly, the maxim of manner educates speakers to express orderly. To decipher an intention to communicate with a speaker, one draws knowledge on the speakers' state of mind, on the premise that they followed Grice's Maxim.

The literature review reveals a research gap in the existing studies. On the one hand, most studies are based on movie conversations. On the other hand, there is a shortcoming in the literature. The current studies focus on the content rather than the context. For instance, movies are based on a specific theme, and most conversations are dependent on the context. Also, there are a few sets of studies that considered the CP. Thus, there is a demand for a survey to investigate CI and CP in daily conversations.

Materials
Researchers utilized a set of sources for collecting conversations. Initially, they recorded the conversations among students. Most students communicate in the Arabic language. Therefore, researchers translated the Arabic and Tamil conversations into English and stored them into a dataset. A total number of 20 conversations were collected from the students' conversations. Also, a dataset of George & Jasmi (2020) is employed and gathered a sum of 45 conversations. Even though the dataset is large, researchers selected the frequently used daily discussions. In addition, the Internet source is employed in order to increase the number of conversations. During this process, a number of 18 conversations were collected. Finally, a total of 83 conversations were collected. In addition, researchers requested a linguistic specialist to review the 83 conversations. After the review process, a total of 77 conversations were stored in the dataset.

Methods
Researchers adopted a qualitative approach for analyzing the conversations. Two phases of analysis were carried out in order to investigate CI and violation of maxims. In the initial phase, each conversation is analyzed manually. Each researcher reviewed both content and context. Figure three outlines the methodology of the research. In order to analyze the conversation, researchers read both context and utterances. Investigation of CI is based on the principles of CI and Grice's theory. Researchers classified the exchanges into GCI, PCI, and SI. For instance, during a conversation, a speaker applies a special meaning and complete information to another speaker, the discussion will be classified into PCI. Similarly, each conversation will be organized into GCI, PCI, and SI.
In the second phase, researchers identify the maxim violation in each conversation using CP. A total of 77 conversations were recorded in the proposed study in order to investigate the violation of maxims. Each talk is analyzed carefully, and utterance violated the maxim will be identified. The process is repeated for exploring the whole set of words.

Results
Pragmatics represents the particular events, deliberate actions of speakers at specific duration, and locations, generally with expression. Typically, logic and semantics deal with terms or their usage characteristics. It depends on the particular context of the conversation. Social rules define the ideal communicative exchange and decide the expectations of reasonable speakers about others linguistic actions. This section outlines the findings of the study.

Classification of Conversational Implicature
Researchers classified the CI into PCI, GCI, and SI in this study. Moreover, CP is applied to investigate the violation of Grice's maxim in the conversations.

Particularized Conversational Implicatures
PCI is analyzed with reference to detailed background information. It requires an inference for each utterance. Some responses may deviate from relevance, as illustrated in the following table one.

Table 1. Analysis outcome - PCI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person A: Did you enjoy the movie?</td>
<td>Person B replied that they were not happy with the movie in this situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person B: There's nothing on the movie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person A: Please, take care of the patient</td>
<td>In this local context, Person B understands Person A intention. Thus, Person B replied that he/she would do their best.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person B: I will do my best.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Person A: Did you grill the fish?
Person B: Person C looks happy.
Person B responded that Person C will be happy after seeing the grilled fish in this conversation.

**Generalized Conversational Implicatures**

GCI does not require a specific rule to express the speaker's emotion. Speakers can express their feelings without any special rules. Table two illustrates some examples of GCI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person A: I couldn't see you. Person B: I had been shopping with my kid.</td>
<td>In this example, person A asks Person B a question without any specific time or day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person A: Are you coming to the school? Person B: Well, I will come with person C.</td>
<td>Person B does not want to accompany Person A. Thus, they employ the term &quot;well&quot; and intimate person A about his plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scalar Implicatures**

Scalar implicatures are formed through communicating information by expressing a scale of values. Speakers choose a suitable one from the scales: < excellent, good >, < hot, warm >, < always, often, sometimes >, < must, should, may >, < cold, cool >, < love, like >, < none, not all > and make decision on the basis of informativity and truthfulness. Table three presents the conversation and its implicature using SI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person A: Did you meet Person C? Person B: Person C often visits the shopping mall nearby my house.</td>
<td>In this example, Person B confirms that Person C visits the shopping mall frequently. The term &quot;often&quot; is used to illustrate the situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person A: Do you have a car? Person B: I drive many cars.</td>
<td>Using the term &quot;many&quot;, Person B implicates that they know to drive the car.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cooperative Principles and Implicature**

The foundation of a good conversation is cooperation, which may be seen as an essential aspect of the interaction between language users. The antecedent is the listener's expectation of what the speaker will do. This occurs when a speaker aims to convey more than the literal meaning of their words. As previously said, when individuals communicate with each other, they do it following CP. On the other hand, participants may not always adhere to the maxims above. The speaker may transmit an additional meaning rather than the exact meaning of his remark if he violates a principle. Some instances of maxims are illustrated in the following example.

**Quantity:** The speaker should convey meaningful information during communication. Table four illustrates some examples of violations of quantity maxim.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Person A: Did you meet Person C? Person B: Person C often visits the shopping mall nearby my house.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Person A: What is your major?  
Person B: Applied Linguistics.  
Person B's response is based on the maxim of quantity. They provided sufficient information.

Person A: What are you doing?  
Person B: I have built a new house recently.  
In this example, person B conveys irrelevant information to person B.

**Quality:** The speaker should convey facts and necessary contributions to the conversation. Table five shows some instances of quality maxim.

**Table 5. Analysis outcome - Quality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Person A: Where are you?  
Person B: I am at school. | Here, Person B conveys necessary information to person A. Hence, it follows the maxim of quality. |
| Person A: Where are you?  
Person B: I am at a shopping mall. | In this example, there is a violation of the maxim of quality. Person B conveys a weaker statement to Person A. |

**Relevance:** The speaker should convey relevant information through their utterance. Table six illustrates the instances of relevance maxim.

**Table 6. Analysis outcome - Relevance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Person A: Did you get the results?  
Person B: Yes, I got it on time. | Person B followed the maxim of relevance and conveyed relevant information to Person B. |
| Person A: Did you get the results?  
Person B: Your voice is good. | Here, person B violates the maxim of relevance. They did not provide the necessary information to Person A. |

**Manner:** The speaker should not provide obscurity and ambiguity in the conversation. Table seven shows the instances of the manner maxim.

**Table 7. Analysis outcome - Manner**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Person A: How old are you?  
Person B: I am 46 years old. | Person B conveyed a clear message to Person A. They did not convey any ambiguity in the statement. |
| Person A: How old are you?  
Person B: I am still working. | In this example, Person B caused ambiguity in their statement. Hence, the maxim of manner is violated. |

Researchers classified the conversations and found 34 PCI, 26 GCI, and 17 SI, respectively. In addition, 40 conversations were violated by the CP. In particular, 14 utterances were violated the maxim of quantity, whereas 12 utterances were violated the maxim of quality. Furthermore, 13 utterances have violated both maxims of relevance and manner.
Discussion

Researchers presented a solution for RQ1 by investigating the daily conversations. They found that context plays a crucial role in applying CI in discussions. According to Martini (2018), individuals routinely use non-informative utterances that don't convey enough or too much information. The essential data gathering methods in this qualitative study were observation and recording. On the one hand, according to Ali (2019), semantics focuses on the precise meaning of a given word or phrase. On the other hand, pragmatic notions are concerned with how a term or word is utilized in a phrase. He discovered that Arabic speakers ignored the cooperative principle in their speech and instead employed CI. The outcome of the proposed confirms the findings of (Martini 2018; Ali, 2019).

Moreover, GCI and PCI are often employed in the conversation, according to Diliana (2019). According to the data, PCI accounted for 72.2% of the total, while GCI accounted for 27.7%. Likewise, the present study's findings also obtained a more significant number of PCI rather than GCI and SI.

The findings of Elizabeth & Radhika (2020) stated that a speaker could prevent an implicature by saying a discussion directly. They also classified the CI into three categories: SI, GCI, and PCI. It also supports RQ1.

In addition, the findings of RQ2 is supported by studies (Ali, 2020; Li, 2021; Astria & Fitrawati, 2021). Ali (2020) focused on the words that are used in a debate. A descriptive-pragmatic technique was used to analyze the message. The findings indicated that the use of functional terms is critical for creating CI. According to Li (2021), the experimental class's ability to infer CI is better than the control classes, which can help students improve their listening comprehension. Astria & Fitrawati (2021) emphasized that PCI dominates GCI and SI. Both the speaker and the listener must trust the information they are getting in regular communication.

In contrast to the findings of RQ2, the breach of maxims in the Mulan film was presented by Simaremare et al. (2021). They demonstrated that the maxim of manner was severely breached. However, the findings of the proposed study are highly dependent on the daily conversations, which differs from the movie.

Conclusion

The study intends to investigate the importance of conversational implicatures in daily conversations. In addition, it identifies how speakers violate the cooperative principle. Consequently, several everyday conversational implicatures in a variety of settings were examined. Seventy-seven conversations were recorded from multiple sources such as the existing dataset, students' discussions, and Internet sources. A large number of particularized conversational implicatures is used in daily conversation compared to generalized and scalar implicatures. The study's findings reveal that context is the most crucial factor in generating implicatures. Context-dependent conversational implicatures were the most common type of implicature in categorizing implicatures. Scalar implicatures are also reliant on the context to some extent. It was found that the conversational implicatures are, in most cases, context-dependent in the examination into the violation of the Grice maxims. Because implicates enable language users
to interact collaboratively, scholars emphasize the importance of this aspect of communication. This study's conclusions are also based on the discussions gathered from the data sources.

About the Authors:
Osman Rabaab Elmahady Musa has completed her Ph.D. in English language. Presently, she is working as a managing director at EFL Center, Sudan. She is the member of many English forums and councils. She has presented lectures in many workshops. She published research articles in reputed journals. Her research areas are Educational psychology and social studies. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5179-112X

Saravanan Subbaiah has completed his post doctorate in English. Presently, he is the CEO of EFL center, India. He organized many workshops and chaired many conferences. He published research articles in reputed journals. His research areas are Linguistics and Educational technologies. ORCID : https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7260-1388

Sharifa Bahia Afrin Mohammed is working as a lecturer in EFL center, Sudan. Her research interests are pragamatics, Educational Technology, E-learning, and application in quality management in course designing and course delivery. she has many presented talks in numerous workshops. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7930-0756

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Deception Strategies in the Discourse of American Think Tanks: An Argumentative-Pragmatic Analysis

Ali Al-juboori
Department of English, College of Languages
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq
Corresponding Author: ali.hamza501@gmail.com

Sabah S. Mustafa
Department of English, College of Languages
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract
Deception is a misrepresentation of reality that attracted many researchers examining it from various perspectives. However, no due attention has been given to the discursive deception strategies in the work of think tanks. This study aims at exposing the deception strategies deployed in the conservative American think tanks' discourse which concern itself with the (re)production of socio-political realities. The study holds the significance of the detection and explication of argumentative and pragmatic discursive deception strategies which impose ideological hegemony and socio-political polarization of the positively presented Self against the negatively presented Other. This study attempts to answer a twofold question: what are the discursive deception strategies involved in the work of think tanks, and why/how these strategies are applied? To this end, eight political texts from three think tanks were analyzed adopting an eclectic model based on van Dijk (2000) and Yule (1996). The analyzed data mainly focuses on four political themes namely (1) terrorism in Islam, (2) Russian role in the Middle East, (3) the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, (4) the U.S. policy in the Middle East. The results demonstrate the pervasiveness of discursive deception strategies in the think tanks’ discourse which endeavor to communicate an ideological polarization of a positive presentation of the Self against a negative presentation of the Other and reinforce a hegemony of particular socio-political realities. Findings can be beneficial for students of (critical) discourse analysis, media, communications studies, and English for special purposes.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, deception, ideology, political discourse, think tanks

Introduction

Social or political gains are achieved in a variety of ways. In politics, deception may be realized through discursive deception strategies to fulfill political domination. In the realm of policymaking, language is of pivotal role in laying out the desired policies that may eventually guide the performance of governments. Of great, and indeed inevitable, importance to some policymakers is the act of deception as it allows them more freedom to exploit the social and political resources. We attempt in this study to tackle the deception strategies utilized in the discourse of think tanks where these institutions may well be considered a vast manifestation of political discourse in which deception is strategically practiced. Think tanks are public and private research institutions that rely on roughly academic procedures to make up policy analyses to help policymakers inform their policies (McGann, 2019). While most of the work of think tanks passes unchallenged (Wiarda 2010), advocacy think tanks (ATTs) are a prevalent type of think tanks that promotes and is established based on market conservative ideologies. Weaver (1989) points out that ATTs work towards partisan policy-making that is ideologically motivated while heavily investing in marketing their products to practice a strong influence over policy debates. Plehwe (2015) mentions that critical analyses of think tanks must tackle the validity of the independent and objective ‘scientific’ public image since most think tanks provide no financial and funding transparency. One example about the political influence of an ATT is the way Heritage Foundation and Cato Institute mobilized mainstream media in the U.S. and the very policy of the White House towards the alleged development of Iraq to weapons of mass destruction (Paolucci, 2009). We have set the goal of this study to be the exploration and exposition of pragmatic and argumentative ideological strategies of deception deployed in the work of ATTs. For this purpose, we developed an eclectic CDA model to analyze eight texts from the work of three U.S.-based think tanks that are well-known of following a conservative political orientation. The analysis focuses on the ideological polarization of a positive presentation of the Self against a negative presentation of the Other. Analyses also concentrate on the way think tanks reinforce a hegemony of particular (i.e., preferred) socio-political realities. With that said, we seek to answer are:

1- What is the extension to which argumentative and pragmatic deception strategies are used in the conservative think tanks’ discourse to polarize the positive Us against the negative them?
2- What are the contextual interpretations that explicate why and how these strategies are applied to impose an ideological hegemony?

Literature Review

Deception and Critical Discourse Analysis

Deception is essentially communicative when people are targeted to embrace a particular set of truths as it arises when falsified statements are made to manipulate the audiences' minds where falsity is key to defining deception (Galasinski, 2000). One facet of the pragmatics of H. P. Grice is seen as a practical attempt that may be the intrinsic definition of deception, i.e., Grice’s four maxims of Relation, Quality, Manner, and Quantity, and inform all the factors that regularize how people mean and communicate which immediately makes deception the intention to deviate from these maxims and violate the cooperative principle (Oswald, Didier, & Saussure, 2016). The deceiver eventually drives at having his/her (political) adversaries construe a preferred version of
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a particular reality which consequently pushes forward the deceived to support the deceivers’ agenda (Macdonald, 2007). Challenging deception is then at the heart of achieving social equality. To this end, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is well-positioned to tackle the social and political equalities since a naturally occurring text can be, and should be, viewed as a communicative vehicle through which deception is manufactured, disseminated, and inculcated. This is so due to ideological and attitudinal prejudices pushing the linguistic behavior of writers and speakers to manifest their socio-political relations. This further confirms the inseparability of linguistic meaning and ideology which necessarily makes any linguistic analysis an influential instrument in studying the ways ideology mediates power (Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979). Therefore, (critical) discourse analysts carry the burden of challenging dominant social and political realities to lessen the suffering of people (Fairclough, 2012).

According to van Dijk (2015), CDA is an emancipatory and interdisciplinary analytical apparatus used to analyze spoken and written discourses for revealing and criticizing the enactment, (re)production, and legitimation of power abuse and inequality realized as various generic discourses. The core objective of CDA is “to examine critically the relationship between language, ideology, power and social structure, for example, social inequality as it is constructed, re-produced, legitimized, and resisted in language” (Catalano & Waugh, 2020, p. 1). To achieve this, CDA breaks down naturalized discourses by analyzing the dynamics between society and discourse, i.e., the way macropolitical ideology-informed institutions/actors manifest themselves in everyday textual micropolitics that in turn makes up polarized and biased power relations (Luke, 2002). The main tenet of CDA “draws heavily on social theories and seeks to develop a critically contextualized approach to linguistics which identifies issues of ideology, power, and inequality” (Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018, p. 1).

While it has such a “strong interest in power and ideology, CDA naturally shares ground with politics and political actors” (Filardo-Ilamas & Boyd, 2018, p. 315).

**Political Deception**

The ultimate goal of a deceptive political discourse is to make adversaries perceive reality in a particular way which helps the deceiver persuade the deceived to do something that is in the interest of the former (Macdonald, 2007). Political deception sees the light when politicians put together convincing cover stories provided that audiences have no access to accurate information (Godson & Wirtz, 2010). Novel, and/or alternate meanings are created when political actors bend the meanings of words. According to Dunmire (2012), political meaning-making is actualized at two levels (a) first, actional ideas, and (b) second, a descriptive linguistic content that materializes those ideas. A socio-political reality may well be the direct and pure product of the politically wrought language in everyday political happenings (Edelman 1988, as cited in Dunmire, 2012). Indeed, Edelman assumes that politics is known to be a direct reflection of the language used to realize contextual political events. Politics can manifest itself in so many different ways, reproduce particular realities and attain undisclosed goals. The outcome, Teubert (2010) explains, is a reality that is discursively manufactured and one that has more public acceptability in a particular time and place. When new political meanings are produced, they are the result of how a nonentity is rendered as an existent meaningful entity, and how various meanings arise because of the many ways by which one entity is described (Chilton, 2004).
Previous Studies

El-Zawawy (2017) explored political lying in electoral speeches given by the then-presidential candidates Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump. He novel linguistic analytical model was based on criteria-based content analysis. Al-Zawawy concluded that such models lack context-sensitivity and are therefore limited in determining whether a discourse is deceptive or non-deceptive. Olajimbiti (2019) surveyed the political deception in 250 sampled political posts on Facebook out of which 50 posts are selected as the most politically deceptive at the time of the Nigerian 2019 general elections. The posts were found to achieve other-criticism, positive self-presentation, and mobilized the public, yet they fell short of addressing the ideology-laden motivations according to which politicians (re)act.

In a more recent study, Ricketts (2021) examined the way politicians draw on deception strategies on the platforms of social media. He utilized machine learning and a model of natural language processing to deal with texts from politicians’ accounts on social media to explain the way they downplay their publicly perceived wealth during the time of elections. The study concluded that rich politicians attempt to belittle their wealth while their poorer counterparts attempt to magnify it. Although analytical accuracy is addressed when using natural language processing to uncover deception, this study provided no contextual explications of the texts analyzed as to what ideological interpretation is behind the minimization or exaggeration of perceived wealth at the time of elections.

Mattes, Popova, and Evans (2021) investigated the way voters perceive deception when watching videos of politicians’ speeches. Compared to those of non-verbal nature, they found that the level of delineation of verbally produced indications is far better in aiding voters to identify dishonest politicians. However, Mattes et al. (2021) offer no discursive (textual) evidence, and judgment is left to voters whose anecdotal, relative, and personal perception of socio-political realities may well be of great discrepancy. Results even take a gender bias where females politicians are judged to be more honest.

Chadwick and Stanyer (2022) presented deception as a concept that can collectively explain how we disinform, misinform, and misperceive. Their model is the work of various social disciplines establishing a connection across the information, intentions, attitudes, and behaviors of the actors in terms of “media-systemic distortions in information supply; the relational interactions that both produce and activate cognitive biases; and the attributes, strategies, and techniques of deceptive entities” (p. 1). However, they admit that their model of analysis pays no attention to delineating the influence of this multi-layered deceptive content.

These studies have attempted to detect and explain the (linguistic) nature of deception yet a gap can be identified in terms of (1) the lack of a contextual discursive interpretation of the deception strategies employed, and (2) these studies refrain from addressing the ideological premises embedded in producing a deceptive content. The current study seeks to bridge this gap as it explores the discursive deception strategies at the argumentative as well as pragmatic levels. It attempts to present a more comprehensive and contextualized detection of the way deception is
produced and put to use in the institutions of think tanks with a critical interpretation as to why such content is socio-politically harmful.

**Methods**

This study develops an eclectic analytical model based on some of the discursive tools van Dijk’s (2000) Ideology and Discourse offer, and also on Yule’s (1996) Pragmatics. The main critical orientation is van Dijk’s ‘ideological square’ of the (1) emphasis on our good qualities while covering up our good ones, and (2) emphasis on their bad qualities while covering up our bad ones (e.g. van Dijk, 2006). To satisfy the qualitative analysis, the deployment of discursive deception strategies is explored at the argumentative and pragmatic levels while the quantitative analysis will cover the frequency of the detected discursive deception strategies.

**Argumentative level:** the argumentative encounters attempt to make one’s standpoint more palatable, conceivable, and plausible by developing arguments that appear to back up a point of view which then leads to specific conclusive remarks (van Dijk, 2000). This may develop false conditional or logical relational events (i.e., through fallacies), or through providing examples and illustrations. *Fallacies*, according to van Eemeren, Garssen, and Meuffels (2009), are argumentative strategies developed with flawed premises which in turn give rise to groundless or false arguments. Fallacies arise when the relational and logical connection between premises and conclusions is manipulated in a particular argument (van Dijk). To set up the premises for substantiating a particular policy, politicians may present or cite premises in a vague manner (van Dijk). *Exemplification* is another argumentative strategy that offers one or more detailed examples or illustrations to make one or more propositions powerful enough to be imagined and memorized. The strategy of Examples also polarizes an 'Us' (good-doers) versus 'Them' (bad doers) ideological equation (van Dijk, 2000).

**Pragmatic level:** pragmatic strategies account for the way writers implicitly communicate more than what is written (Yule, 1996). *Presuppositions* are inferences manifested as grammatical structures based on the immediate forms of sentences’ constructions which are heavily context-dependent (Levinson, 1983). Three types are prevalent in the ATT discourse, namely existential, factive, and non-factive. *Existential Presuppositions* subconsciously stimulate the existence of certain entities and states of affairs by constructing a definite or indefinite noun phrase to promote the taken-for-granted existence of that entity or state of affairs (Yule, 1996). *Factive presuppositions* are triggered when verbs such as ‘know’, ‘regret’, ‘acknowledge’, ‘realize’, ‘report’, ‘be’ + (aware of, odd, glad, happy, sad, etc.) are used to load presupposed information (Yule, 1996). *Implicature* is another pragmatic strategy to encode more than what is said in a shared context. *Fabrication* in politics is the non-adherence to or non-observation of the maxim of Quality to cause the audiences to embrace a false proposition that explicitly lacks adequate textual and/or contextual evidence which renders these statements unsupported (May, 2001). *Equivocation* is a strategy to make vague, loose, or hedged statements to mislead the audiences (Al-Hindawi & Al-Aadili, 2017). This is done through violating the maxim of Manner in Grice’s terms, i.e., providing equivocal propositions, and also through floating the maxim of Quantity, i.e., providing either less or more than the required information (Yule, 1996). *Speech Acts* is the pragmatic dimension within which people do and perform various practices using words to communicate. Political discourse uses different types of speech acts such as those of
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representatives (Yule, 1996). Representative speech acts present assertions, conclusions, or descriptions to convey the speakers' belief toward a particular state of affairs which may receive a performative interpretation such as ‘I hereby assert that X is the case’ (Yule, 1996).

**Data Description**

Eight written texts are selected for analysis. The original writing language of the texts is American English, they cover the period of 2012 to 2020, they vary in their number of words, and they are obtained from the internet websites of the respective ATTs. To qualify as analytical materials, texts must be (a) a written text as opposed to T.V. or radio programs, (b) is the special work of one of the respective ATTs, and (c) reflective of one of the political themes of (1) the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, (2) Islamic terrorism, (3) the U.S. policy in the Middle East, and (4) the Russian role in the Middle East. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is analyzed in the work of the think tank of the Heritage Foundation. The think tank of the Hoover Institute is selected to reflect the theme of terrorism in Islam. The Russian Role in the Middle East is studies in the work of The Brookings Institution. Finally, and The Washington Institute is of good reflection to the U.S. policy in the Middle East. The corpus of texts is illustrated in the following tables.

**Table 1. The corpus of analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Theme</th>
<th>No. of texts</th>
<th>N. of words</th>
<th>Publication year</th>
<th>Text type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism in Islam</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,089</td>
<td>2016, 2016</td>
<td>Article, research brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Russian role in the Mid. East</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,161</td>
<td>2017, 2016</td>
<td>Policy report, testimony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Israeli-Palestinian conflict</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,434</td>
<td>2015, 2020</td>
<td>Issue brief, policy commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The U.S. policies in the Middle East</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,987</td>
<td>2017, 2012</td>
<td>Policy analysis, policy analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14,671</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis**

The quantitative frequency of the deceptive strategies in think tanks is explained through the statistics below. Yet, the numbers provided are not meant to constitute analytical comparisons among these strategies since this task is beyond the scope of this study. A moderate-to-high frequency of deceptive strategies is detected in the eight texts analyzed as shown in Table (1 and Table 2.

**Table 2. Distribution of deception strategies per political theme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deception strategies</th>
<th>Terrorism in Islam</th>
<th>The Russian Role in the Middle East</th>
<th>The Israeli-Palestinians Conflict</th>
<th>The U.S. Policy in the Middle East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Argumentative Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemplification</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallacies</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pragmatic Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicature (Fabrication)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicature (Equivocation)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presupposition (Existential)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presupposition (Factive)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech acts (Representative)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the argumentative level, the *exemplification* is the most applied strategy in realizing terrorism in Islam while *fallacies* is the most frequent of the strategy deployed in the reproduction of the Russian role in the Middle East.

**Figure 1. Argumentative deception strategies**

At the pragmatic level, the political theme of the Russian role in the Middle East received the most used strategy of *fabrications*, while *equivocation* is found to mostly applied in the political themes of the Russian role in the Middle East as well as the U.S. policy in the Middle East. The highest frequency of *existential presuppositions* is observed in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict whereas the theme of Russian role in the Middle East harbors the maximum number of factive and non-factive presuppositions. Finally, the strategy of representative speech acts is most pervasive in the re-introduction of the Israeli-Palestinians conflict. Below is an illustration of the deployed frequencies of the detected deception strategies of the political themes analyzed.

**Figure 2. Pragmatic deception strategies**

Deception Strategies: Argumentative Level

Exemplification
One panelist noted that the Soviet Union ran into a similar problem. The moment stability arrives in the Middle East, Russia’s role will largely evaporate. (Brookings, 2017)

Brookings (2017) brings to the discussion the Soviet Union's political approach toward the Middle East to add more weight to the negative role that Russia is supposed to have assumed in this region of the world. In order to negatively reproduce this role, Brookings mentions that Russia is but an extension of the same political irrationality which stems from the 'similar problem' that the Soviet Union went through as it also relied on political instability. While Brookings compares Russia’s irrationality to that of the Soviet Union, the strategy of exemplification is employed to convey that Russia feeds on political unrest and that this is not new to the Russians since their ancestors had done the same thing, i.e., creating chaos in the Middle East and benefiting from it politically. In other words, Russia's ineffective and indeed detrimental actions should not surprise anyone. The Russians, Brookings confirms, are politically labeled as a historical failure. They are depicted in an ideological polarization of Us (the West) who bring peace and stability to this region, and Them (the Soviet Union/Russia) who always attempt to keep the unrest in the Middle East.

The kidnapping of U.S. diplomatic personnel in Tehran by a group called “Muslim Students Following the Line of the Imam” sent us a message that we were engaged in the religious war the jihadists warned would come. (Hoover, 2016a)

Hoover's (2016a) strategy of examples deployment strengthens an already existing stereotypical perception of Islam. This strategy instills reproducible memories which may well be reflected in more concrete ideological social practices (van Dijk 2000). Hoover provides a list of seven additional examples to further reinforce a negative perception of the Islamic faith which states in that even students may be recruited to kill innocent diplomats who work within internationally respected political norms. Hoover then goes on to stress the 'message' that should have been construed from this accident: Islam and Muslims are the West's avowed enemy and there exist unequivocal examples of the 'religious war' Muslims now lead. The examples Hoover uses are employed to reduce the religion of Islam to the violence of a few people which Islam and Muslims condemn. This reduction, if solely considered, would dismiss all religions as merely false instructions of violence.

There are few "happily ever afters" in the Middle East; developments that begin with remarkable hope and inspiration rarely end that way. Look at the bloodless revolution in Tunis, the spirit of Tahrir Square, and the amazing courage of the peaceful protestors in Deraa, and then look at where they are today. (The Washington Institute, 2012)

The Middle East is full of political failure and these are just some examples to show that it is a hopeless endeavor (The Washington Institute, 2012). Although the examples may well be truly indicative of political happenings, audiences are invited to compare a before-after scenario with these examples in mind to develop a negative depiction of this region. The examples are exploited to reinforce an already-existed stereotypical perception of the Middle East. No matter how promising these protests and revolutions may appear, The Washington Institute invites its
audiences to 'look' at how things have turned out now, i.e., the middle east has always been this way, a political vacuum that cannot be remedied correctly with democracy.

**Fallacies**

The Palestinians’ “all or nothing” negotiating stance has left them with nothing that gives hope for a better future. Now they are turning their backs on Trump’s vision, despite the potential economic benefits it offers. (The Heritage Foundation, 2020)

This excerpt shows the way one or more premises are provided as reasonably sufficient to welcome a particular argument. The Heritage Foundation (2020) puts forward a supposedly valid political environment of of the recent U.S.-sponsored Abraham Accords between the Israelis and Arabs as the latter being represented by the countries of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. Heritage yet defends more of an economic agreement and reproduces the accords to offer 'economic benefits' deemed to be most Palestinians’ dire need. The fallacious aspect arises when Heritage advances these 'benefits' as they are necessarily valid premises upon which the accords should be accepted by the Palestinians. That is, the fallacy goes, what else do the Palestinians want from Israel when such an agreement is offered to them and they simply refuse it! This argument, and the entire scope of the accords, is immediately groundless once Israel’s settlement program is considered by the Palestinian negotiator. The ideo-political polarization, a typical strategy in Heritage’s treatment of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is thus re-produced successfully. The Palestinians are (re)presented as the ones who reject such an economically valid ‘vision’ while the Israelis’ proactive peace efforts are positively foregrounded.

As much as we would like to wish it so, it is a mistake to think the United States can pivot away from the Middle East and toward Asia, as though we have a fixed amount of bandwidth and the luxury of reapportioning it based on our preference. (The Washington Institute, 2012)

The superficial interpretation of this excerpt is intended to convey that the (conservative) U.S. ‘wish’ they can just leave the Middle East alone. However, The Washington Institute (2012) sets the argument of avoiding such a political and strategic ‘mistake’ since the U.S. has the ‘bandwidth’ and the ‘luxury’ to control the region, i.e., the advantage to re-organize the Middle East in a way that best brings its economy and strategic interests to highest standards. The argument loses validity once a question such as why the U.S. can’t just leave the region if they want is posed. According to the Washington Institute, the answer is: we sincerely want to leave, but we must stay. Taking into account the extremely important oil considerations, among many other pivotal concerns, the U.S. would simply commit political suicide if it were to leave the Middle East. The fallacious argument emerges when the Washington Institute communicates a typical false narrative of the U.S. being compelled to stay in the Middle East for the sake of promoting democracy while it strives to establish its military and political presence in this part of the world and heavily invests to maintain that presence.
George W. Bush pursued a delusional program of democracy promotion in Iraq and Afghanistan, with scant appreciation for the profound cultural differences between Islam and the West. (Hoover, 2016a)

Hoover (2016b) brings to the discussion of terrorism in Islam President's Bush attempt to export a democracy 'program' to Iraq and Afghanistan. But this attempt, Hoover says, has failed miserably as Bush had no real understanding of the real problem: Islam. That such emancipatory attempts are deemed to fail is a patterned argument in the conservative think tanks. The fallacy in this excerpt lies in the product of the premisses of (a) Islamic countries neither accept democracy nor adapt to it and most importantly (b) Islam is never compatible with the democratic West. The first premise gives rise to the first fallacious argument, i.e., Muslims live in corrupt governing Islamic systems yet they still refuse to adapt to the western successful democracies. The second premise facilitates a false argument of a deeper ideological polarization. Hoover (2016a) dissolves Islam into bare cultural practices that stand against the sophisticated American governing system. While the latter offers programmed lessons of doing democracy yet it is Islam that rejects it.

**Deception Strategies at The Pragmatic Level**

**Presupposition: Existential Presuppositions**

At all turns, Putin has shown he is willing to pay a high economic and diplomatic price as he seeks to tip regional balances of power in Europe and the Middle East in Moscow’s favor. (Brookings, 2016)

The Russian role in the Middle East is contingent upon and is a result of President's Putin ignorantly compromising policy targeting the 'regional balance' of the way international powers exist in the Middle East (Brookings, 2016). There are at least two intertwined propositions that are presupposed to exist in this example, (a) a 'high economic' risk, i.e., Putin is indifferent to his own country's economy and foreign political relationships, and (b) a 'high diplomatic' risk, i.e., he is approvingly willing to compromise the Russian economy and its foreign political gains to keep the Russians' military presence in the Middle East. Both of the presupposed propositions are respectively realized by two indefinite phrases of 'a high economic price and 'a high diplomatic price' through which the presupposed information is simply presented as unassailable. While Putin is being presented as a leader who is 'willing to be' a political fanatic to maintain Russia's image as a major superpower, this excerpt reproduces Russia as a country that may destroy its economy and determinedly cut off any foreign political ties only to maintain a military presence in the Middle East.

Contrary to the claims of the Palestinian Authority, this effort is not intended to breathe new life into the peace process. It is a deliberate attempt to: (1) avoid negotiating a peace accord in which the Palestinians would have to recognize Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish state. (The Heritage Foundation, 2015)

Another manifestation of existential presupposition is the use of a possessive structure. The mention of the Israelis' perceived 'right' to exist is of high prevalence in the discourse of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The possessive structure in this example conveys the unacceptable refusal of
the Palestinians to an implicitly assumed right-to-exist of the state of Israel. For lay audiences, this may well appear to be a legitimate right that anyone can and should demand. However, in the discourse of conservative think tanks, the Israelis' existence 'right' is misleadingly recreated. While it is unequivocally true that human beings have such a right, in the discourse of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this particular 'right' to exist is constructed to be perceived as if there is presumptively a party from which such a right is demanded. In other words, it is the Palestinians who must adhere to granting the Israelis what is it originally a natural right to live in a state of their own. Otherwise, the Palestinians will be the ones who willfully prevent that natural justice from taking place. To further clarify the deceptive message, one can say that while the Israelis do have the natural right to exist and live in a Jewish state, yet this does not necessarily entail any assumptions that they are entitled to practice that right on Palestinian soil.

**Factive Presuppositions**

With institutions like the EU, NATO, and with lesser powers, Moscow wants everyone to acknowledge that Russia has the right to block steps that it does not like [in the Middle East]. (Brookings, 2016)

Brookings (2016) re-introduces the Russian role in the Middle East as a fait accompli while they want all international powers to recognize the Russians' inherent right in deciding the future of the Middle East. Brookings applies the strategy of using the verb 'acknowledge', a factive verb that establishes unchallenged facts realized in the claim that immediately follows, i.e., Russia always claims to be entitled to have such a legitimate 'right' to interfere in the affairs of the Middle East, and now it seeks its due recognition from other international superpowers. The factivity employed here reproduces the Russians as a country that has a self-proclaimed political privilege over the other political powers. The Russians hurry to challenge the peacebuilding processes and ‘block’ planned ‘steps’ only because they do not ‘like’ those steps. This portrays Russia as an irrational power that carelessly reacts to sensitive political calculations instead of carefully reconsidering those steps and then requesting modifications or negotiating changes. Without considering the political consequence or other perspectives, Russia halts the structured efforts to stabilize the region.

To maintain this “grievance” narrative, AQ [al-Qaeda] knows that the innate supremacist and violent aspects of sharia—for example ISIS’ destruction of churches and subjugation of “infidel” Christian minorities—need to be curtailed or hidden from the Western world. (Hoover, 2016a)

The alleged Islamic grievance would be compromised if the brutality of the Islamic law (Sharia) is not carefully mitigated or even concealed from the world (Hoover, 2016b). This policy analysis indicates that it is simply a fact that the ‘violent aspects’ of Islamic Sharia command Muslims to ‘subjugate’ all of those who are either not Muslims or oppose the Islamic teachings. This is actualized in the deceptive potential of the factive verb ‘know’, i.e., it is infallibly known that Islamic Sharia permits and even induces extreme violence based on religious affiliations. What makes this example more deceitful is that this ‘fact’ is re-originated to come from the most anti-west Islamist terrorist group of al-Qaeda. According to Hoover, al-Qaeda is well aware of those explicit instructions in the Islamic Sharia that stipulate strict adherence of the aggressive teachings
against ‘Christian minorities’. Hoover argues that to ‘maintain’ the necessary narrative, Muslims need to meticulously suppress the ‘supremacist’ and ‘violent’ nature of their Islamic law, otherwise the true essence of Islam would be flagrantly exposed.

**Implicature: Fabrication**

For the past several years, the PA has sought to use the U.N. and other international organizations to bolster its unilateral statehood claims absent a negotiated peace with Israel. Specifically, the Palestinians applied for and won full membership in the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) over U.S. objections in October 2011. (The Heritage Foundation, 2015)

According to The Heritage Foundation (2015), by winning membership in UNESCO, the Palestinian Authority acted unilaterally and purposely bypassed the only way to resolve the conflict: the so-called two-state solution. Heritage violates the Quality maxim as it provides neither well-founded nor legally justified reasons behind America's refusal of Palestine's full membership in UNESCO. Otherwise, and if it were illegitimate, Palestine's request to join a U.N. organization would have been revoked in the first place. The implicatures on which Heritage bases this argument are twofold. First, the U.S. decides whether or not Palestine acts or can be a recognized state and thus by an extension such U.N. membership requests are only approved by the U.S. provided that they threaten the delegitimization of independence of Israel. Second, it is an ideological polarization that features the U.S. and Israelis as responsibly advocating peace-making on one hand, and, the Palestinians as imprudent who politically exploit the U.N. organizations on the other hand.

And an IS-centric policy is likely self-defeating because Iran's sectarian-driven policies run the risk of alienating Sunnis and recreating the conditions that produced IS in the first place. (The Washington Institute, 2017)

The narrative of Iran's responsibility for creating ISIS is omnipresent in the discourse of conservative think tanks. An American foreign policy to defeat ISIS is not reasonable as long as Iran continues to follow sectarian policies which have created ISIS ‘in the first place’ (The Washington Institute, 2017). In this excerpt, the fabricated implicature confirms that any set policies to defeat ISIS is valueless and will inevitably be ‘self-defeating’. The implicature further conveys that if such a policy were to exist, it may well ignore the very existence of Iran as the original reason behind the formation of ISIS. The Washington Institute therefore conveys that it is of great necessity to fight Iran instead of ISIS since it is the sectarian policies of Iran—no matter whether or not those policies are truly sectarian—that directly paved the way for ISIS to emerge. The Washington Institute violates the Quality maxim, i.e., not offering explicit statements that provide clear evidence about how the Iranians' policies, the claim goes, allegedly pushed 'Sunnis' who felt 'alienated' which ultimately brought ISIS to existence.

**Implicature: Equivocation**

This history is worth reviewing, for all these mistakes, these failures of imagination, these indulgences of naïve idealism, these sacrifices of our security and interests to political
advantage, all comprise the “everything” that 9/11 was supposed to “change.” (Hoover, 2016a)

Hoover (2016a) refers to the informing 'history' of terrorism in Islam, encourages the audiences to comprehend Islam through the 'mistakes', 'failures', 'naïve idealism' of the Democrats politicians who show unaccepted tolerance towards the violent nature of Islam, and reminds its audiences of the 'sacrifices' made meanwhile. While Hoover fails to provide clear statements regarding the nature of that 'history', the maxim of manner is violated by presenting a series of ambiguous phrases such as 'these mistakes', 'these failures', 'these indulgences of naïve idealism', and 'these sacrifices'. This excerpt is another example of double-layered ideological polarization. On the one side, it polarizes Us (the victimized American society) versus Them (the terrorist Muslims). On the other side, it promotes a negative political adversary between Republicans (defenders of the American society) and Demarcates (indifferent to the safety of the Americans).

As was the case during the Cold War, Russia depends on a certain amount of conflict, but it also counts on that conflict not boiling over. (Brookings, 2017)

Brookings (2017) develops a negative perception of Russia's foreign policy in the Middle East while the Russians find the conflict in the Middle East a necessity achieve their political objectives. Brookings suggests two deceptively interrelated political states of affairs in this excerpt. For reintroducing the role of Russia in the Middle East as detrimental, Brookings implicates that the Russians wittingly initiate and control conflict so it remains at a 'certain amount' and not 'boiling over'. However, the claim 'Russia depends on a certain amount of conflict' is vague where a reference to the 'amount' is loosely made as if there exist quantifiable measurements of 'conflict' that enable the Russian to set up a conflict degree to be involved in a 'conflict not boiling' beyond uncontrollable degrees. Therefore, Brookings violates the Manner maxim by providing no explicit statements on how, when, or why Russia would invest in and benefit from the turmoil of the Middle East.

Speech acts: Representatives

Erdogan is weaker, Netanyahu (if reelected) will be stronger, and the Syria crisis has underscored the common dangers Turkey and Israel face. It is time to try. (The Washington Institute, 2017)

The policy analysis from which this excerpt is taken attempts to bring back to life the Turkey-Israel political relations claiming that there exist several common factors that motivate such a relationship from the U.S. perspective (The Washington Institute, 2017). This excerpt shows the strategy of drawing on the representative speech act of ‘Syria crisis has underscored’ for a stronger mediation of the Syrian conflict as the political situation which Turkey and Israel have to confront together. The Washington Institute utilizes the speech act to provide a deceptive description of the premises of this anticipated relation, i.e., the ‘dangers’ Turkey and Israel have in common are far greater than the disagreements they hold against each other. This further informs the performative interpretation of the speech act: this is to establish that Turkey and Israel share a seriously promising political relationship due to the challenges they both face in Syria.
The Palestinians’ “all or nothing” negotiating stance has left them with nothing that gives hope for a better future. (The Heritage Foundation, 2020)

The Heritage Foundation (2020) calls for a more flexible ‘stance’ on the part of the Palestinians since they have not been realistic in their political endeavors with Israel which thus dismisses their ‘hope’ for ‘a better future’. Heritage develops the representative speech act of ‘has left them…’ to bring about the conclusion that it is the Palestinians who raise the negotiations bar so high and hold unnegotiable positions. Also, the conclusive speech act is employed to accentuate the irrationality of the Palestinians and the severe lack of political prudence they should enjoy to secure a more prosperous future. The performative interpretation encodes a polarizing facet: this is to conclude that the Palestinians are not realistic in their demands and hereby have no hope to fulfill their future, while the Israelis are more serious to have fruitful negotiations and are indeed offering peace agreements.

All Sunni Islamic jihadi groups—Boko Haram, ISIS, Talibab, al-Shabaab, al-Qaeda, even Hamas—share the same motivations based on a literal and orthodox reading of Islamic history and doctrine. (Hoover, 2016a)

According to Hoover (2016a), all the 'Sunni jihadi' groups have in common the same theological foundation: the 'history and doctrine' of the Islamic faith. That violence and terrorism are the pure inheritance of the Islamic teachings are reinforced through the representative speech act that all of these violent groups 'share the same motivation'. That is, this speech act is deployed to construct a deceptive assertion to convey that no matter where these groups are, they all stem from what ‘Islamic history and doctrine’ have always taught Muslims: the commitment to the religious bloodshed of jihad against other religions and minorities.

Discussion

The analyses in this study has been an attempt to bridge the gap identified in the previous work in the realm of political deception. The above-mentioned studies failed to pay attention to the social and political contextual interpretations and consequently reflect no due consideration to the ideological motivations in the work of think tanks. The current study presents more comprehensive findings in terms of the political themes analyzed. The quantitative findings offer an overview of the abundance and frequency of the deployed pragmatic and argumentative deception strategies utilized in the think tanks’ products. The qualitative analyses present a closer look at the ideological motivations and put provide deconstructed analytical commentaries of why and how ideology is embedded in the work of think tanks. These analyses are deemed critical as they intend to raise the readers’ awareness of and redirect their attention to the surrounding socio-political realities reproduced deceptively via the powerful institutions of think tanks.

The research questions posed earlier are intended to shed more light on the findings. Firstly, to respond to the first research question (what is the extension to which argumentative and pragmatic deception strategies are used in the conservative think tanks’ discourse to polarize the positive Us against the negative them?), the argumentative and pragmatic deceptive discursive strategies are observed to have a moderate to high abundance in the work of American conservative think tanks. These strategies hold substantial importance in the discourse of ATTs in terms of the
political themes tackled. The Israeli-Palestinians conflict is recreated using the highest frequency of (57) strategies while the Russian role in the Middle East is reproduced through the second highest application of (53) strategies. Terrorism in Islam is observed to have the third-highest deployment of (49) strategies. Finally, the U.S. policy in the Middle East is re-presented through the least number of (40) strategies.

Secondly, the second research question (what are the contextual interpretations that explicate why these strategies impose an ideological hegemony?) is tackled in the light of the analyses above which attempt to lay out a contextualized interpretation of the embedded ideological polarity. The institutions of think tanks may seek to affect the mindset of lay audiences to change, re-present, and re-affirm their surrounding socio-political reality. This is done through communicating a positive presentation of the Self against a negative presentation of the Other. This polarization is achieved simultaneously at the pragmatic and argumentative levels. Moreover, think tanks may strive to produce, disseminate, and reinforce an ideological hegemony of preferred socio-political realities. To achieve this, think tanks deploy pragmatic and argumentative deception strategies. The above analysis reveals that lay audiences may be easily deceived when policy recommendations, for example, are disseminated, inculcated, and thus reproduced as naturalized/naturalizing social practices. This is especially likely when the think tanks’ conservative products are reaffirmed in the media and, more recently, the widely spread social media platforms.

The study’s findings may also create more informed educational curricula for teachers and students of media, and political science, as well as develop critical thinking skills of lay audiences towards generic discourses such as political commentaries and speeches, and religious sermons.

Conclusion

This study is concerned with exposing the deception strategies prevalent in the discourse of conservative American think tanks that lead to (re)production of social and political realities. It attempted to fulfill this aim at two levels. First, deception is manufactured at the argumentative level where examples are used to invite the audiences to seriously (re)consider their surrounding socio-political reality in terms of how the proposed social and political claims have real-life examples. Fallacies, as the qualitative analysis shows above, are perfect argumentative spaces to communicate deceptive messages through manipulating the arguments’ premises and the immediate deductive understandings of lay audiences. Unless it is deconstructed, a fallacious argument may well pass unnoticed and thus develops to be acceptable. Second, deception is also realized at the pragmatic level by implicitly and/or explicitly stating ideological polarization of a positive presentation of the Self of the conservative United States and its allies against a negative presentation of the Other, i.e., political rivals and enemies such as Russia and Islam. Ideological polarization is constructed as fabrications (violation of the Quality maxim), equivocations (violations of the Manner/Quantity maxims), existential, factive, and non-factive presuppositions, and finally representative speech acts.

About the authors:

Dr. Sabah S. Mustafa is a professor of Linguistics and Translation in the Department of English, University of Baghdad, College of Languages in which he has been teaching English.
since 1987. He has published several articles in the area of Linguistics and Translation. His research interests are contrastive linguistics, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis. He is currently Editor-in-chief of the Journal of Languages.

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6504-3560.

Ali Al-juboori is an M. A. candidate in the Department of English, University of Baghdad, College of Languages. His areas of interest are discourse analysis and psycholinguistics, and Universal Grammar. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1357-4420

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Investigating the Legal Discourse of Bill Clinton’s Impeachment Trial

Bader Nasser Aldosari
Business Administration Department
College of Science and Humanities
Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia
E-mail: Bn.aldosari@psau.edu.sa

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Abstract
This paper presents a legal discourse analysis of Bill Clinton’s impeachment trial held in 1998. The paper’s main objective is to explore the different meanings communicated by the dexterous use of some lexical and pragmatic strategies used by discourse interlocutors involved in the trial. More specifically, the article offers a linguistic study of the testimony and statements of President Bill Clinton relating to his impeachment trial. The paper focuses on three main analytical dimensions: word selection, power relations, and questioning and answering, and the way these strategies influence the discourse participants’ conversational performance in the selected trial. To this end, this study draws on a legal discourse analysis approach as discussed by Coulthard (2013) and Mey (2016), focusing on lexicalization, the notion of power, and the use of questions and answers in courtroom settings. The overarching research question is: What are the different ideological and pragmatic meanings targeted beyond the use of selected words during the trial? Results reveal that language is a powerful tool in courtroom testimonies as it helps to extract information, verify evidence, draw legal outcomes, and encode and/or decode the underpinning meanings of courtroom discourse participants. These, in turn, serve to support or defy evidence and ultimately lead to issue a legally just decision.

Keywords: Clinton, courtroom, ideology, impeachment trial, legal discourse

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Introduction

Within courtrooms, language is manipulated for particular linguistic and ideological purposes. In most cases, these purposes target the speaker’s benefits within the courtroom interaction. Deciphering the hidden ideologies and meanings in legal discourse can be analytically conducted through an extensive linguistic investigation, which, in turn, serves to explore the different meanings in discourse. Thus, in order to be able to understand what is going on in a legal interaction between courtroom participants, a linguistic analysis is needed to show the connection between law and language in discourse. Here, the focus will be on offering a legal discourse analysis of Clinton’s impeachment trial to decode the various legal meaning carried in this trial through using different linguistic and argumentative devices. Language, in this sense, therefore, is a powerful tool to decode ideologies and communicating legal meanings. The paper’s main focus, therefore, is to demonstrate the linguistic contribution language provides for other disciplines, including not only social settings (Fairclough, 2013), but also legal discourse and legal settings (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007).

One of the facts that is analytically and linguistically evidenced is that there is a close connection between language and law. Such a reciprocally significant relationship between language and law has been the focus of many studies (e.g., Mead, 1985; Eades, 2000; Farinde, 2009; Berukstiene, 2016; Breda, 2017; Cheng & Danesi, 2019; Aldosari, 2020; Aldosari and Khafaga, 2020, Riner, 2020; Gupta, 2022, among others). Legal texts are always in a need to be analyzed linguistically; not only this, but in most cases language is the key element in determining the final decision of the court concerning a specific case. Language operates effectively in legal texts, either written or spoken, within courtroom discourse. Crucially, the effective extent to which language is employed in legal settings is significant in the decision-making process in courtrooms, wherein laws are presented to defend or accuse. These laws can be conveyed either in a written form or orally, and in both modes of presentation, language has an effective role to play. Within courtrooms, language is dexterously employed to realize specific goals and objectives. The ability of discourse participants to decode the meanings beyond the semantic proposition of the linguistic expressions facilitates the process of communication and helps arrive at a final decision concerning any lawsuit addressed.

When addressing legal texts, we then refer to what is called courtroom discourse, or legal discourse; a term used to compromise the relationship between language and law. In other words, courtroom discourse or legal discourse is a type of discourse that highlights the way language is employed in legal texts and settings. Legal discourse is mainly concerned with oral interaction that occurs face to face within courtrooms (Farinde, 2009). The way discourse participants use language in their speech or defense serves to shape and reshape the decision of the court towards one specific lawsuit. Language, in this sense, can be employed to obtain specific verbal responses from judges, witnesses, and/or opponents, both argumentatively and rhetorically. Thus, the more dexterous language is employed the more effective and satisfactory results are obtained. Within courtroom settings, language is not only utilized in a purely linguistic sense, but as a tool to reinforce the state of defense. Such a task is employed to motivate the cognitive potentials of recipients (Mead, 1985). Language is also used in legal discourse to decode the various relations of power among participants. These power relations can be related to judges or lawyers. They are
used for achieving particular meanings, for persuading, and, sometimes, for manipulating (Hale, 1997). From this context, it can be claimed that the ability to use language in its proper context and in a persuasive and/or manipulative way enables one discourse participant to gain supremacy over the other participants in courtroom settings.

Three reasons constitute the rationale of selecting this trial in particular. First, Clinton’s trial occupies a great deal of world and public opinion in its time. Second, Clinton’s impeachment trial constitutes various usages of linguistic devices on the lexical, semantic and pragmatic levels of analysis that are dexterously employed to communicate particular legal meanings and ideologies in courtroom discourse. Third, the trial at hand maintains and mirrors a type of legal discourse that shows the way language is manipulated to demonstrate specific legal meanings as well as interpersonal relationships among courtroom discourse participants.

The paper is significant because it provides an investigation of the legal discourse of one of the most critical legal trials in the twentieth century, that is, Bill Clinton’s impeachment trial in 1998. The paper sheds light on the connection between language and law. It highlights the extent to which various linguistic strategies are employed within courtrooms to communicate specific ideologies of the communication participants. This will be conducted by employing different linguistic levels of analysis, including the lexical, the pragmatic, and the semantic levels. The paper, therefore, is anticipated to contribute to both the linguistic and legal studies, particularly the relationship between the two dimensions. From the linguistic perspective, on the one hand, this paper attempts to show the extent to which language operates effectively in legal texts and within legal settings. This study highlights the role of language as a decisive element in determining the court’s decisions. From a legal perspective, on the other hand, this paper offers a legal discourse analysis of one of the distinguished trials in the twentieth century, namely, Bill Clinton’s impeachment trial. Thus, the paper tries to shed light on the connection held between language and law and the way linguistic strategies are employed in courtroom discourse to clarify and verify evidence. The paper also has a pedagogic value in the sense that its obtained results can be applied to legal courses delivered in universities. This, in turn, might contribute to the general understanding of the linguistic structures of the different laws, and offer legal and law practitioners an opportunity to know how language works in legal discourse.

This paper attempts to answer the four research questions. First, what are the linguistic strategies employed in the trial to achieve the ideologies of the involved discourse participants? Second, to what extent does the selection of particular words contribute to communicating different ideological and pragmatic meanings during the trial? Third, to what extent are power relations reflected in the trial at hand? Fourth, how do questioning and answering serve to elucidate particular meanings in courtroom discourse? The answer to these research questions constitutes the four research objectives of this article. First, to provide a legal discourse analysis of Clinton’s impeachment trial; second, to show the extent to which lexical choices influence discourse interpretation; third, to explore the different linguistic realizations via which legal meanings and ideologies are encoded and decoded in courtroom discourse; and, fourth, to shed light on the mutual connection held between law and language, and the extent which they are complementary in arriving at a comprehensive interpretation of discourse.
The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section two reviews the literature pertinent to the topic under investigation, focusing on the previous studies relevant to the linguistic analysis of legal discourse. Section three presents the methodology of the current study, wherein data collection and description, and analytical procedures are provided. Section four is dedicated to the analysis of the selected data. Section five offers a discussion of the findings. Section six concludes the study and recommends some ideas for future research.

**Literature Review**

Legal discourse analysis and the use of language in the different legal settings have been approached by many legal and linguistic scholars, who discussed the connection between language and law and the way the former effectively operates within the latter’s settings. These studies investigate the relationship held between language and law, which can be traced linguistically in the different types of legal texts and in different legal settings (e.g., Tiersma, 1999). This relationship has linguistically been discussed from different perspectives, including the following: (i) exploring the lexical features and the use of vocabulary pertaining to courtroom discourse (e.g., Bhatia, 1993); (ii) shedding light on the ways language can encode and maintain power relations among discourse participants (e.g., Stygall, 2012); (iii) highlighting the extent to which language contributes to the interpretation of legal texts (e.g., Tessuto, 2016); and (iv) discussing notions pertinent to identity and culture within the scope of legal communities and courtrooms settings (e.g., Bhatia & Gotti, 2015). The core concern of these studies was to highlight the connection between language and law in the different legal settings. This connection has been emphasized by Riner (2020) who highlighted the necessary connection between linguistic structures and sociocultural processes, which, for him, offers a fruitful guide for understanding the relationship between law and language. This also makes Karasev, Savoskin and Chufarova (2020) to conclude that “presently one could consider legal linguistics as an independent interdisciplinary area of science” (p. 733).

Furthermore, other studies have discussed the influential role played by language to negotiate topics of justice within the various legal communities, as well as the extent to which language is practiced and mediated by the various legal discourse tools (Berukstiene, 2016; Breda, 2017; Cheng & Danesi, 2019; Williams & Tessuto, 2013). Thus, one can notice the complementary nature held between language and law. Such a connection is clearly shown by the fact that the different legal texts can be analyzed and investigated not only from a legal point of view, but also from a purely linguistic perspective that significantly contributes to the ultimate understanding of the various legal texts, such as contracts, legislation and regulations. These varieties of legal texts can be investigated by using the different linguistic perspectives, including the lexical, the semantic, the syntactic, and the pragmatic levels of analysis. This, in turn, helps decipher the different legal meanings and the hidden ideologies in courtroom discourse. Spasov (2016) shares a similar point of view, wherein he emphasized that “legal language is a holistic concept embracing several types of language of law” (p. 83).

Investigating legal discourse within courtrooms has linguistically been approached by many studies. Aldosari (2020) conducted a study in which he offered a linguistic investigation of Nelson Mandela’s defense speech *I am prepared to die*. This study draws on a critical discourse analysis approach and focuses on highlighting some strategies that are employed in the selected
speech to communicate specific ideologies of the language users. Aldosari’s study concluded that some of critical discourse analysis (CDA) strategies were utilized by Mandela to convey his political and ideological stance. These strategies have been based on the lexical and pragmatic levels of analysis. The study also revealed that Mandela’s speech abounds in various linguistic strategies through which ideologies are communicated to addressees, which is realized by several strategies, including the use of terms of address, the employment of rhetoric, and the dexterous use of argumentative strategies.

A Further study by Aldosari and Khafaga (2020) investigated the language of persuasion in courtroom discourse by employing a bi-dimensional approach constituting critical discourse analysis and the computer-aided text analysis. This study explores the extent to which a computer-aided text analysis contributes to deciphering the various strategies of persuasion utilized to control, defend or accuse within the framework of courtroom discourse. The study employed four critical discourse analysis strategies, the use of repetitive expressions, the use of questioning and answering, the use of justification, and the use of emotive language. These strategies have been incorporated within a frequency distribution analysis aided by a computer to demonstrate the extent to which both CDA and computer-aided text analysis (CATA) software are employed to decode the different legal meanings and ideologies in courtroom discourse.

Within the courtroom, legal and ideological meanings can be communicated at various linguistic levels, including the lexical, the semantic and the pragmatic levels. On the lexical level of analysis, this study presents the notion of lexicalization in the selected trial. It sheds light on the lexis employed in the discourse of the discourse participants within courtrooms, and the way these lexis are ideologically laden by particular legal meanings that serve the understanding and interpretation of the whole discourse. In this regard, Fowler (1991) emphasized the importance of lexis as ideology carriers in the analysis of texts. Highlighting the significance of lexis in the process of persuasion, Schaffner (2004) and Khafaga (2017) argued that one focus of attention in discourse analysis is the emphasis it puts on the strategic use of vocabulary to achieve specific goals.

On the semantic level of analysis, the paper focuses on the propositional meanings pertaining to the different linguistic manifestations employed in the discourse of the trial. At this semantic level, the focus is on the use of synonyms, antonyms as well as the other different lexical relations. Further, a semantic discussion of function words will be provided concerning the use of pronouns, passive and active voice, and modality. Fairclough (2013) accentuated the significance of using various pronouns to carry ideological significations of the speaker. They maintained that these pronouns show the speaker's responsibility, competency and authority over others. As for the use of modal verbs, it will be discussed in light of Fairclough’s (2013) classification of the term. He divided modality into two types: relational modality and expressive modality. Regarding the use of the passive forms in discourse, it functions to hide the agent and to leave responsibility unknown. As such, passivization encodes a specific ideological purpose pertaining to the speaker.

On the pragmatic level of analysis, the paper scrutinizes to explore the intended meanings of the speakers in the trial under investigation. This is conducted by shedding light on specific pragmatic devices used in the discourse of the trial, including agency (Fairclough, 2013),
reference, inference, implicature (Yule, 1996), and speech acts (Searle, 1979). These pragmatic concepts will be discussed in relation to their functions as ideology and legal meanings carriers in the discourse of the selected trial.

Obviously, the previous literature on the language of courtroom discourse has approached the language of courtrooms from different perspectives. However, this paper tries to provide a linguistic integration between the lexical, semantic and pragmatic levels of analysis to decode the hidden ideologies in the trial under investigation. This study, therefore, is expected to contribute to the field of legal discourse studies.

Methods
This part is dedicated to presenting the process of data collection, data description, and the research procedures of data analysis.

Data: Collection and Description
The data used in the analysis of this study consist of the discourse of the lawsuit of Bill Clinton’s impeachment trial in 1998. The testimony and statements of President Clinton’s trial consist of 23954 words and are divided into two main parts: the first part is dedicated to the testimony in the Paula Jones case deposition, and, the second part presents the testimony and the questions regarding the case of Monica Lewinsky. The whole trial of Clinton’s impeachment is downloaded from Famous Trial site available at https://www.famous-trials.com/clinton/883-clintontestimony.

Approach of the Study
This study entirely draws on legal discourse analysis approach as discussed by Coulthard (2013) and Mey (2016) to analyze the linguistics of Clinton’s impeachment trial. Legal discourse analysis is one type of discourse analysis that shows the connection between language and law. Its primary concern is to expose the different ways language operates in legal settings in order to reveal the various legal meanings and ideologies in courtroom discourse. Legal discourse analysis, therefore, focuses on the communication acts pertaining to the different practices of law.

Research Procedures
The analytical procedures conducted in this paper encompass four stages: the first stage is dedicated to demonstrating the macro propositions addressed in the trial. The second stage constitutes the collection of the selected trial by downloading it from the Famous Trial site, as is mentioned in Subsection 3.1 above. The third stage comprises the complete reading of the trial to highlight the various lexical and pragmatic strategies employed to communicate specific meanings in the trial. In this stage, some expressions were highlighted as indicative in conveying particular ideologies. The fourth stage is an interpretative and explanatory one, wherein the ideological and pragmatic purposes targeted beyond the semantic propositions of the selected expressions were analytically clarified by means of the use of specific lexical and pragmatic strategies that include power relations, lexicalization and questioning and answering. Notably, some words were emphasized by being written in bold and italics for some analytical reasons.

Discourse Participants
The trial under investigation comprises six discourse participants that have conversational turns throughout the trial. These are as follows: (i) Susan Weber Wright, who is the Judge of the court
and is referred to in the discourse of the trial as Judge Wright; (ii) President Clinton, (iii) Mr. Robert Bennett, who is the president's attorney, and is referred to as Mr. Bennett in the discourse of the trial; (iv) Mr. Fisher, who represents the court; (v) Mr. Mitchell S. Ettinger, who is associate of Mr. Bennett; and (vi) Bill Bristow, who is the attorney of Mr. Danny Ferguson. Despite the fact that these participant participated in the discourse of the trial, the majority of the conversational turns in the trial are related to only two participants: Judge Wright and Clinton.

Analysis

Macro propositions and the Context of Situation

Clinton’s impeachment trial abounds in macro propositions that constitute the general thematic structure of the trial as a whole. These macro propositions are as follows: (i) the case was backgrounded by the Paula Jones sexual harassment suit; (ii) Clinton’s harassment with Monica Lewinsky; (iii) Lewinsky alleged that Clinton enforced her to have sex with him; and (iv) Clinton’s arguments as well as response to the judge’s questions indicate that the whole affair with Lewinsky was consensually conducted. These four macro proposition are presented throughout the conversational turns of the various discourse participants involved in the trial.

As for the context of situation of the trial, it shows the testimony and statements of President William Clinton relating to his impeachment trial. The origins of the case were dated back to 1995, when Monica Lewinsky came to the White House as an intern employee who aged 21 then. Monica Lewinsky proclaimed that President Clinton had practiced around ten sexual activities with her during 16 months between late 1995 and 1996. When the news of such sexual activities began to spread, the president decided to end such sexual affairs. Clinton’s decision of ending his relationship with Lewinsky was not accepted quite willingly by the latter, who quickly fall victim to Clinton’s political opponents, who in turn convinced her to accuse the president of sexual harassment against her.

Power Relations Manifested in the Trial

According to Fairclough (2013), language is perceived as “a primary medium of social control and power” (p. 3), by which dominance practices and power relations are clearly manifested in the different linguistic strategies employed among participants (Khafaga, 2019, 2022). Because legal courts are the contextual setting of exercising power, i.e., by judges over lawyers and attorneys; by lawyers over witnesses; etc., language, therefore, is structured in such a way as to facilitate control and to show the extent to which power is linguistically produced, reproduced and maintained in discourse.

In the context of the trial under investigation, some power relations are manifested in the conversational practices conducted among discourse participants involved in the trial. There are power relations between the judge and Clinton; the judge and the attorneys; the attorneys and Clinton; and the judge and the witness. In the following lines, the paper will focus only on the first two types of power relations, i.e., judge-Clinton and judge-attorneys relation of power. As for the judge-Clinton relation of power, it is linguistically manifested in the use of the terms of address as well as the use of pronouns throughout the trial. This is clearly shown by the way Judge Wright addresses Clinton, as she uses the second person singular pronoun ‘you’ to address Clinton in almost all the conversational turns between the two conversationalists. Only in three
conversational turns, Judge Wright calls him as ‘Mr. President’, and in one conversational turn as ‘the president’. This employment of ‘you’ in addressing the president of the United States sheds light on the nature of power relations held within courtrooms between judges and the rest of discourse participants. This correlates with Fairclough’s (2013) argument that the use of the pronoun ‘you’ communicates power, domination and authority. Here, the judge is seen as more powerful than Clinton regardless the fact that the latter is still the president of the United States. The same power relations can also be seen in the conversational turns between Judge Wright and the attorneys. It is obvious that the adherence to the established norms and terms of address is there within the courtroom. The judge is addressed by the courtroom well-established expression ‘your honor’, in a reference that further accentuates the supreme legal status and authority that Judges have over the rest of discourse participants within courtrooms.

**Lexicalization**

Lexicalization process, the use of specific lexis in discourse, plays a significant role in Clinton’s impeachment trial. Lexis usually carries ideological significance, either on the part of the speaker or on the part of listeners. They are ideology communicators that target particular purposes in the process of communication. In the trial at hand, the skillful use of lexis varies from the employment of specific verbs to the use of particular nouns and adjectives. In these cases, lexicalization reflects particular ideological meanings. That is, they not only express their semantically established meanings, but also communicate specific pragmatic and ideological purposes. The process of lexicalization in Clinton’s Impeachment trial is manifested in three categories of the word level: the verbs, the adjectives, and the nouns. These will be analytically reflected on in the following subsections.

The selection of particular verbs in the trial, particularly on the part of Clinton, plays a significant part in communicating specific meanings to the court. As one of the parts of speech, verbs are ideology communicators; they not only convey their ordinary semantic meanings, but also communicate ideological and pragmatic purposes. The trial witnesses the employment of verbs, such as *know*, *think*, and *believe* are recurrently used in the trial by the two main discourse participants, i.e., the judge and Clinton. These verbs, which semantically express personal beliefs of speakers, convey further pragmatic purposes that revolve around the authenticity and credibility of Clinton’s testimony in front of the court. It is noticed that the verb ‘know’ is used in many expressions, either in the positive or negative forms, in which Clinton expresses his beliefs concerning specific points asked by the judge. Expressions, such as “I don't know what happened to the folder.” “I don't know, four or five, over a ten-year period, maybe a few more, maybe a few less, I don't know,” “That's all I know about that.” “I don't know if that qualifies as suppression,” “I didn't know she was back,” etc. In these expressions, the accused president seems that he simply wants to escape the answer of specific questions by using the expression ‘I don’t know’. It is a matter of dissociating himself from being involved in a specific event.

In the same vein, the verb ‘think’ is employed by Clinton to go around the direct answer of the judge’s questions. The president uses this verb in many situations, such as “I think they did,” “I think she was a volunteer,” “I don't think she stayed long enough to go into any great detail,” “I don't think I was notified when she got the job at the counsel's office,” etc. Again, the same pragmatic purpose lies beyond the use of the verb ‘think’ in these expressions. That is, Clinton
attempts not to be direct in his responses; the meaning of uncertainty is targeted here. This holds true for the verb ‘believe’, which is employed by Clinton in discursive situations in which he wants to communicate the certainty of the argument.

Another type of lexicalization can be found in the employment of adverbs as is shown in the following extract:

I don't recall, but as I said, when she worked at the legislative affairs office, they always had somebody there on the weekends. I typically worked some on the weekends. Sometimes they'd bring me things on the weekends. She – it seems to me she brought things to me once or twice on the weekends. In that case, whatever time she would be in there, drop it off, exchange a few words and go. (Clinton’s impeachment trial, 1998, my emphasis)

In the above extract, it is evident that the employment of particular adverbs in the president’s turns is very indicative. To clarify this point, we can notice the use of the two adverbs of frequency always and sometimes. Given the meaning of normality and regularity conveyed by ‘typically’, the meaning of continuity and permanence communicated by ‘always’ and the meaning of irregularity channeled by ‘sometimes’, one can infer that the use of the three adverbs is ideological in nature. Here, the president tries to communicate three meanings: first, his work in weekends is something normal for his position as a president of the United States of America; second, it is recurrently and continually conducted that some of them (the White House employees) are in the place where he spends his weekends; and third, it may happen that the employees occasionally bring him things to conduct in such weekends. These meanings target a further pragmatic meaning: it is not intentional that the president is there in the weekends to have some sort of affairs with Monica Lewinski; it is not something planned or schemed before, but his meeting with her is something normal and customarily. This last pragmatic meaning is emphasized by three linguistic lexicalizations: first, the president’s use of the verb ‘seems’ in ‘it seems to me she brought things to me once or twice on the weekends’, which further emphasizes unintentionality beyond his meeting with Lewinsky; second, the employment of the two adverbs ‘one’ and ‘twice’, which is also a reference to the irregularity of the event (the meeting); and third, the use of the quantifier ‘few’ in ‘exchange a few words and go’. Crucially, lexicalization, which is manifested here in the selection and employment of particular adverbs, is highly indicative in communicating specific pragmatic and ideological meanings that go beyond the semantic proposition of the linguistic expression.

A further indicative employment of adverbs can be shown in the use of the negative frequency adverb ‘never’, which is highly indicative in communicating specific pragmatic and ideological meanings in the trial under investigation. Consider the following extract:

I never knew she was back in Arkansas. Contrary to her protestations, I never saw her in Texas, I never knew what she was doing there, I never had any contact with her except once in a while she'd come back to Arkansas and call and say hello and how are you. (Clinton’s impeachment trial, 1998, my emphasis)

As indicated in the above extract, the negative frequency adverb ‘never’ is employed to end any suspicion raised against the president concerning his previous knowledge that planned to meet with Lewinski. The accused president is trying to dissociate himself from any responsibilities
and to deny any doubts about his planning to meet with Monica Lewinsky while he was governor of Texas, or while being in office, except through her position as an employee in the White House. The repetition of the same adverb (4 occurrences) in the same conversational turn emphasizes that it is skillfully selected and utilized to convey such a meaning of dissociation. Notice also the combination between the first person singular ‘I’ and the negative adverb, as well as its active construction. The president attempts to communicate that he is completely certain that he never planned the meeting. The use of the active voice here is to acknowledge the responsibility for the communicated action; that is, he did not plan or know anything about Monica’s presence in Arkansas, that he saw her in Texas, or that he conducted any calls with her. Such dissociation serves to convince the court of his point of view concerning his affairs with Lewinsky.

The use of adverbs to communicate specific ideologies continues in the trial through the employment of the adverb ‘certainly’, which is utilized by Clinton in response to the judge’s question and in more than one conversational turn of the two discourse participants. Consider the following extract:

Judge: Have you ever met with Monica Lewinsky in the White House between the hours of midnight and six a.m.?
Clinton. I certainly don't think so.
Judge: Well, have you ever given any gifts to Monica Lewinsky?
Clinton: I don't recall. Do you know what they were?
Judge: A hat pin?
Clinton: I don't, I don't remember. But I certainly, I could have.
Judge: A book about Walt Whitman?
Judge: If she told someone that she had a sexual affair with you beginning in November of 1995, would that be a lie?
Clinton: It's certainly not the truth. It would not be the truth. (Clinton’s impeachment trial, 1998, my emphasis)

Again, the use of the adverb ‘certainly’ in Clinton’s answers to the questions directed to him by the judge attempts to eliminate the accusation of harassment with Lewinsky. This persuasive goal beyond the use of ‘certainly’ can be inferred from his conversational turns. However, the idea that he tries to dissociate himself from the harassment accusation is dominant, as it can be also presupposed from the contradiction that can be inferred from his first turn in the above extract ‘I certainly don't think so’; the president is certain, however, he does not think so. Significantly, the use of ‘certainly’ in Clinton’s turns can be said to be speaker-argumentation-supporter that functions to strengthen his position in front of the court.

Adjectives and nouns also play a significantly indicative part in Clinton’s trial. In more than one conversational turn, the adjective ‘sure’, for example, is recurrently used by Clinton in response to several questions directed to him by the court’s judge. Consider the following extract:

Judge: Have you ever had a conversation with Vernon Jordan in which Paula Jones was mentioned?
Clinton: I'm sure I have.
Judge: Without consulting your notes, do you have any independent recollection of anything that was said in any of those conversations with Danny Ferguson?
Clinton: I sure do.
Judge: Did you look at the transcription before your deposition today?
Clinton: I'm not sure that I did
Judge: My question, though, is focused on the time before the conversation occurred, and the question is whether you did anything to cause the conversation to occur.
Clinton: I think in the mean – I'm not sure how you mean the question. I think the way you mean the question, the answer to that is no, I've already testified. (Clinton’s impeachment trial, 1998, my emphasis)

The above extracts show that Clinton uses the adjective ‘sure’ in his answer to the judge’s questions. This skillful employment of the adjective is of ideological significance. Given the semantic proposition the adjective ‘sure’ carries, which indicates certainty and a high level of confirmation, one can infer the pragmatic purpose beyond the surface semantic meaning of the adjective. That is, the accused president is highly confident and certain of his answers. This pragmatic meaning in turn functions to shift the wheel of suspicion from away from his side so as to be proclaimed unguilty at the end of his testimony. The same holds true for the employment of other adjectives, such as certain and aware, yet the former is recurrently used by Clinton, whereas the latter is more representative in the questions of the judge to Clinton.

Similarly, the discourse of the trial presents a significant use of some nouns, such as harassment, affairs and allegations. Indicatively, the three words are collocated with the words sexual, extramarital and her, respectively. These words, together with their collocated items serve to shed light on two important things that are closely associated with the trial macro propositions: first, the first two collocational expressions function to cast emphasis on the main reason beyond the trial, that is, sexuality. Both sexual harassment and extramarital affairs connote the meaning of sexuality; second, the combination between the third person singular pronoun her (referring to Monica Lewinsky) with the word allegations serve to dissociate President Clinton from the accusation of harassment. Also the connotation carried by the word allegations further accentuates the pragmatic meaning that Monica Lewinsky did not tell the truth in terms of her accusations to Clinton.

The Employment of Questions and Answers
The process of questioning and answering is always inherited within courtrooms. It is the core concern and a dominant feature of courtroom discourse. Questioning constitutes different forms, as it can be produced in a wh- question type, or a yes-no question. In both cases, the speaker seeks an answer in response. Sometimes, these questions are information-seekers; in other times they come to confirm a piece of information. The process of answering also comprises different structures on the part of the respondent participant. Answers may occur very short, constituting one or two words, either in the positive or negative forms; in other times, they come in full structures; and in a third time they may be responded by a further elaborating question from the respondent himself.
In Clinton’s impeachment trial, the different forms of questions as well as answers are represented in the discourse of the conversationalists. One of the forms of questioning is the questions that start with one of the wh-interrogative operators, as is shown in the following table.

Table 1. *Question words and their frequency in Clinton’s testimony*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question word</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Where did you meet with her on that day?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>What was the process by which she received that job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>When did you meet her for the first time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Why don't you say it's not true?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Who in the White House would be responsible for receiving applications for that job and making the decision who would receive it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>How do you know her?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>How many times did you visit the home of Jane Doe 2 when her husband was not there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>How much time elapsed between the time of the reunion and the time when you made these notes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated from Table 1, various interrogative markers have been used to form questions, including where, what, when, why, who, how, how many, and how much, with occurrence frequencies of eight, 21, 12, seven, nine, five, nine, and four, respectively. All these questions are information seekers, that is, they require responses on the part of the other discourse participants.

Yes-no questions is another type of questions employed in the trial. These are questions that start with helping and/or modal verbs, and also require a response from discourse participants. The following table adds more clarification:

Table 2. *Yes-no questions and their frequency in Clinton’s testimony*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question initiator</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Do you remember giving her a gold brooch?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>Did you ever talk with Monica Lewinsky about the possibility that she might be asked to testify in this case?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Does that happen all the time, sir, or rarely?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Have you ever met with Monica Lewinsky in the White House between the hours of midnight and six a.m.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Has Monica Lewinsky ever given you any gifts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Is this a copy of a sexual harassment policy that you signed when you were the governor of the state of Arkansas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Are there any other individuals who are specifically assigned to be your secretary?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Would you repeat the question?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Will we do that in your room Judge, here?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 demonstrates that various helping and modal verbs are employed by the different discourse participants in the trial to form yes-no questions. These forms are also information seekers.
seekers, as they require responses on the part of the listeners. As indicated in the table, the different question-initiators constitute the three times, i.e., the present, the past and the future. Significantly, among the different question initiators used in the trial, the modal ‘would’ is employed only in situations that require the speaker to be polite with his addressees. That is, in the seven occurrences of the ‘would’, the addressee has more power than the speaker. All of them are directed to the judge of the court, who is contextually more powerful than the other participants in the trial, as she, being the judge, has both the access and authority over the court.

Crucially, sometimes, the Judges and attorneys employ a sort of questions that attempts to confirm a piece of information, not to seek information, as is the case for wh-questions and yes-no-questions. This type of question is used in Clinton’s trial by Judge Wright to confirm some sort of information on the part of the addressees or to make the addressees admit their knowledge concerning some information. Consider the following extract:

**Judge:** And when you were governor of the state of Arkansas, you appointed Jane Doe 2 to the position of Judge on the Arkansas Court of Appeals correct?

**Clinton:** I did, yes.

**Judge:** And she decided cases on the Court of Appeals for two years, correct?

**Clinton:** That’s correct. (Clinton’s impeachment trial, 1998)

Here, despite the fact that the two conversational turns of the Judge do not carry any interrogative word, i.e., wh-word or auxiliaries that operate as questioning initiators, the two conversational turns are still considered as questions. The word ‘correct’ at the end of each turn fulfills the interrogative function of the various questions words, either wh-questions or yes-no questions. These questions are employed in courtrooms to confirm information, not to ask for information. Judge Wright, in both conversational turns, attempts to get a confirmation from President Clinton that this information listed by her in the two turns is true or false. Thus, we can say that confirmation questions equal yes-no question in the sense that both types can be answered with ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

In all their forms, questions that are used in Clinton’s impeachment trial are met by different forms of answers. That is, they are responded in three ways. First, in a short linguistic terms constituting one or two words, including the positive or the negative response operators ‘yes’ or ‘no’. This is clearly shown in answers like ‘yes, I did’, ‘yes, this is right’, ‘no, I don’t’, ‘I don’t think so’, ‘it is correct’, ‘not to my knowledge’, etc. Second, in full linguistic sentences comprising a complete syntactic structure that functions as both a response to the question and an explanation of the answer by adding some information, as in Judge Wright’s question: “What were her qualifications to serve as a judge in the Court of Appeals?” and Clinton’s answer that immediately follows: “She was an intelligent, hard-working person who was a good friend and supporter of mine. And I thought she would make a good judge. The evidence is that she did, I think.” Third, in some discourse situations in the trial, a question is answered by a further question from the addressee, in which he/she asks for more elaboration to the question initially given, as in Clinton’s response to the judge: “Would you repeat the question?” when she asks him: “Has it ever happened that a White House record was created that showed the Monica Lewinsky was meeting with Betty Currie when in fact Monica Lewinsky was meeting with you?” Thus, various forms of answering
have been employed in the trial as a response to the different types of questions initiated within courtroom.

Discussion

The analysis of the selected data demonstrated the relevance of applying the various linguistic levels of analysis to the investigation of legal data. That is, the paper showed that the different ideological purposes within courtroom settings can be decoded at the lexical, semantic and the pragmatic levels of analysis. This goes in conformity with Adosari’s and Khafaga’s (2020) argument that hidden legal meanings can be deciphered by means of the linguistic investigation of the legal data. Language, in this sense, contributes significantly to decoding ideologies and communicating legal meanings, which, in turn, highlights the linguistic contribution language provides for other disciplines, including not only social settings, as argued by (Fairclough, 2013), but also legal discourse and legal settings (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007).

The analysis further showed that language is used deftly in courtrooms to accomplish specific goals and objectives. The ability of discourse participants to decipher meanings beyond the semantic proposition of language terms promotes dialogue and aids in reaching a final conclusion on any lawsuit under consideration. This correlates with Farinde (2009) contention that the discursive intelligibility a prerequisite towards a successful act of communication within courtroom. As a result, the more dexterous language used, the more successful and satisfying the results are. This also reconciles with Mead’s (1985) argument that language is used in courtrooms not just in a linguistic sense, but also as a tool to bolster the state of defense. This type of task is used to inspire participants' cognitive abilities.

In terms of the linguistic strategies employed in the trial to achieve the ideologies of the involved discourse participants (research question No. One), the analysis identified two main linguistic strategies: the use of particular lexis and the employment of questions and answers. The two strategies are dexterously used to decode particular ideological meanings pertaining to discourse participants. This, in turn, sheds light on the relevance of the linguistic analysis to the study of legal discourse, either spoken or written. This chimes with Aldosari’s (2020) and Aldosari’s and Khafaga’s (2020) arguments that lexical choices as well as the utilization of questioning and answering in legal trials are among the commonly established linguistic strategies used by discourse participants to arrive at their targeted ideologies.

Concerning the extent to which the selection of particular words contribute to communicating different ideological and pragmatic meanings during the trial (research question No. two), it is analytically evidenced that lexicalization is a very significant tool of linguistic analysis. The analysis in this paper goes in conformity with Fowler’s (1991) argument that the use of specific vocabulary in discourse is ideological in nature. In the context of this paper, vocabularies are employed ideologically to communicate as well as reveal particular meanings on the part of discourse participants. The same argument has previously been accentuated by Schaffner (2004) who emphasized that vocabulary is strategically employed by discourse participants to achieve specific goals.
With regard to the extent to which power relations are reflected in the trial at hand (research question No. three), the analysis demonstrated that power is always represented in courtroom discourse. It is produced, reproduced and consumed by discourse participants. In the current study, power relations are linguistically manifested in two ways: the use of pronouns and the use of specific terms of address. The analysis has evidenced the use of the pronouns as well as of specific terms of address to reflect various relations of power in the discourse of Clinton’s impeachment. This emphasizes the ideological role played by linguistic devices in communicating power, either persuasively or manipulatively. This reconciles with Fairclough’s (2013) and Khafaga’s (2021) arguments that function words, including pronouns and modality are ideologically loaded. That is, they are employed to achieve specific ideological purposes in discourse.

As for the way by which questioning and answering serves to elucidate particular meanings in courtroom discourse (research question No. four), the analysis showed that the employment of questioning and answering strategy is very indicative in elucidating information from discourse participants. This is analytically clarified by the use of two forms of questions: the yes-no questions and the wh questions. The analysis further showed that within courtrooms, questions are sometimes employed not to seek information but to accentuate and confirm a fact. This correlates with Aldosari’s and Khafaga’s (2020) contention that the use of questions as information seekers is less representative in courtroom settings than using them to explain and/or confirm a piece of information. Consequently, within courtrooms, legal and ideological meanings can be communicated at various linguistic levels, including the lexical, the semantic and the pragmatic levels.

Conclusion
This paper presented a linguistic and legal discourse analysis of Bill Clinton’s impeachment trial in 1998. The analysis revealed the integration between legal discourse and linguistics with its various analytical approaches. The analysis demonstrated that the selected trial abounds in linguistic expressions and strategies via which various ideological beliefs and legal meanings are encoded and conveyed to discourse participants. This is linguistically evidenced on the different linguistic levels of analysis: lexically, by means of a dexterous employment of specific lexis that covers the different parts of speech on the word level, including the verb, the noun, the adjective and the adverb. Semantically; by clarifying the extent to which various types of questions and answers are employed to communicate particular legal meanings and ideologies. Pragmatically, the analysis highlighted the different power relations within courtroom, by demonstrating the extent to which these power relations are encoded in discourse by means of specific employment of pronouns and terms of address. Ideologically, it is analytically clarified that there is always a specific ideology lies beyond any use of linguistic strategies. Therefore, within courtroom contexts, the process of lexicalization, power relations and the employment of questioning and answering are ideological in nature that are employed to achieve specific ideological purposes. Furthermore, it is analytically demonstrated that legal discourse is a discourse genre that mirrors the different relations of power among discourse participants, and, therefore, is integrated within language with its linguistic scope to communicate specific legal meanings and to decode particular ideological purposes in courtrooms settings.

Recommendation
For future research, the paper recommends further linguistic investigations for other legal discourse texts, both spoken and written, to show the extent to which particular legal meanings as well as various power relations are manifested by means of the linguistic employment of specific discourse strategies. These studies might reveal findings similar and/or different of those reported here that pertain to legal discourse analysis.

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About the Author
Bader Nasser Aldosari is an Assistant Professor, Head of Business Administration Department, College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. He got his PhD degree in Law Studies at School of Law, Politics and Sociology at the University of Sussex, UK, in 2018. His research interests include law studies, law and politics, and legal language. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0769-6912

References


Evaluation of an E.S.P. Textbook from Teachers' and Students' Points of View: A Case Study of Nursing One for Premedical Students at a Saudi University

Abdul Majeed Al Tayeb Umar
English Language Center
Umm-Al-Qura University, Saudi Arabia
Corresponding Author Email: dtayib@hotmail.com

Abdurrahman Abdulmlik Ameen
English Language Center
Umm-Al-Qura University, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract
This research aims to evaluate Nursing One; a textbook endorsed to teach medical English to premedical students at Umm-Al-Qura University. The study is quite significant as it attempts to check the suitability of this book for premedical students who are assumed to be taught the proper language that qualifies them to study medicine through an English medium. So, the study's central question asks about the appropriateness of Nursing One for the target students in terms of its subject, content, and layout. The researcher obtained data via a checklist given to (25) teachers and a series of interviews arranged with (12) students. The collected data are analyzed quantitively, and the results reveal that the participants (teachers and students) are pretty satisfied with most aspects of Nursing One. More specifically, it is revealed that most subjects acknowledge that the content, layout, design, and presentation of Nursing One are appropriate. They admit that the book is adequately organized, and its topics are selected carefully to cater to the students’ academic and professional needs. These results have led the researcher to conclude that Nursing One is a suitable textbook for premedical students at Umm-Al-Qura University. The research recommends that all E.S.P. textbooks be rigorously assessed and evaluated before being endorsed to be taught in classrooms.

Keywords: assessment procedures, checklist, English for specific purposes, Nursing One, textbook evaluation

Introduction

A language teaching program is commonly based on several pillars, but an essential one is a textbook. A textbook is crucial in any language teaching program since it represents the primary source of the required linguistic information to be taught to language learners. Umar & Eterji (2020) confirm the importance of a textbook, saying that it is the milestone of any teaching-learning procedure. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) add that “The teaching-learning process would remain incomplete without a relevant textbook.” (p. 316).

Using a textbook has many advantages; for example, it helps establish a reference or a framework for the language program and helps to unify the instructional processes. Crawford (2002) claims that textbooks are reliable learning resources and can provide a perfect language model that can quickly be adopted in the classroom. Umar (2016) adds that books can also be used to train beginner teachers.

However, textbooks are not always perfect, and in many cases, they appear with severe defects. According to Crawford (2002), the defects may include but are not limited to the following:

1. They may include inauthentic language.
2. They may not cover the learners’ specific needs.
3. They may minimize teachers’ roles.
4. The books could be pretty expensive.

An ideal textbook must attempt to meet the specific objectives of a particular course and cater to the academic and socio-cultural needs of the target students (Shannon, 2010). Textbook evaluation helps to identify the points of strength and weaknesses in the textbook. This type of evaluation assists textbook writers in revising and modifying or improving their subsequent editions.

Quite recently, textbook evaluation practice has begun to occupy a more expansive space in the realm of English Language Teaching literature. The primary goal of this practice is to set criteria that allow a textbook to be systematically analyzed to ensure its usefulness and practicality (Salih, 2017). These criteria could appear as a checklist built on several factors such as the book’s capacity to help students achieve linguistic proficiency, meet the learners' academic and social needs, cater to individual differences, and many other contextual features. A textbook must fulfill several conditions and have specific thematic elements that must appear in every aspect of the textbook fabric (Tomlinson, 2001). These aspects must be carefully considered and well covered in each textbook. This current research aims to evaluate a book titled Nursing One. The researchers have endorsed this E.S.P. textbook for teaching Medical English to premedical students at Umm-Al-Qura University (U.Q.U.) since 2014.

Introduction

Nursing One was developed by Oxford University Press (O.U.P.) and intended for those students who want to study English for medicine and nursing. The book comes within a series of books entitled Oxford English for Careers. This series aims to prepare the students to learn their medical courses through an English medium of instruction. The author of this book (Tony
Grice, (2014) says, “Nursing One seeks to develop the language and skills students need to prepare for their future medical study in English.” (p.2.) He explains this further, saying Nursing One gives the language, information, and skills the learners need to start their medical study or career. This research helps to check the capacity of Nursing One to cater to the students’ linguistic and professional needs. Furthermore, it is expected to attract the students and raise their motivation for learning.

Purpose of study
A textbook is not always expected to be a perfect product (Mukundan, 2007). Hence, this research aims to allow teachers and other partners to identify the strengths and weaknesses in Nursing One and try to enhance the points of strength and cater to the deficiencies with adequate supplementary materials. This current evaluation program plans to help all partners, particularly the book's authors, review and fill the gaps in their future editions. For that purpose, this research will try to choose and implement a set of adequate criteria for assessing this textbook. Another objective of this study is to ensure that the book, i.e., Nursing One is a successful selection, that it will meet the needs of the learners, and that its content does not conflict with the learners’ values.

Significance of study
Textbook evaluation is an important activity for both instructors and textbook writers. Indeed, it can act as an instrument for selecting adequate learning materials for students at a specific academic level or specialization. But unfortunately, textbook evaluation is not always given due attention, and scientific criteria are not adopted when choosing a textbook to teach a particular language course (Hutchison & Torres, 1994).

Hence, this research aims to assess Nursing One, a book assigned to a group of premedical students taking an E.S.P. course in the preparatory college at Umm-Al-Qura University.

The Specific goal of the research
This investigation aims to assess Nursing One from the instructors' and students' views. The results of this evaluation can provide decision-makers at the English Language Centre (E.L.C.) with accurate data to decide upon the level of appropriateness of that book for premedical students in the preparatory college.

The research questions
This research project attempts to answer the following questions:
1. Is the design of Nursing One appropriate?
2. Are the activities in Nursing One sufficient and well presented?
3. Does Nursing One teach the appropriate language skills?
4. What type of language does Nursing One introduce?
5. Is Nursing One effective in terms of its subjects and content?
6. Does Nursing One use effective assessment procedures?
Literature Review

Textbook evaluation and its functions

Educators conduct textbook evaluations for different objectives. For Tomlinson (2003), textbook assessment is a process that aims to measure the value of the material taught to a specific group of learners. For instance, it shows a textbook's value and suitability for a particular group of learners.

Littlejohn (1998) points out that text evaluation enables the evaluator to see 'inside' the materials to control their design and implementation more. Cunningsworth (1995) asserts that textbook evaluation helps choose a new textbook or find particular strengths and pitfalls in coursebooks already in use. Such evaluation may also help publishers decide on publication and help researchers and authors prepare their books and write reviews for journal publication.

Textbook evaluation procedures

The significance of textbooks makes it necessary to seek an adequate assessment procedure and identify the principles to follow in their assessment. Litz (2001) claims that there are several textbook evaluation procedures, making it necessary for researchers to look for the best assessment procedures that fit their evaluation objectives. For this purpose, checklists are among the most practical and effective techniques for measuring the appropriateness of the textbook features. The textbook features that need evaluation include the book's suitability, its accessibility, and its layout. Such features are commonly evaluated qualitatively on the Likert scale (e.g., Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Strongly Disagree, and Agree).

For Cakit (2006), a checklist is an instrument to evaluate a textbook on specific criteria. This instrument states the main features that are necessary for effective educational materials. It allows for comparison between different sets of subjects. Actually, through a checklist, a researcher can specify, verify or compare information about a particular book. The researchers, the instructors, and students can participate in the evaluation process. These participants try to specify the value of each textbook feature according to the set criteria (Soori et al., 2011).

McGrath (2002) says the checklist is systematic and comprehensive, and its results are usually precise. Furthermore, a researcher could easily modify the checklist to match a specific situation.

Two types of evaluation (Predictive & Retrospective evaluation)

The standard classification of textbook assessment techniques is entitled predictive vs. retrospective evaluation. Predictive or pre-use evaluation helps to decide which materials best suit the set objectives (Ellis, 1997). It helps to explore a textbook's future or potential before adopting it.

A retrospective textbook assessment checks predictive evaluation's reliability to improve its suitability for future use (Ellis, 1997). Concerning the nature of this form of evaluation, i.e., retrospective assessment, it is usually done through a wide-scale framework. This framework provides a more accurate assessment by analyzing the data obtained via varied instruments formed of a reflective report and a checklist (Cunningsworth, 1995). This assessment form may continue for the semester (Byrd, 2001).
Relevant to the above classification is macro-and micro-evaluation. While in micro-evaluation, the evaluator selects a specific teaching task and subjects it to a detailed evaluation, macro-evaluation endorses a comprehensive assessment procedure to check if the whole textbook meets the specific educational objectives. Planning and collecting data for macro-evaluation is quite a tiring procedure; however, a micro-evaluation sequence could serve as a rich source for macro-evaluation. Tucker (1995) reports that micro-assessment can be an effective tool for valid wide-range, macro-textbook evaluation. This current research adopts the macro-evaluation approach to evaluate Nursing One.

**Previous studies**

There are numerous studies related to EFL/ESL textbook evaluation. These evaluations generally use teachers’ and students’ perspectives. The ultimate objective of most of these evaluation studies is to check the efficacy and suitability of the target textbooks (Richards & Renandya, 2002). However, one could observe that most of these studies come from the West. Such studies are needed to check the suitability of the (EFL) textbooks for a typical conservative society like that of Saudi Arabia. Fortunately, and quite recently, some researchers conducted studies in the Kingdom and other Middle-Eastern countries. These studies have revealed some interesting and valuable results that will benefit the researchers in this current research project.

One of the most relevant studies conducted in Saudi Arabia was done by Alsheheri (2016). This study aims to evaluate an English language textbook titled Cutting Edge. This book is taught to first-year students at King Khalid University. To judge this textbook, the researcher relies on the perception of 12 teachers who provide their views via a checklist constructed by Litz (2001). The checklist has six domains covering the book activities, layout, language type, and content. The results reveal that the teachers are satisfied with Cutting Edge and acknowledge that this book serves its purpose to some extent. However, some teachers reserve that the textbook does not pay enough attention to the practical aspects of language teaching and that the book does not give enough time to handle the writing skill.

Another relevant research conducted in The Kingdom is by Al-Harbi (2016). This study uses two checklists instead of one to evaluate a textbook series taught in Taif secondary schools. The study aims to see if the series can achieve its set objectives. The first checklist by Keban et al. (2012) shows that the evaluators are generally quite satisfied with the series. Still, some of these evaluators express dissatisfaction with the review sections and the quality of the textbook paper. The second checklist used in this study was designed by Williams (2006). This checklist has also revealed both strengths and weaknesses in the language content. It is revealed that the vocabulary and reading skills are positively evaluated, whereas speaking, grammar, and writing are negatively rated.

A third relevant study in this region was done by Faruk (2014). That study analyses three textbooks published and used over the last three decades to teach English to secondary school students. The three books are 1- Saudi Arabian English, 2- English for Saudi Students, and 3- Traveller 111. The researcher noticed that Traveller 111, currently used in Saudi schools, differs significantly from the other two textbooks. This series stands in sharp contrast with them. The researcher (Faruk, 2014) highlights this contrast by saying from nineteen-eighty-two to two-
thousand-twelve, English was taught within the traditional Saudi cultural context, and there was total avoidance of western cultural issues. However, the English language material in Traveller 111 is contextualized in terms of western culture.

Quite recently, Salih (2020) checked the appropriateness of a series of textbooks called Pacesetter (Strange & Hall, 2015). This series is taught to premedical students at a Sudanese university. The researcher collected data from a sample of 24 EFL instructors. The results reveal the appropriateness of the series for the target students. However, some participants reserve that the book does not give enough time for speaking. In this study, a checklist helped to get the instructors' perceptions of the textbook.

In Turkey, Tunç (2010) conducted a unique study. The researcher assessed the first-year English program taught at Ankara University. The researchers obtained instructors' and students' points of view via questionnaires. The study used the (CIPP) evaluation model, developed in 1991 and has been used since then. The study sample involved 406 students who joined the university in 2008. The sample of study also involved 12 English language instructors from Ankara University. The instructors and their students provided the required data via questionnaires. The findings showed that the textbooks assigned to the first-year students serve their purpose to a certain extent. The study ends up with some suggestions to improve the content of these books and to pay more attention to the exercises and drills to make them more enticing and practical.

In South Korea, Litz (2001) developed a checklist and used it with students and teachers at a tertiary level. The checklist aimed to measure the efficacy of an EFL textbook called English First-hand taught at Sung Kwan University, South Korea. The checklist includes various criteria that cover the physical characteristics of the textbook, its methodology, its aims, and its teaching approaches. The researcher analyzed the generated data focused on the linguistic components and further expanded to include the students' backgrounds, needs, and interests. The criteria for this analysis are established on the theoretical model of communicative competence, which is adopted to build this evaluation checklist. The study findings obtained via systematic in-depth analysis reveal that the target textbook has many positive features and shortcomings. But "Its positive attributes far out-weight the negative characteristics" Litz (2001, p.34).

Ruben (2010) analyzed the content of textbooks used in Dutch early childhood teacher education. This analysis showed a lack of consistency in the content of the curriculum.

From the literature reviewed above, one can simply conclude that textbook evaluation has become a significant issue, widely considered by many linguists and curriculum specialists. Faruk (2014) confirms that textbook assessment has been an indispensable tool for deciding the appropriateness of a textbook for any particular school setting.

Evaluating textbooks for any educational program can be of utmost importance. However, a proper evaluation should consider all aspects of the book, including its layout and design, its content and language type, and the skills and activities used to enhance these skills. In practice, the researchers acknowledged that English textbooks could lead to better achievement in language skills if they are well developed; otherwise, they only become a waste of time.
Method

Participants

Text evaluation is the responsibility of the teachers who teach the target textbook, but Chambers (1997) proposes that the evaluation may be more reliable if it is collectively performed by all those who participate in the teaching-learning process.

For this study, 25 teachers and 12 students involved in teaching or learning Nursing One in the preparatory college at Umm-Al-Qura University have participated in the investigation. The sample of the teachers has engaged highly qualified staff members who belong to different nationalities, and most of them have relatively long teaching experiences varying from four to twenty years. They report that they have taught other EFL /ESP textbooks and are well acquainted with Nursing One, which is the subject of this study. The students’ sample is selected randomly from the premedical groups studying in the preparatory college. The ages of these students vary between 17 and 19 years. The study took place during the second term of 2021-22.

Instruments

The researchers used a checklist to collect data for this study. Litz (2001) developed this list at Sung Kwan University in South Korea. That checklist was modified and used as an essential tool to collect data from the teachers. Litz’s checklist adopts Likert scales. Hence, the subjects are requested to select from “Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree” to give their views on the items included in the checklist. The modified checklist consists of 32 items that cover six domains. Each of these domains explores one aspect of the textbook. The six fields cover: 1- The layout of the book, 2- The activities, 3- The skills, 4- The language patterns, 5- The content of the book, and the evaluation procedures. The checklist ends up with open-ended questions to allow the participants to express their views and elaborate on different issues in the survey if they like. Cronbach's alpha (α) is adopted to check the reliability of the checklist. This procedure revealed that the checklist has a high-reliability index of (0.81).

The second tool used in this study is a series of interviews with the student sample. The researchers conducted the interviews with 12 students randomly selected from the premedical students. The researchers prepared the interview questions, and two highly qualified instructors validated the instrument.

The Material of (Nursing One)

Nursing One, the subject of this study, was prepared by Oxford University Press in 2014. The author (Tony Grice) reports that Nursing One aims to help students succeed in their future careers and prepare them to pursue their study of nursing and medicine through an English medium of instruction.

Nursing One gives the language information and the skills the students need to begin their careers as doctors or nurses. Nursing One includes fifteen units. Each unit starts with a scrub-up and vocabulary, followed by reading and grammar, then teaches listening and grammar in context. Later on, the unit introduces process writing. The review section also involves vocabulary and an assessment of the learning outcomes.
Additionally, the book includes the Reading Bank, which provides practice in reading for nursing and medicine. Then the book presents facts, figures, and quotations about nursing and therapy. The book also offers online interactive exercises to review and recycle language. These exercises are accessible @ www.oup.com/elt/oefc.

**Procedure**

The researchers held interviews with 12 students randomly selected from premedical students at the preparatory college. The researchers distributed copies of the checklist to 25 English language teachers from the English Language Centre, who returned all documents on time.

The teachers evaluate the different items in the checklist on a 5-point Likert scale. This procedure would help the teachers show their satisfaction with each item on the checklist. In the same checklist, the teachers expressed their views freely through open-ended questions. The researcher arranged the teachers' responses into tables and analyzed them quantitively to answer the research questions. The researchers used Students' answers to the interview questions to verify the instructors' points of view.

**Results**

This part of the study presents the findings, which aims to evaluate *Nursing One* and check its suitability for premedical students. It concentrated on six dimensions, which include: the layout, the activities, the skills, the language content, the subject, and finally, the assessment procedures adopted in this textbook. The evaluation is based on the teachers' and students' points of view.

**The book's layout**

The book’s layout simply refers to the design, form, and structure of language sections in the book. The format also covers how the textbook appears to its customers (Inal, 2006). The package of *Nursing One* includes a Student’s Book, a Workbook, and an i-Tools USB. The package consists of The Teacher’s Resource Book, which helps the teacher prepare students to work in their fields of specialization.

To check the suitability of the layout and design of this textbook, the researcher resorted to the teachers' responses obtained through a checklist and a series of interviews with the students. **Table 1** provides the details of the teachers’ responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In <em>Nursing One</em>, the goals are clearly stated at the beginning of each unit.</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>03%</td>
<td>02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Nursing One</em> specifies the skills and structures taught in each unit.</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>08%</td>
<td>08%</td>
<td>02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The layout and design of the book are pretty suitable and attractive.</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>01%</td>
<td>02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The lessons are supported with pictures, figures, mind-maps, and other e-learning materials that back up their learning.</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>06%</td>
<td>05%</td>
<td>05%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A good vocabulary list or glossary is included at the end of each book unit.

Nursing One includes relevant review sections and exercises.

Nursing One includes quizzes and unit-by-unit tests.

The Teacher's Recourse Book contains guidelines and directions on using the textbook to realize its utmost benefit.

The responses in Table 1 reveal that the teachers are pretty satisfied with the layout and design of Nursing One. The answers show that a percentage of (85%) of the instructors acknowledge that the book clearly states each lesson's goals at the beginning of each unit. In response to the second statement, (82%) of the sample acknowledged that the book includes a list of all skills and items the teacher must teach in each lesson. Furthermore, (79%) of the teachers point out that the design of Nursing One is appropriate and attractive. In response to the fourth statement of the checklist, (84%) of the instructors hold that the material in this textbook is well organized and well presented. They also acknowledge that the lessons are supported with pictures, figures, mind-maps, and other e-learning materials that facilitate and support the learning activities. In response to the fifth statement on the checklist, more than three-quarters of the teachers, i.e., (78%) admit that a relevant vocabulary list is given at the end of each unit. Then (72%) of the teachers agree with the statement that the book includes good exercises and review sections. In response to the seventh statement, the teachers admit that the book contains quizzes and tests supporting learning processes. Finally, and in response to the eighth statement, (80%) of the instructors acknowledge that the Teacher's Resource Book is well-designed and contains clear directions on how the textbook helps realize the maximum benefit for the students.

The interviews with the students revealed that most admitted that Nursing One is well-organized and its topics are well-graded to meet their needs and cater to their interests. The students also commend the review sections and say they find these captions interesting, including fruitful exercises and valuable revisions. The students add that the book's colors and pictures are attractive, and the font is easy to read. The students also admit that the book’s cover is durable and that the book’s size is just reasonable. They add that the book is light and easy to carry.

From the above responses of both teachers and their students, one can easily conclude that the design and layout of Nursing One are appropriate as more than (80%) of the participants agree with most of the statements in the above table. The researchers can report these findings to answer the research's first question, which inquires about the suitability of Nursing One in terms of its layout and design.

Activities in Nursing One

The second research question inquires about the effectiveness and suitability of Nursing One in terms of its activities. The researchers measure the textbook’s suitability through the participants’ responses to six statements in this section. The teachers’ responses are reported in Table 2;
Table 2. Instructors’ reactions regarding the activities of Nursing One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nursing One provides activities catering to the learners’ different needs and language learning requirements.</td>
<td>% 36</td>
<td>% 44</td>
<td>% 10</td>
<td>% 4</td>
<td>% 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The activities in Nursing One provide good communicative and meaningful practice.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The activities include individual, pair, and group work</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in proper context.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The activities in Nursing One encourage creative and independent responses.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Teachers can easily modify the Nursing One activities to fit the students' different levels.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that (80%) of the teachers think Nursing One provides a balanced set of activities that cater to the different needs of the learners and the diverse language learning requirements. In the open-ended section of the checklist, one of the teachers acknowledges the balance in the distribution of exercises. The balance is between exercises that concentrate on fluency and the ones that focus on accurate production. Furthermore, this instructor adds that “the course activities focus on topics relevant to the medical field, such as Hospital Admissions, Accidents & Emergencies, Pain, Nutrition and Obesity, Symptoms, Medication, and Alternative Treatment.”

In response to the second statement in this section, (74%) of the teachers hold that the activities in Nursing One provide communicative and meaningful practices. In response to the third statement, (86 %) of the teachers acknowledge that the actions contained in Nursing One incorporate individual, pair, and group work.

In response to the fourth statement in this section, (70 %) of the teachers hold that Nursing One presents grammar and vocabulary in proper contexts. Then in response to the fifth statement in the checklist, more than two-thirds, i.e., (67%) of the teachers, claim that activities in the textbook promote creative, original, and independent responses.

The teachers are then requested to give their view about the flexibility of the activities in Nursing One and how they could be modified or reformulated to match students’ different abilities. In response to this question, an overwhelming majority of (84%) claim that the material is designed and arranged flexibly and that such material can be easily modified or amended to fit the particular context. In the open-ended section, one of the teachers supports this claim saying that “Activities in Nursing One can easily be modified, supplemented, or even changed to fit the particular level of the students.”
In the same section of the checklist, one teacher comments on the additional components and activities of *Nursing One*. He says that "reviews and tests offered regularly are used as activities to allow practicing what is known as formative evaluation that gives the students the chance to check the level of their performance before it is too late."

At another level, the student sample interviewed in this study has confirmed the appropriateness of *Nursing One* activities for premedical students. These interviews revealed that the students are satisfied with the activities found in *Nursing One*. They ensure that the book is rich with exciting and valuable activities. Another student comments on the Role Play activity indorsed in the book, claiming that it is a creative method for teaching speaking as it helps the students to assimilate the language patterns used in hospital or clinic settings. A third student commends the flexibility of the learning styles adopted by Nursing One. He says that *Nursing One* offers the students the chance to practice various learning activities individually, in pairs, and as groups. He then claims that this variety in learning style has made their learning practice enjoyable.

This variety in presenting language activities has qualified *Nursing One* to appeal to many language learners who adopt different learning styles. *Nursing One* authors have endorsed individual differences as a common principle when designing this textbook.

The researcher can cite the above statements to answer the second question of this research. This question asks if the exercises and activities of *Nursing One* are suitable for premedical students. In response to the above question, most teachers and their students agree that the activities in this book are adequate and ideal for teaching different language skills and preparing students to resume their medical studies through English instruction.

**Skills in Nursing One**

The third research question asks if *Nursing One* provides adequate language Skills. The level of adequacy of these skills is checked via four statements in this questionnaire and presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Instructors’ view regarding the adequacy of skills in Nursing One**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Nursing One</em> stresses the language skills that the students need in their academic life or their future profession.</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>Nursing One</em> provides the four language skills in a balanced manner.</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Nursing One</em> pays particular consideration to study skills, such as listening, note-taking, skimming, and scanning.</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Nursing One</em> encourages practicing proper pronunciation that includes stress and intonation.</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 reveals that (76%) of the teachers admit that Nursing One focuses on the language skills students need to use in their current academic life and future careers. Furthermore, two-thirds of these participants acknowledge that Nursing One keeps the balance between the four language skills and teaches them integrative. One of the teachers in the open-ended section describes Nursing One as a comprehensive textbook covering all language skills. He says, “Nursing One is a multi-skill textbook that manages to integrate productive and receptive skills.” McDonough and Shaw (1997) strongly recommend an integrated multi-skill syllabus as it incorporates receptive and productive skills.

However, in the same open-ended questions section, one of the participant’s reserves that Nursing One does not allocate enough time to speaking. He says there are sufficient reading exercises but not enough dialogues or speaking activities.

In response to the third statement in the checklist, (73%) of the teachers think that Nursing One pays considerable attention to sub-skills such as note-taking, scanning, skimming for information, etc. Concerning the book’s attention to these sub-skills, one of the teachers points out that Nursing One considers the sub-skills such as making predictions, scanning for details, and skimming for general information. This teacher adds, “Adequate implementation of these sub-skills can enhance teaching the major skills by definition.”

Concerning pronunciation, the teachers claim that the method adopted by Nursing One to teach pronunciation is one of the book’s strong points. Furthermore, (80%) of the teachers acknowledge that this book encourages the learners to practice natural pronunciation (that involves stress and intonation). The researcher observed that many units in this book contain exercises that deal with word stress and intonation, and new words are commonly transcribed phonetically in the Glossary section.

For the students’ sample, Nursing One is a comprehensive textbook. They acknowledge that it includes all the language components they need for their academic specialization and future careers as medical doctors. They admit that Nursing One provides models for successfully practicing these language skills. The students add that teaching these language skills is enhanced through innovative techniques adopted in the book. Moreover, some of the students interviewed reflect their admiration of the British accent officially endorsed in Nursing One, claiming that it is more transparent, precise, straightforward, and clear. The supporting electronic materials are found on C.D.s and used to teach listening and speaking skills together with materials on the book electronic site @ www.oup.com/elt/oefc.seem to acquaint the students and familiarize them with the native British accent.

Generally speaking, Nursing One authors have tried their best to cater to the learners’ needs. This book has attempted to develop a multi-skill syllabus covering receptive and productive skills. This type of syllabus aligns with Hammer's (1996) approach, which endorses an integrated, multi-skills syllabus to teach English to EFL and E.S.P. students.
**Language type in the textbook**

The fourth question of this study enquires about the suitability of language type in Nursing One. This question is answered through the teachers’ responses to four statements in this part of the checklist. Responses to these statements are recorded in Table 4.

Table 4. Teachers’ view of language type in Nursing One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The language used in Nursing One is authentic.</td>
<td>% 35</td>
<td>% 46</td>
<td>% 11</td>
<td>% 2</td>
<td>% 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The language used in Nursing One is at the right level for students</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The explanation and presentation of grammar points are just appropriate</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The vocabulary items are presented with brief and accessible examples and simple explanations</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table:4 shows that (81%) of the teachers admit that the language used in Nursing One is authentic. One of the teachers in the open-ended section says, "The adoption of such authentic language reflects a non-traditional trend in language teaching." This trend comes in line with the 'Communicative Approach' to language teaching that calls for giving attention to language authenticity (Litz,2001). It is pretty clear that Nursing One author seems to be fully aware of the 'Communicative Approach' principles and reflects this awareness in using authentic language when designing this textbook. According to Turkistany (2017), original material makes the book more exciting and allows learners to set these materials as their speaking and writing models.

Concerning the second statement in this section, it is revealed that (71%) of the teachers confirm that the language used in Nursing One is just at the right level for the students. Furthermore, a vast majority of (85%) of the respondents state that the presentation of grammar items is entirely appropriate.

On the other side, students view the language type and components in Nursing One as appropriate. They admit that this book uses a language relevant to their specialization. However, some students reserve that this textbook is heavily loaded with new vocabulary items. The researchers observe that some lessons in the book include numerous new vocabulary items, and some of these words need more explanation. However, apart from this reservation, most teachers and their students seem entirely satisfied with the type of language used in Nursing One.

The responses of the teachers and their students provide answers to the fifth question of this research. It is documented that the language used in this book is authentic and relevant to the students' levels and specializations. It is also reported that the grammar points and vocabulary items are appropriate and well explained.
Subject and content of Nursing One

It is generally believed language is strongly related to the culture of the people who speak it. Hence, language cannot be separated from the culture of its speakers, and this fact makes it impossible for the students to study an EFL or E.S.P. textbook without being exposed to the target language culture (McDonough & Shaw, 1997). Therefore, textbook writers must be careful when selecting materials for EFL/ESL learners and ensure that the book does not contain culturally inappropriate topics.

The fifth research question asks about the relevance of the subjects and content of Nursing One to the students’ academic needs and culture. The teachers' responses to these questions are in Table 5

Table 5. Teachers’ views towards the subjects and content of Nursing One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The content of Nursing One is relevant to students' academic needs and</td>
<td>%40</td>
<td>%44</td>
<td>%06</td>
<td>%4</td>
<td>%6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>caters to their future medical careers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The topics in Nursing One are relevant &amp; realistic.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The subjects of Nursing One are interesting.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The subjects in Nursing One are varied and colorful.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The materials in Nursing One do not portray any negative stereotypes</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or culturally inappropriate issues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 reveals that a vast majority of (84%) of the teachers agree or even strongly agree that the content of Nursing One is relevant to students' academic needs. Furthermore, (77%) of these participants hold that the material in this book is quite realistic. One teacher in the open-ended section reports, "All of the topics in this book are related to the medical profession and deal with health and medical issues." Another teacher in the same open-ended question section of the checklist confirms that “the content of Nursing One is scientific, useful and informative.”

At another level, (83%) of the teachers confirm that the content and subjects of Nursing One are motivating and engaging. Scholars, such as Ruben (2010), recommend that an ideal textbook for teaching English for Specific purposes should include authentic, engaging, entertaining, and up-to-date materials relevant to the student’s specialization. Other scholars suggest that a good textbook must cover a variety of topics and cater to individual differences (Lives, 1999)

When asked about the cultural relevance of the material in Nursing One for premedical students, the majority of the instructors, i.e. (84%) confirmed that the contents of this book are neither culturally biased nor show negative stereotypes and that they do not include any culturally problematic issues. In terms of subject variety of the academic content, the teachers report that
Nursing One has covered a wide range of medical and health topics. One of the instructors noticed that “all the topics in Nursing One are taken from reliable resources, and some are directly scripted from scientific medical articles.”

One of the teachers reports that “Nursing One frequently presents patients, doctors and other medical staff interacting and discussing causes, and possible treatments in a real hospital or clinic settings.” Then this teacher adds, “The presentation of such events in a real setting seems to strengthen Nursing One’s authenticity and puts it up to the learners’ expectations.”

Regarding the students’ perception of the content suitability, it is revealed that they carry a similar view to that of their teachers. One of the students claims that Nursing One includes interesting, challenging, motivating materials and discusses various academic, medical, and health issues that the students need most in their study of medicine. Another student assumes this book can enhance their overall medical awareness and experiences by exposing them to hospital and clinic settings. However, some of these students reserve that they need more time to cover all of the materials included in Nursing One.

**Assessment and evaluation**

Over the last few decades, educators have changed their view of assessment and geared the evaluation process to enhance learning (Umar, 2020). Educators believe in formative evaluation, which uses assessment results as feedback to improve the teaching-learning processes. So, the final question of this research enquires about the appropriateness of the evaluation methods adopted in Nursing One.

**Table 6. Teachers’ perception of assessment tasks in Nursing One**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assessment tasks in Nursing One focus on the language used in the classroom and real-life situations.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assessment tasks in Nursing One focus on developing student’s thinking &amp; cognition</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nursing One provides various test types (objective vs. subjective tests etc.).</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assessment tasks in Nursing One focus on developing students' linguistic and professional abilities.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nursing One adopts non-traditional assessment techniques such as formative assessment.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows that (72%) of teachers agree that the assessment practice focuses on language use in the classroom. Furthermore, (80%) of the teachers admit that the evaluation tasks in Nursing One develop students’ thinking and cognition. The third question in this section inquires about test types found in Nursing One. In response to this question, (70%) of the teachers acknowledge that the tests in Nursing One are varied and colorful. These tests include both
objective and subjective tests. However, one of the instructors reserves that “the objective tests in this book might give the learners a false impression about the level of their performance.”

The fourth question in this part asks if the assessment tasks in Nursing One focus on developing the linguistic and professional skills of the students. In response to this question, about two-thirds of the teachers agree that the evaluation procedures followed in this book could enhance the linguistic and professional development of the students.

The last question asks if Nursing One adopts modern evaluation techniques such as formative assessment. In response to this question, (72%) of the teachers agree that this book uses modern evaluation techniques. One of the teachers comments on this practice, saying, "The short tests administered after every one or two units, represent one of the basic characteristics of formative evaluation, which stands as one of the most modern and effective assessment techniques." Yet, it must be clear that the efficacy of such evaluation procedures can increase if the results of these tests provide feedback to improve or modify the teaching-learning processes (Umar & Eterji 2020). From the above results, it becomes clear that Nursing One adopts some modern approaches to assessment that aim to enhance teaching and learning procedures.

Discussion

Researchers generally believe that E.S.P. textbooks are the essential sources for teaching English. E.S.P. textbooks impart specialized linguistic knowledge, including scientific terminology and expressions pertinent to the specific field of the learners' specialization. These E.S.P. books enhance students' communicative and academic abilities and serve as a guide for learners and their teachers. An E.S.P. textbook is not just a collection of topics but a pillar for any educational or academic process.

The researchers launched a large-scale assessment scheme to check Nursing One's suitability for a group of premedical students studying an E.S.P. course at Umm-AL-Qura University. It is essential, therefore, to evaluate the E.S.P. textbooks to ensure that the material in this book is attractive for the learners and capable of realizing the intended objectives. A group of competent teachers with distinguished academic qualifications does the evaluation task and has taught this textbook. A comprehensive checklist, initially developed by Litz (2001), is modified and used to collect data from the teachers. Students' views towards this textbook are obtained via a series of interviews.

The results obtained through the checklist and interviews revealed that most teachers and the learners approve of the activities and the topics taught in Nursing One. These teachers report that Nursing One includes exciting and relevant activities and lessons that motivate the students and keep them engaged in learning the book's content. Furthermore, most participants admit that this book has catered to all students' academic and linguistic needs. This optimistic view towards
Nursing One is realized through the provision of different innovative learning activities and the selection of relevant medical topics that acquaint the students with their future specializations.

Most of the lessons in this book focus on medical and health issues and present doctors and other medical staff interacting with each other and patients in hospitals and clinics. The researchers observed that most teachers who participated in this study acknowledge that Nursing One manages to introduce authentic language. This language is bound to help learners understand English in real-life situations.

Nursing One is a multi-skill textbook that offers many opportunities for students to practice the different language skills and allows them to practice these skills as individuals, in pairs, and in groups. This variety in language learning activities qualifies this book to appeal to a broader range of E.S.P. learners.

Furthermore, the participants acknowledge that the size and format of the print in the book are appropriate for students and easy to read. They also claim that the various activities in each unit support understanding of the main topics. Moreover, the learners can easily access Nursing One e-Site @www.oup.com/elt/oefc and download relevant files. The researchers believe such materials can promote learners' autonomy.

At another level, one of the teachers described Nursing One as attractive, durable, and easy to use. Furthermore, the participants express their satisfaction with the book for using innovative techniques such as Role-Play and Mind-Maps to facilitate learning new concepts and ideas.

However, one of the most crucial findings in this study is that most participants acknowledge that the content of this book is not culturally biased and does not portray any negative stereotypes.

On the other side, some participants have expressed reservations about specific issues in Nursing One. For instance, some students complain that the text is full of new vocabulary items and that the time assigned for teaching this book is insufficient. However, the writer can resolve such a problem if he (Tony Grice) reduces the number of new vocabulary items in each unit and cuts down on the number of units in the book. Alternatively, the researchers recommended that the students be allowed enough time to cover all the materials included in Nursing One.

Another relevant complaint appeared when one of the instructors who participated in the study claimed that Nursing One does not allocate enough time to speaking. This case represents a critical issue, but a teacher can solve this problem by encouraging group discussions and teamwork. The teacher must give the students enough time to practice oral activities inside the class and arrange seminars and dialogues outside the classroom. Other scholars suggest enhancing speaking skills through loud reading (Harmer, 1996).

Some participants raised some reservations about the capability of the evaluation procedures adopted in this book to develop students' thinking abilities and cognition. Furthermore, some of the teachers complain that the textbook does not provide enough variety of test types claiming that most of the tests in this book are objective tests, and these types of tests do not motivate the students to practice deep learning. Anyway, instructors can resolve this problem by using essay-type
questions and the results of these tests to provide feedback to improve or modify the teaching-learning processes (Tunç, 2010).

Under all conditions, the researchers suggest that all E.S.P. textbooks should be rigorously assessed and evaluated before being taught in classrooms.

Conclusion
Regardless of the minor shortcomings mentioned by some participants, the main findings indicate that most instructors and students are quite satisfied with almost all aspects of this textbook. The participants, teachers, and their students have shown a high level of satisfaction with Nursing One in terms of its content, layout, language type, activities, and attempt to cater to the academic and professional needs of the learners. The participants also expressed their admiration of Nursing One adoption of advanced language assessment techniques, and they admire the book’s avoidance of all negative stereotypes or culturally inappropriate issues. These findings have led the researcher to conclude that Nursing One, with all these advantages and qualities, is a suitable textbook for premedical students studying in the Preparatory College at U.Q.U. and will benefit other students elsewhere in learning English for medical purposes. It will, without a doubt, remain for quite a while as a textbook that many instructors will recommend for their students and many other specialists and language learners will be eager to use.

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Note: The number of this study is 12,6,435

About the Authors:
Professor Abdul-Majeed Atatyib Omar studied at the University of Wales where he got his Ph.D. in applied linguistics. He got my master’s degree in English at the American University of Beirut. He got my BA in English at the University of Khartoum, Sudan. At the moment, he works in the English Language Center at Umm-Al-Qura University.KSA.
ORCiD ID; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5969-9843

Abdulrahman Abdulmalik Amin is an assistant professor in the English Language Center at Umm-Qura University. He works in the English language Centre since Feb 2001. He got his Ph.D. Degree in Applied linguistics at the University of Wales. He published a number of research papers in outstanding journals and participated in seminars and training sessions for new staff members.

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Factors Pertinent to First Language Use in Foreign Language Classroom: A Case of Content and Language Integrated Learning

Hengzhi Hu
Faculty of Education
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia
Email: p108937@siswa.ukm.edu.my

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Abstract
The success of bilingual immersion programmes has promoted the debate about whether learners’ first language (L1) should be used in foreign language classrooms. Nevertheless, Content and Language Integrated Learning, a pedagogical approach embedded in the development of multilingualism and multiliteracy theories, has overstepped the monolingual principle by allowing for more flexibility in the choice of instructional languages. Previous research has emphasised chiefly the reasons and effects of embracing a shared language, other than the target language, in content-based bilingual classrooms, while this paper intends to investigate the correlations between L1 use with learner factors, the understanding of which can shed light on more efficient translanguaging practices. Through a cross-sectional approach, the present study was contextualised in a large-scale, content-based English as a foreign language programme and drew on 335 undergraduates, who completed a series of questionnaires and tests. Correlation and regression analyses primarily demonstrated that English proficiency was the most significant predictor of learners’ overall attitude to L1 instruction in classrooms, followed by content proficiency and language learning motivation. Gender was a non-significant variable for learners’ overall perspective on L1 employment but was related to the constructs about using the L1 for phatic purposes, with male students requiring more translanguaging assistance. The paper concludes with the implication that the desire for L1 use is associated with various learner factors and that teachers should be aware of how to encourage and regulate translanguaging practices for differing instructional purposes as per the changing needs in classrooms.

Keywords: content and language integrated learning, English as a foreign language, first language use, medium of instruction, translanguaging

Introduction

How to teach a second or foreign language (L2) is an intricate issue involving the consideration of various matters, and it is a golden question whose answers have been changing for decades with the reformation of Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories. The Reform Movement, a milestone in the history of modern language instruction, has been playing a vital role since its birth owing to its philosophy of regarding languages as living ones, and one of its initiatives against the prevalence of the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) characterised by excessive use of learners’ first language (L1) as the medium of instruction has encouraged the emergence and popularisation of a direct method to education, emphasising the target language (TL) immersion with the proscription of L1 use in the classroom environment.

Against this backdrop, scholars presume that engaging learners in the TL environment in a way that is similar to how they have learned their L1 can facilitate SLA (Santacruz & Gollan, 2021; Vijayadasan & Tomy, 2020). Although there are different types of immersion programmes based on the amount of the TL used in instruction, total immersion, wherein exclusive use of the TL is statutory, tends to have attracted more widespread attention. However, the development of linguistic theories, such as translanguaging, has rationalised the indispensable role learners’ L1 has in FLT to promote multilingualism against a monolingual mindset. On this basis, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), a pedagogical approach arising from the multilingual European society and characterised by a dual focus on content learning and L2 learning, has stimulated considerable research interest due to its inclusiveness of L1 use. With previous research emphasising the ways and effects of utilising L1 in CLIL classrooms, however, little is known about how translanguaging practices are related to the diversity of learner profiles (Jules & Belgrave, 2020) and learner perceptions (Zhou & Mann, 2021). To this end, the present study placed in a CLIL programme foregrounds the exploration of how learners’ attitudes to different ways of L1 instruction are associated with the learner factors justified to be essential for this issue, aimed at addressing the following research question:

• To what degree can learners’ attitudes to L1 use in CLIL be explained by their L2 learning motivation (L2LM), gender, L2 proficiency (L2P) and content proficiency (CP)?

Literature Review

CLIL is a generic umbrella term representing “a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010, p. 1). It is, then, a way of combining subject learning and learning a language that is not the learners’ L1, just as the ‘two for the price of one’ metaphor proposed by Bonnet (2012). That said, CLIL emphasises both content learning and L2 learning as simultaneous academic goals, and learners are expected to acquire content knowledge via the medium of the TL and use and develop the TL through the content subject (Gabillon, 2020; Hu, 2021). Since the introduction of CLIL, it has gained considerable attention from educators and researchers for its unique feature that distinguishes it from other FLT approaches. It is now considered one of the most expedient ways of establishing interdisciplinary links and preparing future specialists who can communicate professional knowledge efficiently in an L2 (Latypova, 2020; State, 2020).
However, the popularisation of CLIL has given rise to several problems regarding its application, one of which is whether learners’ L1 should be used to supplement L2 instruction.

To a large degree, this issue is a golden question without fixed answers. On the one hand, researchers assume that L1 merely “has a support function for explanation”, the use of which should be minimised in CLIL; on the other hand, “L1 has a learning function”, which can help to improve learners’ L2P and metalinguistic awareness (Lasagabaster, 2013, p. 11). The dilemma is apparent, as using L1 can facilitate learners’ understanding and reduce their cognitive loads, but overuse of L1 may deprive learners of exposure to the TL. However, regardless of the long-standing debate, CLIL, a young discipline, admittedly allows for more possibilities and flexibility in L1 instruction in L2 classrooms and distinguishes itself from the monolingual immersion models. When L1 is utilised appropriately to achieve specific purposes (e.g., helping learners understand concepts, comparing L1 and L2, creating a comfortable class environment, addressing disciplinary issues), language learning and content learning can be greatly scaffolded.

Indeed, many CLIL programmes have encouraged L1 use, such as the well-known Polish CLIL programmes, wherein different models have been developed to guide L1 instruction (Czura & Papaja, 2013). Code-switching and translanguaging are two crucial concepts underlying these programmes, as both of them highlight the potential of L1 in FLT. Although researchers tend to use these terms synonymously, their essence is different. Code-switching refers to the methodical switch of languages in a single utterance, while translanguaging “draw(s) on an individual’s linguistic and semiotic repertoires” and includes code-switching and other practices with an assumption that a bilingual or multilingual person has a single language continuum that they can use to communicate without referring to separate language systems (Mazak, 2017, p. 5). In brief, code-switching is the process of changing two languages in contrast to translanguaging, wherein speakers attempt to create a complete repertoire of languages. They have contrasting ideologies, with translanguaging moving beyond the perspective of language separation and monolingual methodologies associated with code-switching but towards flexible language use and learning through more than two languages.

Recent research indicates translanguaging has a vital role in CLIL, and it is interesting to note that CLIL research on code-switching has “frequently adopted a stance that is closely related to translanguaging” and is “less focused on language separation than was previously the case” (Tuder, 2016, p. 37). With the acknowledgement of the necessity of L1, researchers have endeavoured to examine various issues about it, such as reasons for L1 use, learners’ and teachers’ perceptions of L1 use, effects of L1 use, etc. For instance, from a qualitative perspective, Sylvén (2015) asked students to take photos to show their experiences with L1 and L2 in classrooms, analysed them in combination with interview data and concluded that CLIL learners could be more inclusive of L1 instruction than non-CLIL students. Having recognised the indispensability of L1 application, Papaja and Wysocka-Narewska (2020) mainly worked on the ways L1 should be used and deduced that secondary school teachers in Poland encouraged L1 instruction in CLIL for specific purposes, such as explaining grammar and content knowledge, asking for clarification, motivating learners, etc. This reflects the general research finding, whether from teachers’ or learners’ perspectives, that L1 is embraced when it is considered functional (Bieri, 2018; Campillo-Ferrer, Miralles-Martinez, & Sánchez-Ibáñez, 2020; Salvadori, 2019; Zanoni, 2018). From a
different perspective, Moore and Stoelting’s (2021) longitudinal study underlined the educational benefits of translanguage, suggesting that secondary school students in Spain could improve English writing proficiency in a CLIL programme with proper L1 instruction. This finding mirrors the positive effects of L1 on L2 development, which has been systematically proven in previous research (see the synthesis done by Çelik & Aydın, 2018). However, L1 use in CLIL is still a less studied topic, with researchers focusing on why and how L1 should be used but overlooking how L1 use can be shaped by learner factors, namely learners’ characteristics that have an influential explanatory role in learning.

Various factors can affect L1 use in FLT, and L2LM is one of the most studied. Based on classic theories, L2LM generally refers to the extent to which a learner strives to attain particular objectives and has different types (e.g., integrative, instrumental, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation) (Zhang & Shao, 2021). Both theories and research indicate that L2LM plays an essential role in language learning and that motivated learners can achieve their learning goals and improve L2P more quickly than those who are less enthusiastic (Anjomshoa & Sadighi, 2015; Al-Hoorie & Szabó, 2022). However, the relationship between L2LM and L1 use in L2 classrooms is still under debate, with researchers taking a dichotomy of views. On the one hand, they assert adhering to a monolingual mindset and prohibiting L1 use impair learners’ motivation, and Saruwatashi’s (2020) synthesis confirms that embracing the use of L1 can reduce the affective barriers and build rapport between teachers and students. On the other hand, researchers assume that maximising the TL use can increase L2LM, and previous research has confirmed that learners exposed to more TL instruction tend to be more motivated and engaged than those with less language exposure (Alshehri, 2022; Tanaka & Kutsuki, 2018).

This contradiction of views can be also seen in terms of gender as another influential factor in L2 learning. However, whether it is related to L1 use still remains unclear. Some researchers are suspicious about it because their studies have shown a non-significant relationship between these variables (Burat & Çavuşoğlu, 2020; Joyce, von Dietze, von Dietze, & McMillan, 2021). Others tend to be of a different mind. For instance, by reviewing available studies, Azkarai (2015) argues that females and males usually have different attitudes to L1 use due to differing communicative patterns. Her research as one of the few recent initiatives to investigate the gender issue in FLT further implies that female learners usually use more L1 than male learners, who instead prefer to employ some L1 when working in groups. Nonetheless, the relationship between gender and L1 use is still a scarcely studied area, especially in recent academia, and more research is needed to clarify whether this relationship exists.

Compared with gender, L2P is one of the most studied factors. Despite the widely accepted idea that proper L1 use can contribute to L2 development, it also seems to be a consensus that higher TL proficiency typically comes along with less L1 use in instruction and that learners’ L2P justifies the amount of L1 utilised in teaching and learning. Many studies have confirmed this conception. For example, although Tajgozari’s (2017) quantitative research has only disclosed mixed-level English as a foreign language (EFL) learners’ favourable opinions of L1 use in classrooms without pointing out the negative correlation between students’ L2P levels with their attitudes to L1, the data recorded in his paper can be used to verify that elementary learners agree with more L1 instruction than their advanced peers. This finding has been directly specified in
classroom studies, suggesting that beginner language learners are more inclusive of L1 utilisation in a multilingual classroom than proficient learners (Aly, 2020; Yüzlü & Atay, 2020). Almohaimeed and Almurshed’s (2018) research has presented the same result regarding advanced L2 learners’ critical attitude to using L1 in FLT, but they have further found that elementary and intermediate learners’ attitudes to L1 could be judicious rather than positive. This in-depth analysis has shed light on the need to re-examine the tentative relationship between L2P with L1 use to offer a subtler train of thought about this topic.

The last factor is learners’ CP, which is an essential variable in the present study because of the dual-focused nature of CLIL. Researchers have generally agreed about the function of L1 in CLIL to help learners understand cognitively demanding concepts and knowledge about the content area (Martínez-Adrián, Gutiérrez-Mangado, & Gallardo-del-Puerto, 2019; Tuder, 2016), and it appears commonsensical that learners with high CP adopt a less favourable attitude to L1 use than those who are academically weak. However, researchers simultaneously tend to have taken this assumption for granted and thus have spared little effort to verify it. This situation cannot be criticised on account of the reasonableness of the assumed negative correlation between CP and L1 employment, while Bobadilla-Pérez and Galán-Rodríguez’s (2020) latest study on translanguaging has exhibited an exciting phenomenon that necessitates the re-examination of this relationship. In a secondary school CLIL programme offered in Spain, they found learners could well understand and utilise the TL in contrast to the expectation that the specific content subjects might be too obscure to facilitate L2 application. Although the researchers did not attach much importance to this finding due to the principal research focus on the functions of translanguaging, it has cast some doubt on the recognised negative correlation between CP and L1 instruction.

Methods
Research Design
The researcher adopted a cross-sectional survey approach in the study, which was characterised by the collection of data from a population at a specific point in time to examine perceptions as a snapshot and to compare differences of opinions among people with diverse characteristics within the sample (Cohen et al., 2017). This design was appropriate for the study and enabled the researcher to understand and compare L2 students’ attitudes to L1 instruction as per the identified learner factors, namely L2LM, gender, L2P and CP.

Research Participants
The sample of participants was drawn from an accessible population (N = 1570) in a comprehensive university in China, where a large-scale CLIL programme that integrated College English (CE) (i.e., a compulsory EFL course offered to undergraduates whose degree programmes are not related to English studies) with Ideological and Political Education (IPE) (i.e., a subject about the cultures, conventions and social values of China) was provided to first-year students. Based on a 95% confidence interval with a 5% margin of error, 335 students were recruited with informed consent through random sampling. This sample included 182 females and 153 males aged 18 to 20 years, and they needed to take two content-based CE classes per week, which contributed to approximately three hours of workload. The CLIL programme was designed by the CE teachers in collaboration with the IPE specialists at the research site, and it was implemented
to the participants by 39 qualified CE teachers in total, who used both English and students’ L1, namely Mandarin, for instruction.

Research Instruments

Four instruments were used in the study to collect quantitative data, including two questionnaires and two tests. The details are as follows:

- **Questionnaire on Learners’ Attitudes to L1 Use:** this group-administered questionnaire included two sections aimed at collecting the participants’ demographic information and measuring their attitudes toward L1 use. The latter part was adapted from the one developed by Shariati (2019) with established validity and reliability. It included 41 items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ (one point) to ‘strongly agree’ (five points). Seven constructs (see Table one) were measured, which represented everyday purposes in applying L1 in L2 classrooms. The first three constructs were about students’ attitudes to their use of L1, while the others were about their perceptions of teachers’ use of L1. The questionnaire was translated from English to Chinese to ensure the participants’ understanding. A pilot study organised before the research indicated each construct had acceptable reliability and that the Cronbach’s alpha for the whole questionnaire was .86.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interacting with teachers (C1)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>checking comprehension (C2)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>examining and checking meaning (C3)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explaining and teaching grammar (C4)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classroom management (C5)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explaining class activities and tasks (C6)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintaining contact with students (C7)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Questionnaire on L2LM:** this group-administered questionnaire was adapted from the one designed by Zhang and Shao (2021) with well-proven validity and reliability. The questionnaire contained 15 items on a five-point Likert scale. Four constructs (i.e., integrative, instrumental, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation) were measured in the original questionnaire, whereas only the holistic score was reported and analysed in the present study to signify the participants’ general L2LM. A Chinese questionnaire version was also prepared and pilot-studied, whose Cronbach’s alpha was .78.

- **CE test:** the participants’ L2P was measured by the test developed by the CE teachers at the research site as per the curriculum adopted in the semester, whose full mark was 100. Macro language skills were assessed at the end of the semester for summative purposes, and holistic scores were reported to students and used in the study as the indicator of general L2P. The test had satisfactory validity due to its rigorous design and implementation. The pilot study demonstrated it also had satisfying test-retest reliability in a 15-day interval, with Pearson correlation coefficient being .88.

- **IPE test:** the participants’ CP was measured by the test designed by the IPE experts at the research site as per the learning objectives of the CLIL programme. It comprised several open-ended tasks, which were scored based on specific criteria and contributed to a total score of 100. Given the summative nature of this test, students were required to complete...
it in Chinese because of the concern that they might have sufficient content knowledge but did not have adequate English proficiency in expressing it. The test was considered valid due to the compatibility between what was supposed to be measured with what it precisely measured. It also had acceptable inter-rater reliability, with Cohen’s kappa coefficient being .79.

Procedure and Analysis

The CLIL programme in which the participants were involved lasted for 13 weeks in a semester. At the end of the programme, the questionnaires were administered to the participants with the assistance of their tutors, after which the tests were organised and scored by the teachers. All the students completed these paper-and-pencil instruments. Based on the prerequisite that there was a linear relationship between every two variables, that there was no significant outlier and that the data met normal distribution, the collected data were computed into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Pearson’s correlation coefficient was measured to specify the direction and strength of the association between the dependent variable (DV) and independent variables (IVs). Due to the dichotomousness of gender, the relationship between it and the DV was presented by point-biserial correlations, with males coded as one and females as zero. Because of the limitation of Pearson correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis was also run to identify if the DV could be predicted based on the IVs.

Results

The descriptive statistics were recorded in Table two, followed by Table three, which displayed the referential statistics of correlations between variables. The results showed a negative relationship between learners’ overall attitude to L1 use with their L2LM, L2P and CP. The DV was the most strongly correlated with L2P (r = .52), followed by CP (r = .49) and L2LM (r = .36). However, gender was not associated with the DV. A more minute analysis between the constructs of the L1 use variable with the IVs generated slightly different findings. Specifically, L2LM was negatively correlated with the need to use L1 to interact with teachers (r = -.38) and maintain contact with students (r = -.33). Still, it was positively correlated with L1 employment in grammar teaching (r = .41). Besides, although gender did not show any statistical association with learners’ general attitude to L1 use, it was positively correlated with the desire for L1 use in student-teacher interaction (r = .18) and teachers’ contact with students (r = .23), with male students wanting more assistance than female students. The participants’ L2P was negatively correlated with most of the constructs except classroom management. The most robust relationship could be primarily found between L2P with L1 use in explaining and teaching grammar (r = -.61). In contrast, the students’ CP was only correlated with the desire to use L1 to check comprehension (r = -.52), examine and check meaning (r = -.42), and explain learning tasks and activities (r = -.45).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General attitude to L1 use</td>
<td>151.07</td>
<td>14.78</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>43.47</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>25.80</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>14.80</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>21.13</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To further explore the relationships between the variables, multiple regression analysis was run. An initial analysis with all the variables displayed a significant statistical model, $F(4, 125) = 45.39$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .56$. This meant the IVs statistically predicted the DV and that the regression model was a proper fit of the data. However, gender was not a significant predictor ($p = .15$) and was then removed to repeat the analysis. A statistically important model was generated and contained the other three explanatory variables, $F(3, 132) = 57.23$, $p < .001$. As shown in Table four, the standardised partial regression coefficients demonstrated that L2P ($\beta = -.43$, $p < .001$) constituted the greatest independent contribution to the prediction of the attitude to L1 use, and it was followed by CP ($\beta = -.37$, $p < .001$) and L2LM ($\beta = -.26$, $p < .001$). The same analysis was also done to predict the relationship between the questionnaire constructs and the IVs. The main findings shown in Table five included: L2LM ($\beta = -.38$, $p = .01$) and L2P ($\beta = -.37$, $p < .001$) accounted most for the prediction of learners’ attitudes to using L1 when interacting with teachers, followed by gender ($\beta = .14$, $p = .03$); L2P ($\beta = -.32$, $p = .03$) and CP ($\beta = -.23$, $p < .001$) mainly accounted for the desire for using L1 in checking comprehension; the attitude to employing L1 for classroom management could not be predicted by any of the variables; the desire for using L1 to maintain contact with learners could be predicted by L2P ($\beta = -.24$, $p = .01$) and CP($\beta = -.16$, $p = .01$); applying L1 to maintain contact with learners could be predicted by L2P ($\beta = -.27$, $p < .001$), L2LM ($\beta = -.25$, $p = .04$) and gender ($\beta = .13$, $p = .01$).
Discussion
This study examined the desire for L1 instruction amongst a sample of EFL learners. Complex relationships were established between perceptions of L1 use with several learner factors, which served as a brief response to the aforementioned research question. As shown in the statistics, firstly, both the correlation and regression analyses suggested that L2P had the most substantial relationship with learners’ general desire for L1 use and made the most outstanding predictive contribution to the attitude to L1. Due to the negative connection, learners who had a preliminary level of L2P were favourable to L1 instruction, but their desire could decline with the improvement of their L2P. This finding corresponds to previous research, which has revealed that L1 use tends to be more common amongst beginner CLIL learners and that more experienced or proficient learners are typically independent of L1 use (Jiménez & Martínez-Adrián, 2020).

Further analysis indicated that L2P was negatively correlated with a variety of situations of L1 employment. Regression analysis showed L2P was the most significant predictor of the desire for using L1 in teaching grammar, examining meaning, and checking comprehension, followed by the other constructs, including interacting with teachers, explaining class activities, and maintaining contact with students. It should be noted that the first three constructs mentioned above are related mainly to learning itself. In contrast, the others that were less predicted by L2P, as well as the non-predicted L1 use in classroom management, are somewhat related to the communication or interaction process in classrooms. This case accords with the one reflected in previous research, which has presented that less proficient L2 learners may be dependent on L1 instruction mainly to facilitate content learning (e.g., understanding complicated concepts) and language learning (e.g., grasping linguistic features) and that the other L1 functions, which seem less related to learners’ academic performance but are still the reasons of L1 use, may receive less attention from learners (Bobadilla-Pérez & Galán-Rodriguez, 2020).

CP was the second most significant predictor of the perspective to L1 use in the study. Since it was negatively correlated with learners’ general attitude, it seemed that students who had considerable proficiency in the content subject had less desire for L1 instruction than those lower proficiency learners. This finding is in line with the general expectation aroused from earlier research, which has spotlighted the vital role of L1 in helping learners understand the content knowledge and handle the cognitive loads of achieving the dual-focused learning goals of CLIL (Martínez-Adrián et al., 2019). From a more detailed perspective, CP was negatively correlated with and could predict the desire for L1 use to examine and check meaning, check comprehension, and explain class activities and tasks. That meant learners who were competent at the content subject required less translanguaging assistance in these learning activities. In contrast, CP was not related to the attitudes to using L1 for language learning (i.e., grammar teaching) or classroom communication and interaction (i.e., interacting with teachers, maintaining contact with students). Generally, this group of findings reflects that learners considerably need L1 instruction to support content understanding when they perceive the discipline subject as the principal learning focus in CLIL (Saito, 2020).
It has been acknowledged that L1 use can create a safe and engaging learning environment and strengthen CLIL learners’ motivation (Coyle et al., 2010), while the relationship between L2LM with L1 utilisation was multifaceted in this study. L2LM was the third-highest predictor of learners’ general attitude to L1 use and was negatively correlated with the DV. Thus, it could be assumed that more motivated learners usually preferred less L1 instruction but more L2 exposure than those with lower motivation. Further analysis displayed that L2LM was negatively correlated with the desire to use L1 in student-teacher interaction, meaning that motivated learners preferred TL application in classroom communication. This aligns with the expectation that learners with high motivation usually favour more TL immersion to improve language proficiency. In comparison, L2LM was positively correlated with the use of L1 in grammar teaching and served as the strongest predictor of this construct, which entailed that enthusiastic learners preferred to utilise L1 when learning grammar. This finding supplements previous ones that CLIL learners usually prefer L1 use when learning the linguistic features of the TL (Campillo-Ferrer et al., 2020; Papaja & Wysocka-Narewska, 2020), but it is not surprising to see this result in contrast with the negative correlation between L2LM and L1 use for other purposes when China’s GTM-oriented EFL teaching situation is considered. In other words, it makes sense in the way that if learners have a significant desire to master the linguistic forms, they will resort to the language that they are familiar with to gain a thorough understanding. However, it is somewhat surprising to see that L2LM was related to the constructs concerning L1 use for interactive purposes instead of the ones as signs of L1 use in academic contexts (e.g., checking comprehension, examining and checking meaning), which somehow contrasts the view that L2LM, L1 use and academic learning are constantly interwoven in CLIL (Tuder, 2016). This requires further evidence to be collected to substantiate the previously assumed relationships existing in the translanguaging practices.

Gender was not related to learners’ overall attitude to L1 use. However, it was positively associated with and could predict L1 use for student-teacher interaction and contact. It meant male learners wanted more L1 instruction or use in these activities than female learners. As mentioned above, gender is a less studied variable in previous CLIL research, and thus no comparable finding can be consulted here. In the general FLT context, Azkarai’s (2015) study, as one of the few in-depth investigations into the relationship between gender and L1 use, can serve as an interesting comparison. Her research implies that female learners may switch to L1 use more frequently for phatic purposes (e.g., interacting with teachers and peers) than male students, who use the TL as much as possible to increase language proficiency but may employ some L1 when learning new linguistic items. This assumption appears contradictory to the finding of this study, but this comparison highlights that the role of gender can be different in various contexts and that teachers need to consider the characteristics of their contexts to judge the positions of gender in L1 employment.

Despite the multifaceted relationships between the variables, none of the learner factors was related to the use of L1 for classroom management. However, that does not mean L1 is futile to manage L2 classrooms or that the participants dismissed L1 as something unessential in classroom management, as both theories and classroom research have confirmed that L1 instruction can be an effective way to regulate classroom behaviours (Jules & Belgrave, 2020; Saruwatashi, 2020). Instead, the study only demonstrated that the changing of L2LM, L2P and CP, as well as gender differences, would not cause any swing in learners’ attitudes toward using L1 to
manage CLIL. It is hard to explain this situation without further data from the participants or compatible studies. However, Al Balushi’s (2020) study conducted in the Asian context has revealed an interesting phenomenon. In his classroom observation, L1 was scarcely used to manage L2 classes simply due to students’ well-behavedness. This fact is in line with the assumption that compared to Western classrooms, where behaviour problems often occur, Asian classrooms may offer L2 teachers little chance of using L1 to manage the classroom with firm school discipline rooted in learners’ minds (Forman, 2016). From this perspective, possible speculation over the research finding is that there were few behaviour issues in the participants’ learning contexts, which rendered the construct of L1 use for classroom management and its relationship with the studied learner factors negligible. However, this is simply a tentative assumption, and further examination is needed to explain if L1-supported classroom management is essential or not in the research context.

Compared to previous research, this study has moved beyond the exploration of why and how L1 should be used in CLIL and presented a detailed account of how students’ and teachers’ L1 use in different situations was related to crucial learner factors. Therefore, teachers, as the most straightforward guide of learning, should be aware of the potential role these factors have in L1 instruction and thus encourage and regulate L1 use in classes accordingly. There has already been some evidence of this, such as the general case reflected in Zanoni’s (2018) study that the learning circumstances of students as the ultimate recipients of CLIL methodology were considered by teachers concerning L1 instruction, as well as the more specific instance shown in Papaja and Wysocka-Narewska’s (2020) research that teachers considered learners’ feelings and emotions in order to adopt and give an explanation for L1 instruction. These classroom practices have exemplified how a student-centred CLIL programme can be run as per the actual needs of learners to engage them in learning, which, along with the findings of the present study, reinforces that the choice of instructional languages should lie in both students’ and teachers’ parts so that teaching and learning can progress.

A non-negligible limitation of this research concerns the nature of quantitative data, which cannot provide any further insight into why the studied relationships have occurred (Cohen et al., 2017). This invites researchers to consider a pragmatic paradigm in future research to extend and explain quantitative results from a qualitative perspective, with more classroom stakeholders involved. Indeed, a majority of CLIL research about L1 use has taken a worldview that is either positivist (Jiménez & Martínez-Adrián, 2020; Salvadori, 2019; Zanoni, 2018) or interpretivist (Bieri, 2018; Sylvén, 2015; Tuder, 2016). Although there are some mixed-methods studies, such as Papaja and Wysocka-Narewska’s (2020) one wherein close-ended and open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to investigate teachers’ perceptions on why L1 should be used, it seems that most of them have focused on examining the various functions of L1 to justify or refute the use of it in CLIL. The findings of those studies may be different from case to case due to contextual characteristics, but they have generally reinforced the beneficial role of L1 in content learning, language learning, affective learning, classroom management, etc. Thus, it is expected that the design and results of the present study can help researchers to step out of the conventional research agenda to a wider one, which shifts the emphasis to the investigation of how L1 use for differing purposes or in divergent situations can be possibly shaped by various elements. Admittedly, the factors are more than what has been probed in this study, and diverse
characteristics are essential for this issue, such as “language policies and practices, parental discourses about linguistic capital, and societal discourses on ethnicity, nationality, and marginalisation” (Rajendram, 2021, n.p.). These factors include learner factors and contextual factors, the combination of which sheds light on a much broader agenda to be explored in terms of translanguaging practices in FLT.

Conclusion

In this study, the possible relationships between learners’ attitudes to L1 use with different learner factors were explored to provide in-depth insight into the translanguaging issues in CLIL. The results demonstrated that L2P, CP and L2LM were essential variables to predict the value of students’ overall desire for L1 instruction, but their relationships with the constructs were multifaceted. To summarise, increasing L2P could bring about a less strong desire for L1 use for both academic and interactive purposes, which was somewhat similar to that strong CP learners favoured less L1 instruction in learning as reflected by the constructs of checking comprehension, examining meaning, and explaining learning activities. Increasing L2LM could account for learners’ appetite for more TL use in student-teacher interaction and communication and was also a non-negligible predictor for learners’ greater desire for L1 use in grammar teaching. Regarding gender, although a non-significant relationship was found between it with learners’ general attitude to L1 instruction, it was indeed correlated with some phatic situations of L1 use (i.e., interacting with teachers, maintaining contact with students), with male learners needing more translanguaging assistance than their female counterparts. As such, this paper has provided a thorough examination and account of L1 employment concerning various learner factors.

Undeniably, an L2-only classroom is not always suitable for FLT, and appropriate L1 use should be encouraged for different purposes. Thus, teachers, the most straightforward stakeholder and guide of classroom instruction, should bear in mind that there is no one-size-fits-all principle of L1 application and that both learner factors, the focus of the study, and contextual factors, which await to be explored in future research, should be taken into account when allowing of and regulating the use of L1 as the supplementary medium of instruction in an L2 classroom. As such, an implication of the study is that classroom homogeneity can contribute to efficient identification of learners’ needs and targeted L1 use. Joyce et al. (2021) have mentioned the possibilities of student placement in creating a homogenous L2 classroom for meaningful L1 instruction. However, this act may undermine classroom ecology and is sometimes challenging to be ideally implemented in line with educators’ expectations, especially when the student population is too large to be effectively and fairly categorised. In this sense, the onus for creating a multilingual learning environment rests with teachers, whose awareness and expertise in differentiating the learning process as per the profiles of students and classroom discourse are of great consequence.

About the Author:
Hengzhi Hu is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. He has a language education background, with years of teaching experience in diverse international contexts. His current research is mainly in the areas of second language teaching and learning. ORCid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5232-913X

References


Language Learning Strategy Instruction in Saudi Arabia: A Systematic Review

Mohammad R. Alnufaie
English Language Institute
Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu, Saudi Arabia
Email: Nofaie_m@jic.edu.sa

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Abstract
Strategy instruction is essential in the literature of language learning/learner strategies. This paper employs a literature review to determine how much strategy instruction is addressed in language learning research in Saudi Arabia, how many instruments have been used and what kind of strategies are taught. A search was conducted on articles from 1950 to 2020 through the Saudi Digital Library. From an initial 297 records, 17 (5.7%) studies met the review criteria. This small number reflects the shortage of language learning strategy instruction in Saudi Arabia. The reviewed studies also targeted different variables in their strategy instructions, which shows that they were developed based on personal discretion. The most taught strategies are reading strategies and then vocabulary/spelling strategies. The least taught strategies, however, are social and motivational strategies. Only one of the studies utilized a standardized measure for one of its dependent variables after instruction. Thus, it was difficult to make comparisons across the studies. It is recommended that Saudi strategy researchers include strategy instruction in their investigation of language learning strategies and calculate the duration of their instruction in hours for clarity. They should also explain in detail what intervention is used, why and how they conducted the instruction. In addition, strategy instruction is a demanding task that requires a multi-method data collection approach.

Keywords: language learner strategies, strategy intervention, Saudi learners, strategic learning, strategy instruction, systematic review

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Introduction

There is a huge corpus of studies exploring issues related to the difficulties that Saudi learners face in language learning. However, the main objective of this review article is to find out and discover how many effective interventions have been undertaken by Saudi researchers, how many instruments have been used to measure their effectiveness and what kind of strategies are taught in those interventions. These are the three main research questions of this systematic review. We need to determine what we can do to make our students strategic learners with strategic competence.

As demonstrated from this review of literature, numerous studies have provided evidence for the importance of strategy instruction. However, researchers (Alzahrani, 2017; McMullen, 2009) have identified a paucity of studies in language learning strategy instruction in Saudi Arabia, and the importance of the current investigation comes from the fact that it aims to ascertain changes in the situation. In addition, previous reviews of studies in strategy instruction (Arhin & Opoku, 2020; Donker, de Boer, Kostons, Dignath van Ewijk & van der Werf, 2014; Plonsky, 2011) did not include studies from Saudi Arabia. By measuring how much this topic is addressed, researchers then can measure the effectiveness of strategy instruction, particularly in a Saudi context.

Literature Review

The subject of “Language Learners’ Strategies” was and still is an important topic of discussion in the field of second language learning and teaching. It has emerged as one of the research topics since the seventies of the last century and developed due to the need for global communication, and somewhat as a result of the revolutionary theories of Noam Chomsky and his view of language as an instinctive mental ability (Grenfell & Harris, 2017). The beginnings of research in this field were heavily involved in tracking and exploring the strategies of good language learners; assuming (albeit partially) that examples of good strategies could help poor learners (Grenfell & Harris, 2017). From this point, the interest in strategy instruction started. However, as learning strategies vary, so do definitions of strategy instruction. Cohen (2005) addressed how experts vary in their thinking about Language Learning Strategy (LLS) terms. This might be related to the lack of general agreement on what strategies to introduce, when and how to introduce them, and who can introduce them. However, strategy instruction might be simply defined as classroom procedures where the teacher explicitly raises learners’ awareness of their own learning strategies and incorporates LLSs and language use strategies in language teaching (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Robbins, 1999; Oxford, 2011).

Strategy instruction has been clearly called for by LLS scholars and experts such as Donker et al. (2014), Oxford (1990), Grenfell and Harris (1999), Chamot (2009), Harris (2007), Macaro (2009), and Gu (2010) (cited in Oxford, 2011), Cohen (2011), and Veenman (2017). In addition, strategy instruction is essential in the notions of autonomy, learning how to learn, and self-directed learning (Rubin, 2001; Wenden, 1991, 2002; Zhang, 2008). Good strategy instruction is believed to have a positive impact on language learners’ success, achievement, and proficiency (Alzahrani, 2017; Brown, Pressley, Van Meter, & Schuder, 1996; Cohen, 2011; Cubukcu, 2008; Grenfell & Harris, 1999, 2017; Macaro, 2001; Mizumoto & Takeuchi, 2009; O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990, 2011; Sengupta, 2000). However, this positive outlook on strategy instruction has been challenged by some researchers (Bialystok, 1990; Chularut & DeBacker, 2004; Dörnyei, 2005;
Strategy instruction is a demanding task. It requires administering various measures, such as pretests/posttests, experiment groups, ongoing assessments, thinking aloud, interviews, and portfolios to track how learners have incorporated strategy teaching into their regular learning (Cohen, 2005).

Many designs have been proposed for teaching strategies to students and conducting strategy instruction courses. The start might be with the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), which was developed by Chamot and colleagues in the mid-1980s (see Chamot, 2009). In addition, a course called Learning to Learn English: A Course in Learner Training was one of the first strategy-based instruction programs, and it was developed by Ellis and Sinclair (1989). Cohen and his team also conducted a well-known program in Strategy-Based Instruction (SBI) at the University of Minnesota in 2001. Another well-known program is Oxford’s model for long-term strategy training, which was developed in 1990 and updated in 2006. There are other programs that are also well designed and conducted, such as the six-step cycle model of Grenfell and Harris (1999) and the cyclical model of Macaro (2001).

Methodology (A systematic Review)
The review was comprehensive and started from general to specific to carefully narrow down the search step by step (see Figure one), starting from strategy studies in academic journals from 1950 up to 2020 through the Saudi Digital Library. Then, the search was narrowed down to specific subject areas, as shown in the diagram below. After limiting the search to the geography of Saudi Arabia, articles that were not in language strategies were excluded after title screening. Next, articles were excluded after abstract and conclusion screening due to the following reasons: no strategy instruction, not in LLSs, and participants were not Saudi learners. A total of 17 articles investigated strategy interventions in language learning, and thus, were eligible for the review.

Figure 1. The review procedure
From an initial 297 records, 17 (5.7%) studies met the review criteria. This small number reflects the shortage of language learning strategy instruction in Saudi Arabia.

It was difficult to identify the eligibility of the articles for the review, as there is no clear-cut definition for strategies and techniques, strategy instruction, and instructional strategies or classification model for teaching strategies. In addition, the contents of the lessons taught in most of those interventions were not described in detail. Studies in strategy interventions should explain exactly what they did and why if they are to be replicated or compared (Plonsky, 2011).

Results

General Findings

The reviewed articles were published in 12 journals, with three journals publishing more than one article: Arab World English Journal (n = 3), Journal of English Language Teaching (n = 3), and Canadian Center of Science and Education (n = 2). A total of 1477 individuals participated in the reviewed studies, of which 456 were female and 1021 were male, and of which 1435 were college/university students and 42 were elementary school students. The reviewed studies targeted different variables in their strategy instructions or interventions (see Table one). In addition, they targeted almost all language learning strategies except the affective and emotional strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taught strategies</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing strategies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading strategies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking/Pronunciation and Communication strategies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary/Spelling strategies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the reviewed studies (except Alrasheed, 2014) reported a positive effect of the strategy interventions, finding that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the dependent variables. However, only six reported a calculation for the effect size of their results (see Table two). Following Cohen (1988), the value of the effect size ($\eta^2$) was interpreted in the following way: 0.01: $< 0.06 = \text{small effect}$; 0.06: $< 0.14 = \text{medium effect}$, and $\geq 0.14 = \text{large effect}$. As a result, based on the reported values in the six studies, the effect sizes of their affected variables were large.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studies</th>
<th>Effect size of the affected variables after instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alrabai (2016)</td>
<td>($\eta^2_p = 0.31, 0.38, 0.81$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ismaiel and Al Asmari (2017)</td>
<td>($\eta^2 = 0.154, 0.149$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdelhalim (2017)</td>
<td>($\eta^2 = 0.45, 0.94$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khodary (2017)</td>
<td>($\eta^2 = 0.894, 0.91$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzubi and Singh (2018)</td>
<td>($\eta^2 = 0.392$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzubi et al. (2019)</td>
<td>($\eta^2 = 0.622$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only Alzubi, Singh and Hazaea (2019) and McMullen (2009) followed one of the well-designed programs mentioned in the literature above. Another important observation was the length of instruction in almost all the reviewed studies. Listing the duration in weeks or months might be misleading, as the number and length of meetings can vary, which may cause differing results. The longest instruction among the reviewed studies was that of Khodary (2017), which lasted for 77 h over 11 weeks. The shortest was that of Alrasheed (2014), which was 4 h only.

Furthermore, some of the reviewed studies displayed contradictions between the findings and the drawings on the findings. An example of this is Alrasheed’s study (2014). Although the study found no statistically significant differences in the effectiveness of the pre-reading strategies on reading comprehension, Alrasheed (2014) indicated in the conclusion that “the employment of pre-reading strategies is highly recommended” (p. 89). In addition, the similarity between the two studies of Alzubi et al. (2019) and Alzubi and Singh (2018) raises the issue of credibility. Those studies were conducted in the same year (2017–2018 fall academic year) and on the same students. The second study did not cite or even mention the first. In addition, some identical sentences appeared in these two studies and created confusion about the length of the instruction.

Moreover, there was an absence of authentic citations in one of the reviewed studies (Okasha & Hamdi, 2014). It investigated the effect of writing strategies without using a single authentic citation from that field. It also investigated the attitudes without referring to the validity and the reliability of the used instrument. In addition, there are other critical issues in the methodology of some of the reviewed studies that go beyond the scope of the current review.

**Research Methods Used in the Reviewed Studies**

The designs of the reviewed studies were mostly quasi-experimental (n= 8) and experimental (n= 7). In addition, reliability of the instruments used were reported in 13 of the reviewed studies, leaving only four studies that did not mention anything about the reliability or the validity of their research instruments (Alqarni, 2018; Assiri & Siddiqui, 2020; Nahari & Alfadda, 2016; Okasha & Hamdi, 2014). The data collection methods adopted in the current reviewed studies, which used strategy instruction and interventions, are summarized in Table three.

**Table 3. Research instruments used in the reviewed studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruments for measuring dependent variables</th>
<th>Number of studies</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One (Survey tools or tests)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two (Survey tools and tests)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three (Survey, tests, and interview/observation)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think-aloud Protocols</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Studies</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table three, half of the reviewed studies used only one research instrument for measuring the dependent variables of their strategy instruction. In addition, think-aloud protocols are absent in this category of language learning strategy research, despite being needed for studying the effectiveness of any strategy instruction. According to Green (1998), “Standard statistical procedures cannot be directly applied to the verbal report data” (p. 2). Think-aloud protocols allow participants to articulate their mental processes for more in-depth and detailed
information. Moreover, none of the reviewed studies utilized standardized or global measures for all their dependent variables after teaching. Ismaiel and Al Asmari (2017) used Schmitt’s (1997) taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies to measure one of the dependent variables after teaching, and Alqarni (2018) used a tailored version of it. In contrast, McMullen (2009) used Oxford’s Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to collect data before instruction, so it is not related to the dependent variables after the instruction. Thus, it was difficult to make comparisons across the reviewed studies.

Discussion

All the studies presented in this review (except Alrasheed, 2014) found that strategy instruction has positive effects on learners’ academic achievements. This is concordant with the findings of other reviews such as Arhin and Opoku (2020), Donker et al. (2014) and Plonsky (2011). Despite this consensus and despite the fact that strategy instruction is a core area in the literature of language learning strategies (LLS), strategy-based instruction is still scarce in the context of Saudi language learning strategy research.

Due to the absence of a comprehensive theory in strategy instruction, the reviewed studies were developed based on personal discretion. This is concordant with Plonsky’s (2011) finding that SBI studies are “based largely on convenience, intuition, and/or some level of idiosyncrasy” (p. 998). Only two studies reported following one of the well-designed modals of strategy instruction mentioned in the literature. Griffiths (2014) stated that strategy researchers should be careful and implement appropriate instruments and employ appropriate analysis techniques. This could be facilitated by observing a model of strategy instruction designed by experts in the field. Only one of the reviewed studies utilized a standardized measure for one of its dependent variables after instruction. Thus, it was difficult to make comparisons across the studies. As stated earlier, strategy instruction is a demanding task. It requires administering various measures, such as pretests/posttests, experiment groups, ongoing assessments, thinking aloud, interviews, and learner journals and portfolios, to track how learners have incorporated strategy training into their learning and to find out the relationship between strategy use and learning outcomes (Cohen, 2005).

Conclusion

This paper employed a review of the related studies to determine how much language learning strategy instruction is addressed in strategy research in Saudi Arabia. In addition, it aimed to find out how many instruments have been used to measure the effectiveness of strategy instruction and what kind of strategies are taught. Few studies met the criteria, and those that did targeted different variables in their strategy instructions and developed based on personal discretion. The most taught strategies in the reviewed studies are reading strategies and then vocabulary/spelling strategies. The least taught strategies, however, are social and motivational strategies. The affective and emotional strategies are not taught in the reviewed studies. It is thus recommended that Saudi strategy researchers always include strategy instruction in their investigation for language learning strategies and calculate the duration of their instruction in hours. In addition, studies in strategy instruction should explain in detail what it is and why and how they conducted instruction. Most of the researchers in the reviewed studies used only one research instrument for measuring the dependent variables of their strategy instruction and used self-developed survey and tests. Strategy instruction is a demanding task. Therefore, future
strategy researchers who seek to study the effects of strategy instruction on language learning achievements should deploy mixed method design with different research instruments to assess the qualitative aspects of strategy use. In self-developed survey and tests, participants’ performance might be unintentionally directed toward the instruments used (Donker et al., 2014). In addition, future research must deliver a clearer picture of intervention processes and procedures. The scope of the current review is articles in academic journals; therefore, theses and dissertations were not included. This might be worth considering in future research.

Finally, there is a significant increase in calls to integrate strategy instruction not only in strategy research and classroom activities, but also in teacher education programs (Grenfell & Harris, 2017; Griffiths, 2014; Assiri & Siddiqui, 2020; Kassem, 2019). Language learning strategy research and education policy makers in Saudi Arabia should take those calls seriously so that teachers can be made aware of the need to integrate strategy instruction into the content of their lessons and be educated on how this should be done.

About the Author
Mohammad Alnufaie is an assistant professor of English language education at Jubail English Language and Preparatory Year Institute, Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu, Saudi Arabia. He completed his PhD in Education at Dublin University under the supervision of Professor Michael Grenfell. He is mainly interested in language teaching and learning. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0646-8539

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## Appendix
Chronological Order of the Reviewed Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Purpose of strategy taught</th>
<th>Length of instruction</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Main findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McMullen</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>94 female and 71 male college students for the survey, and 16 for the instruction</td>
<td>discover the advantages of strategy instruction on writing.</td>
<td>16 W hole semester</td>
<td>Pre-experimental: SILL Strategy survey, questionnaire, pre-post-writing tasks and tests.</td>
<td>93.75% of the 16 students got higher marks after the training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alsa madani</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>85 male college students</td>
<td>Test the impacts of the 3-2-1 reading strategy on reading comprehension.</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental: reading pre-post-test.</td>
<td>The target group outpaced the control group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okas ha and Hamdi</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>70 male college students</td>
<td>Use strategic writing techniques to promote writing skills and attitudes.</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental: pre-post-test.</td>
<td>Writing skills and attitudes improved among the target group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alrasheed</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>46 female college students</td>
<td>Determine the effect of two pre-reading strategies on reading comprehension.</td>
<td>4 days (4 h)</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental for two groups: post-tests.</td>
<td>Differences were not significant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ismail and Tawalbeh</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>21 female university students</td>
<td>Determine the effect of metacognitive reading strategies on low achievers in reading.</td>
<td>10 weeks (20 sessions)</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental: pre-post-test, strategy questionnaire.</td>
<td>The experimental group outpaced the control group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alrabai</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>437 male students</td>
<td>Determine the effects of six pre-selected motivational strategies on learner motivation</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental: questionnaire, class observation, pre-post-tests.</td>
<td>Learner motivation increased, which led to higher achievement levels in the experimental group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nahari and Alfadda</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Retain the effect of using visualization strategies to improve spelling and attitudes.</td>
<td>5 weeks (45 min/week)</td>
<td>Experimental and control group design: pre-post-tests, questionnaire.</td>
<td>The experimental group outpaced the control group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdelhalim</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Retain the impact of reading strategies in improving reading comprehension and engagement.</td>
<td>3 months (16 h)</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental: pre-post-test, survey, interviews.</td>
<td>The experimental group outpaced the control group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ismail and Al Asmari</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>Disc over the impact of vocabulary learning strategies.</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>Experimental and control group design: pre-post-test and questionnaire.</td>
<td>The experimental group outpaced the control group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khodary</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Disc over the effect of using Vocabulary Strategy on improving vocabulary learning.</td>
<td>11 weeks (77 h)</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental: pre-post-test.</td>
<td>The experimental group outpaced the control group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzubi and Singh</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Determine the impact of social strategies through smartphones on socio-cultural autonomy in reading context.</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>Experimental and control group design: pre-post-questionnaire.</td>
<td>The target learners’ socio-culturally autonomous features were promoted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alqarni</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Determine the impact of strategy training on raising</td>
<td>5 weeks (5 h)</td>
<td>Pre-experimental: pre-post-questionnaire.</td>
<td>There was a significant difference in the use of determination,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Study Design</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
</tr>
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<td>------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahdi</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental: pre-post-tests.</td>
<td>45 male college students</td>
<td>Determine the effect of traditional and multimedia LINCS (List, Identify, Note, Create, Self-test) strategy on learning pronunciation.</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzubi et al.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Experimental and control group design, pre-post-questionnaire.</td>
<td>70 male college students</td>
<td>Determine the impact of reading strategies through smartphones on the learners’ psychological autonomy.</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kassim</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Experimental and control group design; pre-post-tests, questionnaire, strategy use checklist.</td>
<td>39 male college students</td>
<td>The impact of communication strategy instruction on strategy use, speaking skill and self-efficacy.</td>
<td>One semester (1 h/week)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assiri and Siddiqui</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Experimental and control group design; pre-post-tests, survey.</td>
<td>35 male college students</td>
<td>The effect of reading strategy on reading comprehension.</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okasha</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental: pre-post-questionnaire and test.</td>
<td>70 male college students</td>
<td>Determine the effect of the strategic reading on reading comprehension.</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chinese-to-English Translation of Political Discourse: A Feature-Oriented Analysis

Sun Aina
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication,
Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia
&
School of Foreign Languages,
Guangzhou Nanfang College, Republic of China

Ng Chwee Fang
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication,
Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia
Corresponding Author: chweefang@upm.edu.my

Vijayaletchumy A/P Subramanlam
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication,
Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

Che Ann Binti Abdul Ghani
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication,
Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

Abstract
The translation of political discourse differs from the translation of texts in non-political contexts in which political discourse is highly profiled in terms of political sensitivity and policy orientation. It may potentially influence global peace and security. Understanding the features of translating China’s political discourse from Chinese to English is of great help to political translators and researchers in studying the problems and strategies of political translation for attaining the above expectation. It is expected to help the international community understand clearer and better the stance, response, and policies adopted by the government in national and international affairs. Therefore, the translation of China’s political discourse should deliver the intended information accurately and adequately the national characteristics of the source text and conduct flexible adjustments to conform to the language habits and ways of thinking of the target audience while mainlining the correct political position. This article aims to review and identify the essential characteristics of translating China’s political discourse from Chinese to English. It is apparent in understanding the desired political translation effect and some relevant translation problems. The bibliometric research method concludes that the Chinese-to-English translation of China’s political discourse has four distinctive features: accuracy, international-audience-centeredness, national characteristics, and political rightness. It is recommended that the translator pay great attention to these features while selecting translation strategies and methods and raise the acceptability of the translated text among the global recipients for promoting an authentic national image of the country.

Keywords: Chinese-to-English translation, feature, political discourse, target text, translation of political discourse

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Introduction

“Political discourse can be interpreted as “an act of communication used in formal or non-formal political contexts that relates to, deals with or describes any political event, organization or actor” (Bánhegyi, 2014, p.140). A widely shared definition of political discourse comprises all forms of political contexts, such as parliamentary debates, bills, laws, policies, and regulations issued by the government or its departments, documents of other agencies, and political advertisements, speeches and interviews produced by political actors. “The vast bulk of political discourse studies is about the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions... both at the local, national and international levels” (van Dijk, 1997, p.12). Political discourse has become one of the cores of international communication.

Translation of political discourse distinguishes itself from other forms of translation by its potential influence on global peace and security. The key to the translation of political discourse (TPD) is how to do the perlocutionary act so that the target text (TT) could effectively influence the concepts, decisions, and acts of the international recipients (Yuan, 2020). Furthermore, different from many other pragmatic contexts, TPD emphasizes the truthful delivery of the TT and the intended communicative effect on the target audience (TA) since the international audiences are expected to “hear,” “understand,” and “accept” China through the translated text. In this regard, understanding the features of translating China’s political discourse from Chinese to English is of great help to political translators and researchers in studying the problems and strategies of political translation for attaining the above expectation.

Features of Translating China’s Political Discourse

This article identifies four leading features of TPD, namely, accuracy, international-audience-centeredness, national characteristics, and political rightness.

Accuracy

Accuracy is widely considered a fundamental element in TPD. It relies on comprehension and expression, two significant stages of the translation process. And without the correct understanding of the source text (ST), there would be no way for a correct TT and the achievement of translation purposes. It is more challenging to comprehend the implied meaning of a discourse, mainly when special terms, vague expressions, jargon in dialect, and figures of speech are involved.

Take political terms. Concise and condensed in the form of expression, terminologies in China’s political discourse are long held, featuring the popular political proposition of the governments in tenure. For example, the phrase “完善制度 (wánshàn zhìdù)” is frequently used in Chinese political documents and was once translated into “further perfect the system” (Fu & Lan, 2019, p.77; Qiu, 2018a, p.14; Jia, 2003, p.28). However, “perfect” in Oxford Learner's Dictionaries means “faultless, ideal, free of any defects” and needs not to be “improved” (Oxford University Press, n.d.). From this sense, the English translation fails to convey the intended meaning of the Chinese term since it refers to the situation that the current system needs to be improved due to some flaws or defects. “Improve the system of” is therefore considered a more accurate translation in this case (Qiu, 2018a, p.14). And improper comprehension of the ST leads to the inaccurate TT that would impair intended information's understanding, acceptability, and
Metaphor is another discursive feature in China’s political texts. It is an effective tool for introducing China’s policies and expressing its national position to other countries (Van, 2012). Moreover, this rhetorical device provides a shortcut for the audience to understand complex political issues and situations and plays the role of cognitive interpretation and rhetorical persuasion in political discourse (Yuan, 2020; Miller, 2012). And the translator is supposed to comprehend both the literal and implied meanings of these vivid metaphorical expressions, which is a prerequisite to a correct TT with conviction.

For instance, “一场没有硝烟的战争(Yīchāng méiyǒu xiāoyān de zhànzhēng)”, “白衣战士(báiyī zhànshì)” and “扶贫攻坚战(fúpín gōngjiān zhàn)” (Qiu, 2018a, p.15). Literally and neglecting the political context, the translator may put these Chinese metaphorical expressions as “a smokeless war”, “white-coated soldier,” and “poverty-relief battle” (Qiu, 2018a, p.15). The translations, unfortunately, fail to deliver the actual political viewpoints in the ST but sketch China with some war preference, which probably misleads the international audiences into considering China as a belligerent country. Such an inaccuracy in TPD harms the desired persuasion effect on the TA, but also the national image and discourse power of the government in the global arena.

The above-mentioned metaphorical expressions are suggested to be translated into “invisible efforts”, “medical worker,” and “poverty-relief” (Zhang, 2016, p.14; Zhang, 2013, p.25).

As illustrated above, accuracy is a crucial feature and criteria for TPD in determining whether China’s voice, responses, and attitudes could be transmitted truthfully. At the same time, to help the international reading public with an easy and clear understanding of the country’s ideas and concepts presented by its political discourse, the translator should take full care of their demand, reading habits, and way of thinking.

**International-audience-centeredness**

In Reader’s Response Theory, it is suggested that translation evaluation must have the reader and his response at the center since he is the target of the translation product (Nida & Taber, 2001). In other words, instead of correspondence at the lexical and grammatical dimension, the focus should be on whether the target audience could be informed correctly and convinced by the TT. TA’s acceptance of the translated text is the primary consideration in global communication (Qiu, 2018b). Therefore, putting the international audience at the center is the second key feature of TPD.

However, domestic and foreign audiences differ significantly in demand for information, language use, and way of thinking. Therefore, as Huang (2004) proposes, Chinese-to-English TPD should adapt to the realities of China, the needs of foreign recipients in terms of information acquisition, and their thought patterns. In this case, annotations for background information are necessary. Take the translation of two political words “五大发展理念(wǔdà fāzhǎn lǐniàn)” (Xi, 2015) and “四个自信(sìgè zìxìn)” (Xi, 2016) for example. They can be translated as five concepts for development and four matters of confidence. However, such a TT is vague and puzzling to the foreign recipients who, without knowledge of China’s national strategies and ruling philosophy, have no idea about what the “five” and the “four” actually refer to. And this problem calls translational annotations into existence.
In other words, the given TT of “五大发展理念 (wǔdà fāzhǎn lǐniàn)” (Xi, 2015) and “四个自信 (sìgè zìxìn)” (Xi, 2016) would be better understood when annotated respectively with “innovation-driven development, coordinated development, green development, development for global process, and development for the benefit of all” and “four matters of confidence in the chosen path, guiding theories, political system and China’s culture” (Qiu, 2018a, p.18). In this way, the international audiences could understand clearer and deeper the intended information by China’s political discourse.

On the other hand, the translator should think and express like the original English speakers, taking their habits and custom of language use. As members of two different language families, Chinese and English vary from each other in many, such as pronunciation, grammar, lexicon, and logical argumentation. And the most significant lies in parataxis and hypotaxis (Nida & Taber, 2001). The Chinese language emphasizes parataxis, conveying meaning through word order and context instead of linguistic form, while the English language features hypotaxis, the expression of intention through syntactic devices. At the stage of expression in TPD, the translator must consider these linguistic differences and be audience-centered.

For another example, “军队革命化、现代化、正规化建设继续加强, 国防实力和军队防卫作战能力提高 (jūnduì gémìng huà, xiàndài huà, zhèngguī huà jiànwù jìxū jiàqìng, guófáng shílì hé jūnduì fángwèi zuòzhàn nénglì tígāo)” (Jiang, 2002). The two subject-predicate constructions separated by a comma in the Chinese sentence seem to be parallel in linguistic form. Still, the latter is actually subordinated to the former in logical, communicative meaning. In other words, there is a casual relationship: the strengthening of national defense and military power (the latter) relies on the enhancement of army building (the former). A participle phrase “leading to” is thus suggested to help convey the underlying logical connection in the following TT “The revolutionization, modernization and standardization of the armed forces were carried forward, leading to a rise in our country’s military capability and our army’s defensive combat readiness” (Jiang, 2002). Such an accommodation aims at more accessible and idiomatic English translations that are more adaptive and acceptable to the TA.

**National Characteristics**

Another feature of translating China’s political discourse is the transmission of Chinese national characteristics. With continued social development, its distinctive cultural and political characteristics persist and rise. Many China-featured abbreviations and collocations are perceived in China’s political discourse, presenting the unique governance philosophy, political initiatives, and views on peace and development.

However, many such expressions have no correspondence in English, and that translates more challenging in helping the TA understand the retained political, cultural, and historical characteristics unique to China. When transferred insufficiently, they would leave the TA in a daze and haze. And this is explained well by the condition that most Chinese leaders prefer the use of numbers in their speech to emphasize the fact, significance, or innovative proposals.
For example, “一带一路(yīdài yīlù),” or “丝绸之路经济带(sīchóu zhīlù  jīngjì dài)” and “21世纪海上丝绸之路(èrshíyì shìjì hǎishàng sīchóu zhīlù)” (The Office of the Leading Group for Promoting the Belt and Road Initiative, 2017). As a popular political term among domestic and foreign media reports, “一带一路(yīdài yīlù)” and its English translation has aroused extensive solicitude and discussion since it was first raised in 2013. The translated texts of the term include “one belt and one road”, “one belt, one road”, “the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road”, “one belt and one road” initiative, “the belt and road strategy”, and “the Belt and Road Initiative” (Qiu, 2018a, p.19). It is found that most of these translations use “one” to refer to “一(yī)” in the Chinese political term, but what does “一(yī)” mean in “一带一路(yīdài yīlù)” exactly?

On the one hand, as a recent appellation of ancient trade routes, “the Silk Road Economic Belt” consists of a network of several different overland routes: the “northern route,” the “southern route”, and the “southwestern route” (sometimes referred to as the Tea Horse Road), with more minor routes branching off along the way; on the other hand, the "21st-Century Maritime Silk Road" refers to the proposed modern-time version of the ancient Maritime Silk Road that connected China with the rest of Asia, and even parts of eastern Africa (Zhao, 2020). It actually comprises of two routes: the first extends from China's coastal ports to the South China Sea, through the Strait of Malacca to the Indian Ocean and to Europe, and the second is to cross the South China Sea from China's coastal ports to the South Pacific Ocean.

Based on the those mentioned above, there is more than one road involved in the strategic initiative of “一带一路(yīdài yīlù)”, and this term is only used as an abbreviation for the “Silk Road Economic Belt” and “21st-Century Maritime Silk Road”, the two great concepts of President Xi Jinping (2013) seeking joint development with West Asia and ASEAN countries (Qiu, 2018a, p.19). In other words, “一(yī)” in “一带一路(yīdài yīlù)” does not mean “every” or “one” as an article. More than being inaccurate, the given English translations with “one road” are also insufficient in terms of national characteristics intended by the ST. They are misleading to the TA in that only two roads or routes are covered by the initiative, which undermines both the value and purpose of the unprecedented proposal by China.

Therefore, the National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce have standardized the English translation of “一带一路(yīdài yīlù)” into “the Belt and Road Initiative” (Souhu, 2019; Qiu, 2018a, p.19). Therefore, this TT is intact and expressive with retained Chinese characteristics.

Political Rightness

The influence of politics on translation has always governed the translation activities of the translators: from the selection of source materials to translation strategies and from macro-dimension explorations to micro-dimension operations (Chen, 2014). Among all the influences, however, political rightness is considered one of the most crucial and fundamental criteria in translating China’s political discourse into English (Si & Zeng, 2021; An & Wang, 2019; Xie & Wang, 2018; Mo et al., 2016).
Political rightness is a judicial term derived from the United States in the 19th century. It requires that the court language follow the principle of rightness; that, the vocabulary and rhetoric must conform to the judicial regulations or meet the laws and principles prescribed by the Constitution. Along with the wave of liberalism in the 1980s, the judicial concept was introduced to the political field, specifying the rightness for mass media in racial discrimination, gender discrimination, and other phenomena. And the purposes of political rightness in that historical context is to prevent discrimination or prejudice.

In TPD, however, political rightness usually refers to the correct position of the translator on issues of national interests, such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, state system, social stability, etc. The translator is supposed to be qualified for both cross-cultural communication and speaking for the position of China (Zhao, 2011).

For example, the translation of the political term “独立关税地区 (dúlì guānshuì dìqū)” concerning Hong Kong (National People’s Congress, 1984, p.13). It is from Article 3 in the Sino-British Joint Declaration on the Question of Hong Kong: “Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will maintain its status as a free port and an independent customs territory”, where the Chinese term “独立关税地区 (dúlì guānshuì dìqū)” was initially translated into “independent customs territory” (National People’s Congress, 1984, p.13). The word “independent” in Cambridge Dictionary is explained as “not influenced or controlled in any way by other people, events, or things; an independent country is not governed or ruled by another country” (Cambridge University Press, 2021). In other words, it generally refers to the freedom of the country from any colonial rule.

However, instead of being an independent political entity, Hong Kong has always been a part of China in history. Under this knowledge, the previous translation of “独立关税区 (dúlì guānshuì dìqū)” is a political mistranslation that goes against China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. A TT devoid of political rightness tends to convey China’s untrue stand and status, giving rise to misinterpretations and doubts from the international community upon China’s national image. The term was then re-translated into “a separate customs territory,” which is accurate and sufficient in meaning transfer and correct with the political stance in the ST (Qiu, 2018a, p16).

Another typical example is the English translation of “台湾问题 (táiwān wèntí)” (www.gov.cn, 2021). There is an indisputable fact that Taiwan has been an inalienable part of China's territory since ancient times. Therefore, the Chinese political term “台湾问题 (táiwān wèntí)” should be translated into “the Taiwan question” or “the question of Taiwan” rather than “the Taiwan issue” or “the issue of Taiwan” (ENGLISH.GOV.CN., 2021). Since the word “issue” means “a disputed event” or “an event worth talking about”, it would be a seriously wrong delivery of China’s position was it used in the TT (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Conclusion
To conclude, as the core of discourse content for international communication, political discourse bears witness and clarifies China’s successful practice and incredible achievements
within the course of the revolution, construction and reform. TPD, therefore, serves the proper comprehension of a truthful national image of China and enhances discourse power in the international community. Its key features are of positive reference and significance for political translators and researchers in fully understanding the desired purpose of political translation as well as helping locate some relevant translation problems and proposing translation strategies that contribute to higher acceptability of the translated political discourse by global audiences.

About the Authors:

Sun Aina is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Her research focuses on identifying and examining problems in translating China’s political discourse. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4316-676X

Dr. Ng Chwee Fang is an experienced senior lecturer at the Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Her specializations include Chinese linguistics, comparative linguistics, psycholinguistics and linguistic typology. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2413-265X

Prof. Dr. Vijayaletchumy A/P Subramaniam is an esteemed professor at the Department of Malay Language, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Her specializations include language learning and acquisition, psycholinguistics and translation. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2225-1313

Dr. Che Ann Binti Abdul Ghani has taught various courses at the Department of English Language, Universiti Putra Malaysia for 25 years; and has published numerous papers on writing and autism in local publications. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4992-4426

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An Analytic Study of the Evaluative Resources Used in American and Iraqi Opinion Columns

Ishraq Abdulredha Alsandeli
Department of English, College of Languages
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq
Corresponding Author: ishraqlami@gmail.com

Rihab Abduljaleel Saeed Alattar
Department of English, College of Languages
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract
This study investigates how American and Iraqi writers utilize the evaluative resources in newspaper opinion articles (henceforth, op-eds) from a critical discourse analysis perspective. It explores how American and Iraqi writers of op-ed pieces draw on the evaluative resources to establish their attitudes, create rhetorical effects, and serve their ideologies in influencing readers' and addressees' feelings and attitudes towards certain subject matters. This study hopes to enhance the critical thinking of readers of an increasingly important journalistic genre in democratic societies. The main questions this study raises are: On which categories of attitude markers do American and Iraqi op-ed writers base their evaluation? Which types of referencing external voices are the most recurrent? And why? The researcher adopts Martin and White's (2005) appraisal theory and Van Dijk's (2006) ideology perspective to achieve the study's goals. After applying qualitative and quantitative analysis methods, the study finds that the significant ideological strategy of positive-self presentation and negative other-presentation significantly motivates the evaluative resources used by American and Iraqi op-ed writers. Both American and Iraqi op-ed writers use similar evaluative techniques in terms of distribution. The analysis also finds that there are variations concerning the overall frequencies and the frequencies of the sub-types of evaluative resources under examination across the corpus.

Keywords: Attitude markers, critical discourse analysis, evaluation, external voices, opinion articles

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Introduction

Op-ed pieces are a significant platform of public discourse, especially in democratic societies. This journalistic genre functions to pass certain opinions over specific issues to the reader. It exhibits powerful sermons where individuals, including professionals, politicians, journalists, and academics, deliver arguments, evaluative beliefs, and direct evaluations. Those individuals usually reflect on various dialogistic and contentious issues of public interest.

Op-ed writers operate within a framework of a dialogic relationship to influence readers' feelings and construct or change their attitudes regarding specific topics. Hence, those writers strategically utilize specific linguistic features that reflect evaluative and attitudinal meanings. Op-ed writers deploy the interpersonal sense of attitude semantics, which contributes to revealing their opinions. According to Lihua (2009), one of the significant interpersonal resources in op-ed pieces is the appraisal meaning, most notably, the attitude lexis. Op-ed writers use this dialogic heteroglossia repertoire to employ their legitimation, persuasion, manipulation, domination, etc. These attitudinal resources operate as markers that reflect the nature of the social relations binding the writer with their putative readership in the communication pattern. It is worth noting that every form of discourse has a distinct style for evaluation. The journalistic discourse, for instance, has various evaluative techniques correlating with the subgenres of journalism. Martin and White (2005) talk about different attitudinal styles in mainstream journalism. The journalistic attitudinal styles cover the 'reporter voice' and the 'writer voice.' The reporter voice style is associated with hard news reporting. On the other hand, the writer voice style includes the 'correspondent voice,' which is linked to the section of the analysis, and the 'commentator voice,' which is correlated with the opinion/comment section. In the reporter voice style, there are attitudinal restrictions because writers obscure their presence or their intersubjective positioning, at least, explicitly. There are no unmediated inscribed judgments but only implicit or invocations of judgment. The writer voice style permits a more individualized style of writing where writers use inscribed judgments discursively. Still, there are some attitudinal constraints in the correspondent voice style. In the commentator voice style, writers have full access to all types of attitudinal meanings, inscribed (explicit) or invoked (implicit) meanings.

The attitudinal resources received a vital attention in other journalistic genres such as hard news, news reporting. However, little CDA research has been conducted to examine the attitudinal resources and the engagement of external voices in op-ed pieces. Opinion pieces have become increasingly important as a communication channel between text producers and text recipients in light of the rapid cyberspace advances and freedom of expression democratic societies witness today. This study is an attempt to fill in this gap. The researcher seeks to enrich the existing literature by investigating the evaluative resources under the canopy of attitude semantics besides exploring the employment of the rhetorical device of referencing external voices. Referencing external sources apparatus also plays an evaluative role in the signed opinion journalistic articles. The study helps readers interpret what they read in such a genre with a critical eye. The current study strives to investigate the op-ed genre in two vastly different communities linguistically and culturally, drawing on Martin and White's (2005) appraisal theory and van Dijk's (1995, 1997 & 2006) ideology theory.

Given the flexibility granted to the writers of the op-ed genre in using all kinds of evaluation, the present study sets itself toward answering the following research questions:
1. Why do op-ed writers use evaluative meanings in their argumentations?
2. What are the similarities/differences between American and Iraqi op-ed pieces regarding writers' employment of the various patterns of attitude markers and the types of referencing external voices?
3. Which categories of attitude markers do American, and Iraqi op-ed writers base their evaluation?

The present study aims to examine the micro-macro matching between the distinctive evaluative linguistic features and the ideological motives. The current study hypothesizes that the primary ideological strategy that motivates the use of the evaluative resources is the positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. The study also aims to identify the distinctive linguistic features which characterize writers' journalistic evaluative styles in the American and Iraqi opinion pieces. Consequently, this study intends to reveal any similarities or differences between the two types of data in terms of attitude micro-semantics and referencing external voices. The study hypothesizes that American and Iraqi writers employ different evaluative resources to serve their motives.

**Literature Review**

**Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA) is an established international and heterogeneous linguistics paradigm. The CDA approach is interested in critically exploring language use as a social practice. However, CDA is not a particular method for applying discourse analysis. Instead, it is a transdisciplinary approach in which theories and methods from different linguistic and social disciplines may be used (Wodak & Meyer, 2008; Titscher et al., 2000, cited in van Dijk, 2011). Furthermore, CDA may deal with various areas within discourse studies, such as discourse grammar, conversation analysis, discourse pragmatics, rhetoric, stylistics, argumentation analysis, and so on.

The general properties of CDA, according to van Dijk (2011), can be seen as focusing primarily on social problems of political nature rather than simply analyzing discourse structures independently of their social and political contexts. Thus, instead of merely describing discourse structures, CDA attempts to explain them in relation to the features of social interaction, particularly social structures. Van Dijk (2011) suggests that "CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimize, reproduce, or challenge relations of power abuse (dominance) in society." (p. 467). The ways dominant groups use to control text and context and, hence, the mind are vital elements within the theoretical framework of CDA.

Weiss and Wodak (2003) refer to CDA as a school with a set of principles stressing that this field "cannot be viewed as a holistic or a closed paradigm" (p. 12). Moreover, there is a general conceptual framework of CDA within which most forms of CDA operate. The CDA framework consists of questions about how dominant groups employ particular discourse structures in the reproduction of social dominance. Hence, the typical notions that circulate in the theoretical framework of CDA include power, dominion, hegemony, ideology, class, gender, race, discrimination, interests, social structure, and social order (van Dijk, 2011). In addition, the context of language in use and language as social practice are crucial principles of CDA (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).
CDA investigates the link between social and political practices against a backdrop of social values, norms, and social structures. CDA analyzes how interactants distort this interconnectedness in the relationships of dominance, discrimination, control and the subsequent inequalities (Fairclough, 1985, as cited in Wodak, 2001). Thus, CDA theorists are interested in studying meaning in terms of cognitive models on a societal level (Wodak, 2001). One of the CDA goals is to present a description of discourse in context. CDA also explains why and how discourse operates (Rogers, 2004). In other words, it aims to reveal why a given discourse looks as it is and what it tries to achieve (Rogers, 2011, as cited in Paltridge, 2012).

CDA analysts hold that there is no direct relationship between text and society. Instead, the social relationships of dominance and power mediate between text and society. Moreover, the ideologies of powerful groups operate in the legitimization of these social relationships. Most of researchers in this domain agree that language is ideological because it is not employed to articulate legitimations of power relations. Language is used as a medium to practice dominance and social power (Wodak, 2001). Henry and Tator (2002) define CDA as a tool to give a critique of the ideologies of the powerful groups like the mass media. They also hold that CDA is a tool to identify and clarify social, economic, and historical power relations between the interacting groups. In Al-Utbi's (2019) opinion, "this definition implies that in every CDA endeavor there is the question of how texts make a reproduction of the represented ideology of the world" (p. 26).

CDA endeavors to diagnose the linguistic structures which establish power relations and help naturalize and manipulate social links. This linguistic paradigm uses different linguistic theories, most notably, the Hallidayan Systemic Functional Grammar, the Chomskyan grammar, social theories, and sociolinguistic theories (Wodak, 2001).

The researcher now turns to give a brief review of typical recent related studies. In their study entitled "Talking War: How Elite U.S. Newspaper Editorial and Opinion Pieces Debated the Attack on Iraq," Nikolaev and Porpora (2007) investigated how the elite press discussed the proposed American military intervention in Iraq in 2003. At the macro-level of analysis, the study examined the overall characteristics of the attitude of each piece. This macro-level analysis explored whether a given piece was with or against President Bush's policy towards Iraq or even neutral. Nikolaev and Porpora's investigation focused on disclosing each article's primary attitude, whether it was wholly moral or prudential or both. At the micro-level of analysis, Nikolaev and Porpora (2007) adopted Entman's (2003) model to analyze the data regarding the presence or absence of 67 argumentative points, assertions, or assertion-types in an attempt to figure out the nature of agenda-setting in the elite press. In her study "Attitude and Subjectivity in Italian and British hard-news reporting: The Construction of a culture-specific 'reporter' voice," Pounds (2010) compared between the British and Italian online versions of news reporting regarding writers' employment of subjectivity markers. The study aimed to explore and contrast the reporter style in Italian and British hard-news texts. The writer drew on Martin and White's (2005) attitudinal categories, in addition to other evaluative categories she found necessary in the analysis of both types of data. Those categories included colloquialisms, the distinction between event-related/non-event-related 'appreciations.' Wilson et al. (2012) conducted another study that dealt with op-ed pieces. The study was entitled "Argumentation and fallacy in newspaper op/ed coverage of the prelude to the invasion of Iraq." The analysis of the study centered on the Argumentation Theory from a CD perspective. The researchers of this study investigated how the writers of pro-war and anti-war op-ed pieces debated the U.S. resolution to invade Iraq. The study
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labeled both the signed opinion pieces and editorials as op-eds. The corpus was composed of op-ed pieces retrieved from six elite daily broadsheet newspapers selected from Western countries and the Al-Ahram weekly newspaper as a representative of the Arab world. The study explored the fallacious arguments adopted by some widely-read newspapers, and examined how such macro-societal debates over war and peace were either bolstered or called into question by public discourse. In a study entitled "Discoursal Analysis of Rhetorical Structure of an Online Iraqi English Newspaper," Shakeh et al. (2015) analyzed a set of op-ed pieces selected from the Azzaman: an Iraqi daily newspaper with English and Arabic pages. The analysis tackled the rhetorical structure of these pieces. The aim was to identify the patterns of the rhetorical structure adopted by the Iraqi writers writing opinion pieces in English as a second language. The study followed a qualitative method of analysis, and the topics selected were of political focus. The researchers used the rhetorical structure theory of Van Dijk (1993) and Katajamaki and Kosketa (2006) to achieve their research objectives. Al-Rickaby (2020) also made a CDA study entitled: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Stance and Engagement Markers in English and Arabic Newspaper Opinion Articles in 2016. Al-Rickaby's study investigated the patterns of stance and engagement markers in English and Arabic newspaper op-ed pieces to examine their role in the interaction between the text producers and text receivers. He followed Hyland's (2005) model and conducted a qualitative-quantitative analysis. S. H. Rasul (2021) carried out a recent study that dealt with evaluation language in news reports. The study was entitled: Evaluation in Media Reporting: A Comparative Analysis in BBC, CNN, and Aljazeera Reports. The topics of all the news reports selected tackled the fifth anniversary of the war against Iraq in 2003. The study sought to disclose the perspective of each media agency drawing upon Martin's (2008) Appraisal model.

Despite the crucial contributions made to opinion pieces and the language of evaluation, the existing literature needs enrichment of another kind. The previous studies focused either on analyzing the evaluation language in a broader sense with diversified categories as Al-Rickaby (2020) did or on exploring this genre for other points of inquiry, at least in Iraq. The current study deals with the language of attitude as a primary tool for evaluation and intersubjective meaning in op-ed pieces. Referencing external voices device also needs to be investigated with some detailed account. The op-ed genre deserves a limelight position by analyzing it from different perspectives in Iraq.

Ideology

The concept of ideology as a focal notion in CDA, dates back to late 18th century France. It was devised by Antoine Destutt de Tracey in the years following the French Revolution to denote a new system of ideas. De Tracey claims that people's ideas are not the product of God or nature but are the product of their social experience as grasped through their physical senses (McLellan, 1986, as cited in Richardson, 2007).

Traditionally, the concept of ideology was viewed as carrying negative connotations consisting of false beliefs. It was, thus, considered non-objective, only playing a role in the legitimization of dominant groups and their abuse of power when the dominant people embrace dominant ideologies dealing with them as natural and commonsense. However, at the advent of this concept around 200 years ago, ideology was not associated with this negative connotation. Instead, it started to refer to a new system of ideas. In its current use, ideology indicates a neutral approach of socially shared beliefs that could be positive or negative or may not be valued altogether, based on people's perspectives, group membership, or ethics (van Dijk, 2006).
Following Marx's (1998 [1848]) vision on ideology, Gee (1990) suggests that the discourse of the elite and powerful people does not reflect actual reality. But, their ideologies reverse and manipulate reality to make it sound the way they want it to be to maintain and promote their power and interests. Ideology, therefore, reflects relations, not a reality in its accurate picture; in other words, it reflects fact as perceived by powerful elites (Richardson, 2007).

Ideologies are based on norms and values; therefore, they cannot be right or wrong. Instead, people can judge ideologies as more or less efficient in protecting the interests of a group. From a cognitive point of view, ideologies constitute the basis of the mental representations shared by members of a social group. Ideologies help organize and coordinate the attitudes of social groups and specific discourses of group members besides other social practices. Hence, ideologies stand for the fundamental principles which dominate social judgments (van Dijk, 1997, 2006).

Additionally, ideologies contribute to identifying the social identity of a group and its self-image and are associated with categories like membership, activities, goals, values, position, etc. Since ideologies are socially-shared, they are discussed based on a socio-cognitive dimension rather than an emotional one. Emotions are personal and temporal; therefore, groups cannot share them continuously. Yet, in actual situations, members of social groups may apply or express ideologies in terms of emotions (van Dijk, 2006). Theoretically and analytically speaking, ideologies have two dimensions. The social dimension in which social communities and their members share ideologies, and a cognitive dimension, according to which ideologies are mental representations stored in the mind and long-lasting memory. It is worth noting that van Dijk (1997), in his approach to ideology, deals with this concept in terms of a socio-cognitive perspective.

Ideologies, being perceived in social norms and practices, are manifested in newspapers, novels, dramatic texts, etc., not only to direct the audience’s attention to these ideologies as believed by Nasser and Khalil (2021) but also to affect their beliefs and attitudes. The main structure of ideologies which influences opinions and attitudes in text and talk is the polarization represented by Us vs. Them, Self vs. Others, that is, the positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, exemplified in 'We are good and they are bad' (van Dijk 1997, 2006). The second primary ideological strategy is: mitigating Our wrong actions and Their good actions, and emphasizing Our good actions and Their wrong actions.

Genre

In rhetoric, literary theory, media theory, and linguistics, the concept of genre denotes a distinctive kind of text, For Chandler (1997):

Conventional definitions of genres tend to be based on the notion that they constitute particular conventions of content (such as themes or settings) and/or form (including structure and style) which are shared by the texts which are regarded as belonging to them. (p. 3)

Traditionally, genres, in particular literary genres, are treated as fixed forms. The contemporary theory, however, emphasizes that genres are dynamic in terms of both their structures and functions (Chandler, 1997).

Genre is a social process that is both staged and goal-oriented. It is social because discourse users engage in genres with other people. Genre is also staged in that it usually takes them a few
steps to achieve their goals and is goal-oriented because participants use genres to get things done (Martin & White, 2005). According to some Marxist commentators, a genre is a tool of social control speakers/writers use to reproduce the dominant ideology in society. In other words, genres position the audience in the text to naturalize the ideologies embedded in that text (Feuer, 1992). This ideological dimension of genres has led some theorists to redefine genres in terms of their purposes. In Swales' (1990) opinion, "the principal criterial feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes" (p. 46). Chandler (1997) emphasizes that the purposes of not only the producers of texts but also the interpreters of media texts as a genre are crucial dimensions in the analysis of mass media.

Within genres, participants in a text use specific modes of address such as a reader and a writer; a listener and a storyteller; an interviewer and interviewee; a person to be instructed and a person who instructs, etc. Participants have different possibilities for response and action according to their positionings within a text. Each written text represents authorial attempts to construct a reading position for the ideal reader (Chandler, 1997; Kress, 1988). Participants' positionings suggest that there are countless genres whose number in any society depends on the complexity and the diversity of that society (Miller, 1984, cited in Freedman & Medway, 1994). Print media, for instance, contains many genres, including books, small prints, pamphlets, newspapers, and journals. Writers readers can differentiate a set of sub-genres in terms of their format, content, subject matter, purpose, function, and readership. For instance, under the broad genre of newspapers, there are sub-genres, including editorials which are unsigned articles representing the publication's value position, op-eds which are signed articles by regular or guest writers) and letters to the editors (Nikolaev & Porpora, 2007). The present study focuses mainly on op-eds, which stand for "one of the central forums that constitute what Habermas (1989) referred to as 'the public sphere' (...) an institutionalized site (or sites) of citizen discourse operating between the state and market" (Nikolaev & Porpora, 2007, p. 8). In Habermas' (1989) opinion, this public sphere is an essential mechanism for democracy where language users can negotiate general judgments; however, it is often methodically distorted by agenda settings.

**Opinion Articles**

Opinion articles represent writers' opinions, critiques, and arguments about public socially shared news or any event of public concern. Writers usually express their attitude and stance in the written texts to share with readers the overall situation about specific issues (Thompson, 2001, cited in Swayer and Eesa, 2019). Thus, opinion pieces reflect writers' in-group ideologies, being members of particular social groups with social norms and values, which inevitably influence how they formulate their opinions (van Dijk, 1995).

Van Dijk (1995) suggests that language users may express opinions in many kinds of discourse, including everyday conversations, argumentative discourses, and any other type of discourse that involves agreement or disagreement. Van Dijk (1995) adds that "Opinions are mental, whereas much of their acquisition, uses and functions are social, and their expression and reproduction often discursive" (pp. 2-3). Accordingly, a satisfactory explanation of opinions must combine the three elements of cognition, society, and discourse. This integration is required to understand better the functions of ideologies and the patterns of intergroup social relations.

Opinions reside in mind, for having an opinion about something means having some mental representation. Moreover, opinions are not confined to their discursive constructions and context-
dependent manifestations. People may have opinions but not expressed, or they may hold the same opinion on different occasions. Thus, opinions are more than just discursive representations of context-dependent discourses (van Dijk, 1995 & 1997). Still, opinion's modes of expression are necessarily different, reflecting the context in which people express their mental representations. Thus, social opinions are stable as long as they are mental representations but variable only concerning their uses and ways of expression. Though opinions are located in mind, which also consists of emotive dimensions and cognitive ones, it is not necessarily the case that these opinions are affective or expressive. Thus, language users may formulate their opinions without showing any emotions, but this is not to deny the role of emotions in forming opinions (van Dijk, 1995).

Opinions refer to those beliefs that tell us that something is good or bad, right or wrong. Such beliefs are based on norms and values rather than on true or false premises in epistemology. Moreover, when a speaker or a writer bases their opinion on standards of social norms and values, this opinion is likely to be challenged in an environment that encompasses other competing opinions on a given issue. That is, people have their opinions at a time when other people may have different beliefs and attitudes (van Dijk, 1996). The concept of ideology serves as the basis for these evaluative social representations. Ideology, in social terms, is an abstract system of evaluative beliefs held by a social group (van Dijk, 1995a, as cited in van Dijk, 1995).

It is worth noting that opinion discourse, including press discourse in general, involves personal knowledge and socially shared group opinions. Thus, ignoring personal experiences and evaluations implies that all social actors in society would say or do the same thing (van Dijk, 1997). Personal opinions are a range of socially shared beliefs, personal experiences, and evaluations. A significant portion of these subjective opinions are also socially shared views people acquire from the socio-cultural context. Thus, individuals do not have a personal ideology but only a private use in concrete situations. It is worth mentioning that writers/speakers can communicate ideologically-loaded opinions in a text and talk using stylistic and rhetorical devices such as word choice, comparison, rhetorical contrast, lexical repetition, etc.

Methods
Data Description

The analysis of the study covers twenty op-ed pieces chosen equally from three American and three Iraqi daily newspapers to meet the study's objectives. The data selected fall within 2020/2021, with great focus on 2021, which witnessed many economic, social, and political challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions. The American data consist of ten op-ed pieces from three authoritative and pioneered American newspapers, namely, The Washington Post, The New York Times, and New York Daily News. The Arabic data, on the other hand, are retrieved from three Iraqi well-reputed newspapers, namely, the State Assabah Newspaper, the independent Azzaman Newspaper, and the independent Almadah Newspaper.

It is worth noting that each publication has a different political orientation. For instance, the Washington Post is currently pro-conservative, while the New York Times is known as pro-liberal. Nevertheless, both of these publications, being so popular nationally and internationally, attempt to be objective and neutral in that they touch on others' views having different political orientations. New York Daily News is a Left-wing populist newspaper. As for the selected newspapers which make up the Iraqi corpus, the Assabah Newspaper always tries to adopt a neutral discourse that generally attempts to soothe the widespread discontent and prevalent turmoil since
it is a state publication. On the other hand, the independent Almadah and Azzaman Newspapers adopt anti-governmental discourse by fiercely criticizing the government's performance.

Tables one and two below describe the American and Iraqi data selected for analysis.

Table 1. *A Description of the American Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Date of Publication</th>
<th>Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone Thinks Americans are Selfish. They're Wrong</td>
<td>Abigail Marsh</td>
<td>May 26, 2021</td>
<td>The New York Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covid's Deadliest Phase May be Here Soon</td>
<td>Zeynep Tufekci</td>
<td>May 28, 2021</td>
<td>The New York Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a Jan. 6 Panel, Mr. President</td>
<td>Lance Cole</td>
<td>May 28, 2021</td>
<td>(New York) Daily News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamala Harris Speaks the Truth about Race, Unafraid</td>
<td>Jonathan Capehart</td>
<td>May 30, 2021</td>
<td>The Washington Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If Biden Wants to Convince the Vaccine Hesitant, Give Trump Credit for the Vaccines</td>
<td>Marc A. Thiessen</td>
<td>July 6, 2021</td>
<td>The Washington Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Politics is Tearing Families Apart: Partisan and Cultural Divides are Estranging us from the People we Love the Most</td>
<td>S.E. Cupp</td>
<td>Aug. 03, 2021</td>
<td>(New York) Daily News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is our Government Buying our Data? We Need a Federal Investigation</td>
<td>Elizabeth Holtzmann &amp;</td>
<td>Nov. 18, 2021</td>
<td>(New York) Daily News</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the details of the Iraqi data, they are presented in the table 2:

Table 2. *A Description of the Iraqi Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Date of Publication</th>
<th>Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Freedom in Two Worlds</td>
<td>Meiyada Safar</td>
<td>August 28, 2020</td>
<td>Assabah Newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Ordeal of the Country and the Investments</td>
<td>Hussein Rasheed</td>
<td>April 27, 2021</td>
<td>Assabah Newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Failure of the Legislative Treatment and its Negative Impacts (Child Custody Law as an Example)</td>
<td>Salim Rodhan Al-Mousawi</td>
<td>July 4, 2021</td>
<td>Almada Newspaper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Research Design

In Martin and White's (2005) opinion, a common practice in discourse analysis is to carry out either a top-down analysis which begins with the broader context towards the study of the specific linguistic realizations, or a bottom-up analysis which starts with the local realizations towards the analysis of their interaction with the wider context. The present study exercises both methods. It considers analyzing the macro-semantics of the selected texts and the prosody of the fundamental attitudes in a given text. The study also explores the attitude markers and their interaction with the general mood of the text and their potential effects on the broader ideologically-loaded attitudinal meanings.

The present study is mainly qualitative. Dawson (2009) proposes that qualitative research explores individuals' attitudes, behavior, and experience, allowing the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of how individuals think, feel, or behave. However, in MacDonald and Headlam's (2008) opinion, a qualitative method is insufficient as it does not make clear how many individuals feel or think the way they do. Therefore, the qualitative method must be accompanied...
An Analytic Study of the Evaluative Resources by what is traditionally called the quantitative method. Accordingly, the study is quantitative, for it tends to give a statistical account of the various linguistic features utilized in the texts under analysis.

**Model of Analysis**

*Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal Theory*

Appraisal theory has been developed within Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and seeks to establish its evaluative and interpersonal analytic tools. Appraisal theory examines language's interpersonal function not just in terms of interaction but also in terms of its meaning potential to communicate and share feelings. The appraisal approach is one of three central semantic systems that convey an interpersonal meaning alongside negotiation and involvement. It contributes to disclosing the speaker/writer's feelings, values, and authority, social status, and identity (personae). Rhetorically, writers/speakers invest the appraisal meanings in establishing social relations of alignment, power, or solidarity with readers/listeners. By using appraisal meanings, speakers and writers can establish communities of shared feelings, values, judgments, and emotions. The appraisal covers three interacting categories: attitude, engagement, and graduation. As for attitude, the approach to feelings is meant to "move beyond linguistic construal of emotion into domains where attitude is deployed to control behavior and manage taste" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 36). Engagement, on the other hand, is interested in how the writer/speaker positions themselves and engages with others while graduation deals with grading feelings; that is, how strong or weak a sense is.

Among the three metafunctions of language proposed by the Hallidayan SFL, the interpersonal metafunction is the most relevant to the attitude system because the attitudinal meaning has an interpersonal potential of meaning-making. Thus, the masterwork on attitude has developed within the general theoretical framework of SFL as it abounds in descriptions of lexicogrammar, discourse semantics, register, and genre (Martin & White, 2005). Attitude is located mainly in discourse semantics. The resources of appraisal meaning-making could be various levels of lexicogrammar (meaning within the clause) and discourse semantics (meaning beyond the clause). Both cooperate to give the prosodic nature of attitude realization and the general mood of the text. In addition to the attitude lexis, Martin and White (2005) refer to invocations of attitude. That is when the selections of ideational meaning invoke attitudinal meanings.

For Martin and White (2005), attitude semantics covers three types of feelings: affect, judgment, and appreciation. *Affect* revolves around feelings of happiness or sadness, confidence or anxiety, interest or boredom. On the other hand, *judgment* and *appreciation* represent institutionalized feelings in communities of shared values. Those communities make judgment meanings formally accepted as rules and regulations about how one should or should not behave. In contrast, appreciation is related to feelings that estimate the value of things, whether they are worthy or not.

Martin and White (2005) classify judgments into two subtypes: social esteem judgments and social sanction ones. Assessments of social esteem consist of three categories: normality (how unusual someone is), capacity (how capable someone is), and tenacity (how resolute someone is). Iedema et al. (1994) propose that social esteem is a system of positive and negative values in the eyes of the public. Social sanction judgments, on the other hand, cover two categories of feelings veracity (how truthful someone is) and propriety (how ethical someone is), as clarified by Martin.
and White (2005). People make judgments of social sanction against a social background of moral ethics, which establishes what good or bad behaviors are.

According to Martin and White (2005), the authorial voice can choose to expand the dialogistic space or contract it. Speakers/writers can expand the dialogistic space by using attribution or entertaining (modality). On the other hand, contraction, which indicates that the textual voice excludes different positions, relies on sub-categories of disclaiming and proclaiming, the last of which includes the endorsement of external agents.

Referencing external voices is one of the fundamental and strategic ways in which the internal agent engages with other agents in a dialogistic relationship to activate certain authorial attitudes through expanding the alternative points of view or contracting them. The types of referencing used for the expansion cover acknowledgment and distancing. In acknowledgment, the authorial voices dissociate themselves from the external agent's proposition as in using reporting verbs (say, state, report, declare, think, believe, etc.) or nominalizations, or formulations like 'according to X,' or in X's view, and so forth. Distancing indicates those formulations when the authorial voice explicitly distances itself from the external voice's proposition. It is conveyed by the meaning of the reporting verb 'to claim.' Martin and White (2005) indicate that the co-text signals can help reveal the author's position towards the attributed material if that position is not made overt elsewhere in a discourse. On the other hand, endorsement represents the cases when the internal voice refers to the proposition of some external source to introduce it as valid, proven, and highly warrantable. Endorsement is realized by verbal processes or nominalizations, such as 'show,' 'prove,' 'demonstrate,' 'find,' and 'point out,' etc. Hence, the authorial voices implicate their subjectivity in the external source's attitude.

The current study deals with the inscribed attitudinal meanings at the micro-level. However, an examination of the concrete elements of the text is insufficient to uncover the genuine textual attitude. To better arrive at the ideologies that motivate those evaluative meanings, the researcher needs to relate the implications of the inscribed attitudes to the general mood of the text by connecting the micro-semantics to the macro-semantics of a given text. In other words, the lexicogrammar realizations with the discourse semantics of a whole text contribute to a complete understanding of the textual attitude (Martin & White, 2005). Moreover, the current study deals with the scope of expansion/contraction of the dialogistic space only in terms of referencing external voices' propositions as in acknowledgment, distancing, and endorsement.

**Data Analysis**

Before delving into the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the American and Iraqi data, a brief account of the contextual circumstances, which represent the macro-level structure of the texts, is necessary.

In the American op-eds, some of the topics discussed are of global concern, while others are local issues. Moreover, some op-eds are comments on current events that are of public interest and under social debate, such as the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Jan. 6 attack on the United States Capitol. Other texts are arguments about controversial social and cultural issues. There are some other texts which straddle the way between politics and socio-cultural issues, such as the racial treatment against the American Blacks and how officials deal with this contentious issue. The texts of this intersection try to highlight the social and cultural effects of some
politicians' actions and policies. For instance, the Republican and Conservative hesitance to take Covid-19 vaccines and the downplay of the pandemic severity by political Conservatives and some political figures.

The Iraqi op-eds analyzed also deal with current controversial issues. Some of these issues are of local concern, while others discuss global issues. Some texts cover political and socio-cultural issues, whereas other texts embody an intersection between political decisions and social effects.

**Results**

The statistical analysis of the overall attitude lexis, and references to external voices in both types of data suggests that the language of American op-eds allows for more invocations of attitude through references to external agents. The evaluative resources in the American data make up (52.74%) compared to the Iraqi writers' use of these evaluative resources, which amount to (47.25%), as shown in Table three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Overall Frequencies of the evaluative sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Data</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Data</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A close inspection of the types of evaluative resources reveals that the language of the Iraqi op-eds is more attitudinal than that of the American ones. The Iraqi data abounds in attitude markers which have recurred in (212) instances, making up (94.64%) of the real data. For the American data, the attitude markers have been detected in (181) instances, only constituting (72.4%). Furthermore, the analysis shows a significant disparity between the American and Iraqi op-ed writers regarding their referencing external voices. In the American data, referencing external agents constitutes (27.6%), having been detected in (69) instances. In the Iraqi data, the apparatus of referencing external agents has recurred (12) times, only making up (5.35%), as illustrated in Table four below. Perhaps, this indicates the foregrounded authority of Iraqi writers and the power of their discourse where they foreground their opinions and attitudes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Overall Frequencies of the evaluative sources</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitude Markers</td>
<td>References to External Voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Data</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Data</td>
<td>224</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the other hand, the negative values of the attitudinal meanings outnumber the positive ones in both American and Iraqi data, where the negative values have a recurrence amounting to (125) and (180) instances, respectively. In contrast, the positive values recurred (56) and (32) times in the American and Iraqi corpus, respectively, as shown in Table five below. This heightened negativity may depend on the nature of the topics discussed in these pieces. The topics echo the unrest experienced by both American and Iraqi peoples towards their local or global issues. Moreover, it reflects that those writers employ the ideological strategy of negative Other-presentation more often than that of the positive Self-presentation. However, the researcher observes that the negative attitudinal values in the Iraqi data exceed those in the American data. Thus, the prevalent negative attitudes are due to socio-cultural factors.

Table 5. A comparison of the positive and negative values of the attitude markers detected in the American and Iraqi data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Positive values</th>
<th>Negative values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Data</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Data</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the types of attitude markers, Table six below elucidates that both American and Iraqi op-ed writers utilize similar evaluative strategies. Both writers base their attitudinal evaluations primarily on judgment and appreciation rather than affect. Moreover, judgmental assessments are the most prevalent category in both data types. This similarity is possible because op-ed writers are typically professionals, not laypersons, so they assume the eligibility to evaluate others' behaviors and events instead of reducing their evaluations to emotional reactions.

Table 6. A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the attitudinal Resources Detected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Overall Frequencies of Types of Attitudinal Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Judgment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table seven below elaborates on types of judgment detected. The researcher observes that social sanction judgments outnumber those of social esteem in both American and Iraqi kinds of data. The rate of social sanction judgments in the American corpus is (62.35%) against (37.64%) of social esteem judgments. In the Iraqi corpus, the disparity between the frequencies of social esteem and social sanction judgments is even more significant. Social sanction realizations score (74.26%) versus (25.73%) of social esteem markers in the Iraqi data. The significant employment of social sanction suggests that both American and Iraqi op-ed writers judge people and their behaviors in relation to moral regulations and norms. They attempt to release more severe criticisms against the textual Otherness.

Table 7. *A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the judgment markers used*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Overall Frequencies of Judgement Markers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Sanction</td>
<td>Social Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Data</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>62.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Data</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>74.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statistical analysis also revealed that the category of propriety highly overweighs that of veracity in both American and Iraqi texts under the umbrella of social sanction judgments. As illustrated in Table eight below, propriety constitutes (83.01%) and (95.04%) in the American and Iraqi data, respectively. In contrast, veracity has a frequency rate of (16.98%) and (4.95%) in the American and Iraqi data, respectively.

Table 8. *A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the types of social sanction markers used*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Overall Frequencies of Types of Social Sanction Markers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Propriety</td>
<td>Veracity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Data</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>83.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table nine below shows, the quantitative analysis of the corpora revealed that capacity is the most frequent category among the three types of social esteem, scoring (81.25%) and (80%) in the American and Iraqi data, respectively. The quantitative analysis illustrated that American and Iraqi op-ed writers do not use normality and tenacity strategically. Normality rates are (12.5%) and (17.14%) in the American and Iraqi data, respectively. For tenacity, it is up to (6.25%) and (2.85%) in the American and Iraqi corpus, respectively. This statistical description indicates that op-ed writers prefer to use capacity in their social esteem judgments. Those writers may find capacity more effective in meeting their ideological goals and in convincing the reader of the in/capability of the agents under criticism. The foregrounded capacity type may also confirm that those writers' evaluations are more focused on the textual Otherness behaviors and actions more often than evaluating the Otherness in terms of inner characteristics as implicated in the meaning of tenacity.

Table 9. A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the types of social esteem markers used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Capacity No.</th>
<th>Capacity %</th>
<th>Normality No.</th>
<th>Normality %</th>
<th>Tenacity No.</th>
<th>Tenacity %</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Data</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>81.25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Data</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, a further elaboration on the statistical results of the types of referencing external sources used in the analyzed data clarifies that acknowledgments are the most frequently utilized device in both American and Iraqi data. These increased acknowledgments suggest that American and Iraqi op-ed writers expand the dialogistic space rather than contract it. As for endorsements, they hold close ratios in the American and Iraqi data. In the former, their rates are (28.98%) while in the latter, endorsements recur (33.33%) of the total referencing instances. Distancing has a close ratio in both types of data, where it occurs thrice in the American data and twice in the Iraqi ones. It scores (4.34%) and (16.66%) in the American and Iraqi corpus, respectively, as detailed below.

Table 10. A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the types of reference to external voices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Acknowledgments</th>
<th>Endorsements</th>
<th>Distancing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following presents a qualitative analysis of the selected data. Due to the limited space, the qualitative analysis includes some examples of the most frequently appearing categories in the corpora, as elucidated below. Positive and negative values of attitude are annotated with (+ve) and (-ve). The parenthesized details attached to each excerpt give the order of the op-ed pieces analyzed in Appendix A and Appendix B. The abbreviated word *para.* with the following number represent the order of paragraphs that contain the excerpts under analysis in the original texts.

**The American Data**

In the op-ed piece entitled "Dear Progressives: you Can't Fight Climate Change by Going Soft on China," the writer discusses the environmental crisis of climate change and the progressives' demand for partnering with China to resolve this crisis. The writer challenges the need for collaboration, arguing that confronting China rather than cooperating with it is the efficient way to fix climate change. As the text proceeds, the writer describes China as "the world's largest polluter." To persuade readers of his attitude and align them into a community of shared feelings, the writer draws on this attitudinal resource of propriety by positioning China as unworthy of this cooperation. Thus, the writer focuses on controversial issues to blame the textual Otherness, as shown in the excerpt below. This employment of propriety operates within the ideological strategy of positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation.

The United States, they write, has long "scapegoated China as an excuse to avoid global climate commitments." The letter absolves China of its human rights abuses [-ve propriety] and the national security threat it poses to the United States, and instead claims that the two countries can partner to "support international best practice" human rights standards … *(Article 7, para., 2)*

The two extracts below belong to the op-ed piece which is entitled "Protests are Taking over the World. What's Driving them?" in which the attitudinal meaning related to the modern governments' inability to handle crises is saturated in a prosodic structure to instill this idea in readers' minds. The genuine attitude of the text is that the "upsurge" of current protests over the world does not only relate to the Covid pandemic impacts. The worldwide protests also reflect the populations' continuous anger with the overall ineffective policies global governments adopt in handling public crises. In the second extract, the writer employs capacity to denote a positive value. The positive value of capacity manipulatively precedes the subsequent negative criticisms to prepare the ground for accepting with little objection the negative attitude. That way, the writer sketches himself as neutral and objective in assessing the pros and cons of people and their behaviors.

Put simply, the governments of today seem **incapable** of offering both representative and effective governance. And ordinary citizens have had enough *(Article 1, para., 4)* … While many demonstrations explicitly invoke the pandemic, the bigger, latent concern is the
inability of modern governments to serve the majority of their populations, especially the middle and poorer classes. This failure is made visible by … [-ve capacity] (para., 7)

This is why both South Africa, once a model of neoliberal democracy now mired in corruption, and Cuba, a paragon of welfare authoritarianism that initially overperformed in its Covid response [+ve capacity], have recently faced substantive challenges to their leadership. (para., 11)

As for the op-ed piece entitled "Is our Government Buying our Data? We Need a Federal Investigation," its two writers discuss the process of purchasing personal data from Tech and apps brokers by the U.S. governmental agencies. The two writers describe the process of buying Americans' data via their digital trails as "unscrupulous businesses" and "unregulated industry," regarding it a "breach" of the Americans' privacy. The writers imply that such acts are particularly hazardous because they come from the government, whose duty is supposed to be the protection of citizens' privacy. Furthermore, they nominalize their attitude towards this issue as a "threat" to magnify their criticisms of the textual Otherness, namely, the U.S. government agencies. In doing so, they provoke negative feelings in readers towards this act and its perpetrator in an attempt to emphasize the potentially damaging impacts of breaching their privacy. This attitudinal meaning incarnated in appreciation negative value in the excerpt below works within the ideological strategy of negatively presenting the Other.

But ironically, the gravest threat [-ve appreciation] to our privacy comes not from unscrupulous businesses, but from a customer with the biggest wall et in the world, the U.S. government. (Article 10, para., 4)

The op-ed piece "How Politics is Tearing Families Apart: Partisan and Cultural Divides are Estranging us from the People we Love the Most" displays an instance of how affect operates. In the excerpt below, the writer sketches Gosar (a Republican member of U.S. Congress) as a person who lacks affection in treating his siblings. A complete reading of this piece makes it clear that the writer exploits the attitudinal meaning of affect to serve her ideological goals and to reveal her genuine attitude. She intends to present the Otherness negatively and provoke certain attitudes in readers. This text expresses the writer's disapproval of right-wing politics in general and the politics of Trump in particular. She argues that such politics has "corrosive effects" on political life and families as it leads to political estrangement and even worse divisions inside the families which follow such politics. She, then, intends to give a negative image of the Republicans that they lack decency towards their own families and others as they are ready to sacrifice their own country driven by party loyalty. So, this example clarifies how the ideological strategy of negatively presenting Others and positively presenting the Self operates.

Gosar has previously responded to their laments without much affection [-ve affect], telling CNN in 2018, "These disgruntled Hillary supporters are related by blood to me but like leftists everywhere, they put political ideology before family. Lenin, Mao and Kim Jung Un (sic) would be proud." (Article 9, para., 11)

The extract below, which belongs to the op-ed piece "Everyone Thinks Americans Are Selfish. They're Wrong" is an instance of acknowledgment. Here, the writer presents two opposing views on whether individualism is something to be proud of or something that arouses concerns. The writer
acknowledges both points of view as alternatives in the current communicative context. Thus, she opens up the dialogistic space to accommodate various viewpoints on the topic and encourages readers to formulate their opinions and choose to agree or disagree. Since the writer explicitly announces elsewhere in the text that the more individualist a country is, the more charitable and generous it will be, she chooses to go with the first view. Referencing external voices, then, acts to activate certain authorial opinions indirectly.

Whether America's individualism is a source of pride or concern varies. Some people extol this mind-set as a source of our entrepreneurial spirit, self-reliance and geographic mobility. Others worry that our individualism is antithetical to a sense of social responsibility whether that means refusing to wear masks and get vaccinated during the pandemic or disrupting the close family bonds and social ties seen in more traditional societies. (Article 2, para., 2)

The Iraqi Data

In the excerpt below included in the piece "فشل المعالجة التشريعية واثارها السلبية" (حضانة الطفال انموذجا) "The failure of the legislative treatment and its negative impacts (Child Custody Law as an example)," the writer points to the recent legislative amendment to the Child Custody Law. The revision focuses on withdrawing mothers' custody over the child and granting it to the father after the child reaches the age of seven. While trying to develop an attitude opposing this amendment, the writer argues that this amendment is unjust to the child before it is unjust to the mother, for the children after the age of seven are in greatest need of their mothers to help them pass the critical period of puberty. As the text unfolds, the writer implies that mother custody is not the reason behind children's homelessness and "their moral and social deviance," as was believed to be the cause for this proposed amendment. This legislative step will not solve the problem; on the contrary, it will make matters worse, the writer implies. The writer uses the propriety meaning in this extract to appeal to the reader. He portrays himself as impartial and objective because he is ultimately standing with the innocent children rather than either the mother or the father. It is a persuasive move to win the readers over and align them into the genuine attitude of the text.

Making the age of seven a reason to take away the mother's custody is unfair to the child under control before it is unfair to the custodial mother because, at this age, the child's personality starts to take shape. Therefore, s/he is in dire need of their mother, more than any other age […]

In the excerpt below, which belongs to the op-ed piece "المتى نشاد المجتمع الاقتصادي عملياً لمواجهة كوفيد-19 ولن يتحسن الاقتصاد باللقاحات" / "The economic crash results not from COVID-19, and the economy will not improve with vaccines" the writer saturates the meaning of incapacity with several examples of a negative capacity. These realizations of incapacity function to attack the textual Otherness fiercely. The writer criticizes the world lawmakers' failure to handle the economic crisis in the world. Further reading proves that the intended Otherness is the capitalist economy. The writer describes the capitalist nations as incapable of solving the international economic crisis witnessed under the Covid pandemic. He degrades the wealthy capitalist countries by describing them as not
perspicacious to imply their incompetence and inadequacy for leadership. This meaning of negative capacity enhances the strategic ideology of negatively introducing the Otherness and works to persuade the reader of the text's primary attitude.

The wealthy and their political and media representatives are incapable of finding a way out of the current crisis. They never got over the 2008 crisis or the impacts of previous problems [...]. In other words, the wealthy are increasingly working in a self-damaging way because they are not perspicacious but greedy and selfish [...]. The rich and their supporters, especially political parties, repeatedly prove their inability and unwillingness to solve severe problems [...]

The two excerpts below spotted in two different op-eds exhibit examples of attitudinal appreciations. In his article "The electronic culture and its effects on family life," the writer uses the negative appreciation to instill feelings of fear and jeopardy in readers towards the risks of modern technology and social media applications. He describes modern technology and cyberspace world as (ترة الإحیاء) epidemic. The writer intends to provoke specific actions in the addressee through raising awareness of the electronic risks and the importance of bolstering parental censorship in this regard. So, the writer negatively assesses modern technology to attack those misusing it. The second excerpt presents an instance of positive appreciation. In his op-ed entitled "Put on a Military Uniform and Enlist in Military Service," the writer appreciates the military service seeking to attach tremendous importance to it. He argues that this service will create genuine men through increasing youth's patriotism, strengthening the spirit of sacrifice for the sake of the country, and teaching the youth how to comply with regulations, disciplines, and the laws of life. The appreciation in this sample functions to positively present things to serve a specific ideology, a persuasive move to appeal to the reader.

The risk of this issue and its impacts on families must be acknowledged. It requires a serious stand in the face of this electronic epidemic. Families and parents must play an influential role in reducing the communicative gap with their children through explicating for them these electronic risks.
The military service creates genuine men with all meanings, strengthens the patriotic spirit inside youths, teaches them how to sacrifice for their country, and teaches them how to adhere to disciplines and laws of life.

The op-ed "الستراتيجية لمواجهة تداعيات جائحة كورونا"/ "The strategic prospects of confronting COVID pandemic" displays examples of how writers use affect markers for particular ideological ends. In the excerpt below, the op-ed writer utilizes the affectual meanings to provoke the addressee, i.e. the wealthy countries, into taking a specific action. He calls upon rich nations to supply developing countries with financial aid. In his use of the expressions "التخوف"/"fearing" and "وبشكل مريع"/"horribly" the writer intends to raise alarms about the seriousness of the situation to elicit the desired action and convince the readers that such a horrible situation deserves to initiate a specific action.

The overall transmissibility of the pandemic arouses fears that the sustainable development goals cannot be achieved by 2030 [...] the pandemic and its repercussions, which negatively affected the progress of many countries, especially the developing countries are deprived of the necessities of human survival.

As an instance of acknowledgment embodied in the excerpt below, the writer in his op-ed piece "التهور في مسيرة تمويل الاستثمارات"/ "The ordeal of the country and investment," seems to dissociate himself from the attributed viewpoint leaving readers a space to judge. Although the semantics of this phrase indicates that the writer has not identified his attitude towards this viewpoint, it bears an implicit dis-alignment and criticism of the Otherness, namely, the investors of the strategic public projects. Moreover, the co-text and the general prosodic structure of the genuine attitude suggest that the writer argues against the performance of the current investments allocated to set up strategic projects. Hence, the meaning denoted in this excerpt, "[...] what they call an investment," reinforces the writer's ideology of negatively introducing the Otherness.

Discussion
The present study endeavors to examine the patterns of the evaluative resources in the American and Iraqi op-ed pieces. The study has revealed that both American and Iraqi op-ed writers invest the attitudinal semantics and the strategy of referencing external voices to achieve specific ideological, persuasive goals. Writers of opinion pieces resort to these interpersonal and rhetorical devices to construct dialogistic relationships of dis/alignment and power or solidarity.

Evaluation is a significant type of interpersonal meaning that the op-ed writers systematically use to exercise social power, i.e. the symbolic power. The symbolic power comes through persuading, manipulating, and influencing readers' minds, the way they represent the world, and indirectly their behaviors (van Dijk, 2011). The privileged access to public discourse and the full attitudinal and evaluative reservoir those writers have, make them exploit this platform to establish their ideologically-motivated social relationships and express their explicit opinions of the world.
As far as a critical discourse analysis is concerned, the access may incur social inequalities when writers negatively or severely criticize or condemn the targeted audience. According to van Dijk (2006), whenever the discursive control upon others' minds is in the best interests of the speakers or writers and against the best interests of the recipients, an illegitimate source of power occurs. To persuade readers, op-ed writers utilize specific evaluative features, among which are the attitude semantics and rhetorical referencing. Being well-informed individuals, op-ed writers address readers as laypersons with poor access to forms of public discourse; hence, they have the space to exercise symbolic power of mind and feelings control.

As a global genre, American and Iraqi op-ed pieces share major commonalities and preferences of specific patterns in the writing conventions of this genre amid the differences of language and culture.

Conclusions

Investigating the patterning of attitude markers and the reference to external voices as two areas of inquiry has revealed convergent distribution and divergent frequencies. First of all, both American and Iraqi op-ed writers invest the attitudinal semantics and the strategy of referencing external voices to achieve specific ideological persuasive goals. Moreover, the evaluative resources operate within the ideological framework of positively presenting the Self and negatively presenting the Other. The study has found that both American and Iraqi op-ed writers usually base their attitudes on judgments and appreciations more than affect. Both types of writers are inclined to judge people and behaviors against a social background of moral norms and values. This reliance on moral norms and regulations is evident in the foregrounded social sanction judgments, which outnumber the social esteem ones. Those writers deploy social sanction judgments to construct more powerful and effective assessments. Propriety and capacity as two sub-categories of social sanction and social esteem, respectively are the most frequent in both types of data. Among the categories of referencing external voices, acknowledgment is the most frequent category in both the American and Iraqi op-ed articles. From the discourse perspective, the language of Iraqi op-eds is more attitudinal than the American ones. The Iraqi op-eds abound in a rich reservoir of attitude markers. These markers allow writers to exercise their ideologically-motivated social relationships and release their judgments to influence readers' minds and induce them to take specific actions concerning the issues dealt with in these articles. Yet, in terms of rhetorical referencing, the analysis has found that referencing external voices is more characteristic of American op-eds than Iraqi ones, which foreground the authorial voice and background any external voices. As for the frequencies of the positive and negative attitude values in the analyzed corpora, the study has found that the negative values of attitude considerably surpass the positive ones to varying degrees in both American and Iraqi op-eds. This heightened negativity reflects the prevailing ideology of the Self's positive-presentation and the Other's negative presentation. This disparity, however, is more significant in the Iraqi articles than it is in the American ones. The controlling negativity associated with the attitude markers conforms mainly to the macro-semantics of the selected articles, which deal with problematic issues characterized by a lot of blaming, accusations, and negative attitudes. This negativity is necessarily influenced by socio-cultural factors.
About the Authors:

Ishraq Abdulredha Alsandeli got her BA degree in the English language at the College of Languages, the University of Baghdad in 2011. She had worked as a translator for the independent All Iraq News Agency (AIN) and is currently a teacher at a preparatory school in Baghdad. This research paper is a partial requirement for obtaining an MA degree from the Department of English of the same college and university. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5935-6656

Dr. Rihab Abduljaleel Saeed Alattar received her Ph.D. from the College of Arts, University of Baghdad in 2006 with a dissertation on Gricean maxims of conversational implicature. Her fields of research are pragmatics and stylistics. She is an assistant professor at the department of English/College of Languages and has been teaching pragmatics, semantics, and many other MA courses since 2008. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8388-7038

References


**Appendix A: Op-ed Articles of the American Data**

*The New York Times*

Arab World English Journal

www.awej.org

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https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/03/opinion/covid-protests-world-whats-driving-them.html

Article 2: "Everyone Thinks Americans Are Selfish. They're Wrong" (26 May 2021)
https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/opinion/individualism-united-states-altruism.html

Article 3: "Covid's Deadliest Phase May Be Here Soon" (28 May 2021)
https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/28/opinion/covid-vaccine-variants.html

Article 4: "America's List of 'Undemocratic and Corrupt Actors' Just Keeps Growing" (5 Oct. 2021)
https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/opinion/us-sanctions-venezuela.html

Article 5: "Kamala Harris speaks the truth about race, unafraid" (29 May 2021)

Article 6: "If Biden wants to convince the vaccine hesitant, give Trump credit for the vaccines" (6 July 2021)
https://www.aei.org/op-eds/if-biden-wants-to-convince-the-vaccine-hesitant-give-trump-credit-for-the-vaccines

Article 7: "Deep progress: you can't fight climate change by going soft on China" (10 July 2021)

Article 8: "Create a Jan. 6 panel, Mr. President" (28 May 2021)

Article 9: "How politics is tearing families apart: Partisan and cultural divides are estranging us from the people we love the most" (3 August 2021)

Article 10: "Is our government buying our data? We need a federal investigation" (18 Nov. 2021)

**Appendix B: Op-ed Articles of the Iraqi Data**

**Azzaman Newspaper**

Article 1: "المحرومة وفيضانات ماء" (15 Sep. 2021) (not full text)
http://alsabaah.iq/58122/

Article 2: "بيغ إمالاطوري" (25 July 2021)
http://alsabaah.iq/294944

Article 3: "اليوم درويش وأطرف حلحي" (10 Sep. 2021)
http://alsabaah.iq/454331

Article 4: "المهاجرين الكرد .. ظاهرة خطيرة وليست عابرة" (16 Nov. 2021)
http://alsabaah.iq/222008

**Assabah Newspaper**

Article 5: "المحرومة في النجف" (28 Aug 2020)
http://alsabaah.iq/294944

Article 6: "المحرومة في النجف" (27 April 2021)
http://alsabaah.iq/454331

Article 7: "المهاجرين الكرد .. ظاهرة خطيرة وليست عابرة" (16 Nov. 2021)
http://alsabaah.iq/222008

**Almadaper**

Article 8: "في النجف تفجيرات الأحياء" (8 August 2021) (not full text)
https://almadaper.org/view.php?cat=243904#.YieDa8bVzA.whatsapp

Article 9: "فجيرة في النجف" (8 August 2021)
https://almadaper.org/view.php?cat=248759#.YieCSAW7uY.whatsapp

Article 10: "في النجف .. تفجيرات الأحياء" (8 August 2021) (not full text)

An Analytic Study of the Evaluative Resources
Alsendeli & Alattar

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EFL Learners’ Syntactic Problems in Translation at AL-Baha University from Arabic into English

Mohammed Ali Elsiddig Ibrahim

English Department
College of Science and Arts AL-Baha University, Saudi Arabia
E-mail: mohamed444444247@yahoo.com

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Abstract
This research aims to address the syntactic problems that Saudi students confront when translating. The significance of the study is to detect syntactic issues among Saudi Arabian undergraduate students. The question is addressed in the study: what are the syntactic problems that Saudi students confront when translating? The researcher used a descriptive analytical method. The sample of twenty undergraduate students, selected from the boys' section, were males and in the second level, enrolled in the second semester of 2018, at the College of Arts and Sciences, majoring in English in Beljurshi, Al Baha University, and this study used a validated test of written Arabic text as a tool to collect information about the research problem. The data was examined, and the students' syntactic problems were detected and categorized as omission and addition in the study. The study finding reveals that omission received a score of 103 out of a total of 50.7, while additions received a score of 99 out of a total of 49 percent. There are 202 syntactic problems in total. Discussion indicates that grammar norms are not being followed by the students, a lack of familiarity with the two languages' rules, interference between the two languages is the most common cause of errors, and students failed to notice there are some distinctions between English and Arabic. The study recommends pursuing research in additional areas connected to syntactic issues.

Keywords: Differences, interference, language, omission, problems, syntactic, translation

DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol13no2.16
Introduction

According to Sohaila (2018), translation serves as a bridge of communication between nations. Humans have been doing it in various forms since ancient times, using language and writing to exchange knowledge and migrate cultures from one geographical area to another. Translation has taken on global relevance and has contributed significantly to the enrichment of the world's cultural heritage. Sohaila (2018) went on to say that translation is crucial to humanity's cultural evolution. People in a country learn about life through translation, and human communication establishes other countries' civilizations, cultures, and achievements in numerous fields.

According to Baker (1998), translation is one of the most fundamental acts people perform with language, and as such, it must be practiced alongside language, speech, listening, reading, and writing abilities.

Bahr (1998) claimed that the biggest issue with translation is that the translation process involves finding a word in one language that matches another word in the other language. This assumes, from the outset, that the two languages match in classification, cultural and social background, and metaphors. Semantic differences between the two languages are one source of translation problems. Working as a translator in many locations as a practitioner in this field, the researcher discovered that translation is a very complex activity and a tough process for most expert translators. During translation lessons, it is found that Saudi undergraduate students have syntactic problems in translation, which could be due to variances in the Arabic and English languages.

This study is significant since it is the first of its kind and one of the few investigations of syntactic issues among Saudi Arabian undergraduate students. As a result, students, teachers, translators, and curriculum planners may find it valuable.

The present study must fulfill the following research objectives: Identify the kinds of syntactic problems in translation encountered by Saudi students. They were second-year boys majoring in English and enrolled in the second semester of 2018. The College of Science and Arts in Baljurashi, Al Baha, offers the program and looks into the syntactic problems that Saudi students have when translating.

The following research questions are addressed in the study:
1-What are the syntactic problems that Saudi students confront when translating?
2-What are the sources of translation's syntactic problems?

This research is limited to identifying the syntactic challenges in translation that undergraduate students face, as defined in the research problem; it is also limited to the students who constitute a sample and the Arabic text that these students translate; they were second-year boys majoring in English and enrolled in the second semester of 2018. The College of Science and Arts in Baljurashi, Al Baha, offers the program. The time frame for this research is 2019-2022.
Literature Review

Concept of Translation

It involves replacing text written in one language, which he refers to as the source language, with an equivalent text written in another language, which he refers to as the language to which it is transferred, as Catford (1965) pointed out. The translation process, according to this definition, is an activity performed by researchers and authors to transmit knowledge and literature into the target language. Similarly, Newmark (1996) defines translation from the viewpoint of Taylor (1990) as is to divert a written discourse with a speech or sentence in another language that is identical. According to Newmark, translation also includes the transfer of source language, which could be a word or a book for new readers.

A good translation, according to Forster (1958), achieves the same aim in the chosen language as it did in the source language with the same goal. A good translation should capture the text's literal purpose and all that surrounds it, and an exact translation should express the true intent rather than simply translating words. As a result, Harry (2020) quotes “Translation is realizable precisely because those deep-seated universals, genetic, historical, social from which all grammars derive can be located and recognized as operative in every human idiom, however singular or bizarre its superficial forms" (p. 235). Thus, the importance of translation is evident in many areas, and is not separated from language in any way.

According to Newmark (1988), translation is a talent that involves attempting to transfer a message or an idea written in a single language to a message or idea written in the target language. The translator concentrates on the meaning rather than the lexical item because if the translation fails to achieve its communicative goal, i.e., if it has no meaning for the receiver, it will have failed to justify its existence. Because the literal meaning weakens the translation, whereas the spirit of the meaning gives it life, the translation must not only convey the message, but also the manner of the other language.

According to Delisle (1999), the complex matters in the translation are to convey information for one speech into the text to establish an equivalence relationship between the two texts, taking into account all the communication meanings associated with the text and the constraints imposed on the translator.

According to Ezzedine (2005), translation is the transfer of utterances from one language to the next. The translation will be more difficult if the translator does not grasp what is written in one language, and if he tries to transfer it without sufficient knowledge, he will write a meaningless speech. Following an examination of translation concepts, the researcher believes that translation is both a science and an art because the translator must adhere to the author's text and clarify what is hidden, and select one word to accurately represent the writer's mood and style to the reader.

Translator

According to Houbert (1998), the translator who truly practices his or her vocation has the responsibility for the translation. Of course, a good translator training program through academic institutions is required.
According to Shuttleworth (1997), the translator plays a vital part in human life interactions involving two or more languages. The translator, in this concept, acts as a go-between for two people who are unable to communicate.

As a result, Köksal (2020) quotes: "A translator is also an expert in intercultural communication, whose task is to create a bridge and aid others to cross-cultural and linguistic boundaries". (p.329)

According to Greiss (2000), a translator must possess some attributes to become a proficient translator. These skills can be attained through the science courses taught in the language and translation departments. These characteristics allow the translator to write effectively. Greiss (2000) went on to say that if you cannot write, you won't be a competent translator. Among the qualities that the translator must possess are the following:

1-Familiarity with his native tongue
2-Knowledge of the transmitted language
3-Knowledge of the translated text
4-Relying on his own experience

According to Greiss (2000) the translator should translate from a foreign language into his mother tongue. It is rare for a translator to have original knowledge of a language, and the translator need to be familiar with all aspects of that language represented in the text and be able to find what works best in terms of vocabulary, word order, and punctuation marks.

According to Anani (2000), the translator is a writer whose task is to formulate concepts into words that are directed at the reader. He differs from the original author in that the ideas he formulates are not his own, but rather those of others.

The researcher views the translator as the one who is fully proficient in the language from which he is translating and the target language has extensive cultural knowledge of both languages, and is constantly aware of the culture, literature, arts, laws and lives of the people of both languages. Finally, he is acquainted with the text he is translating.

Types of Translation

According to Shaheen (1998), distinct forms of translation can be recognized based on the translation procedures used. The translation may be instantaneous, and it is distinguished by its speed and variety of types. The translation could be done with mechanical tools. The method of brief translation is used in both of these two types of translation, or the complete text is honored by depending on the full translation, whether oral or written.

There are several types of translation according to Talal (2015)

1-written translation is as follows: There are two types of translation: idea translation and literal translation.
2-Oral translation: It has three methods: successive translation, dual translation, and simultaneous translation. It is primarily used for two purposes: text-to-text conversion and text-to-speech conversion.

**Translation Methods**

Finney and Darblane (1958) distinguished between direct and indirect translation procedures. According to Al-Khatib (2008), translation is separated into two types: direct translation (literal translation) and indirect translation (figurative translation). Indirect methods are opposed to direct methods, necessitating a significant amount of effort and cultural knowledge from the translator, and are classified into four types: literal, semantic, and contextual translation.

Al-Khatib, (2008) went on to say that while this translation was acceptable in the natural sciences, medicine, and mathematics, where the value of the translated work was unaffected, the transfer of Greek heritage to the Arabic language was not a direct transfer from.

Didaoui (1992) said that translation methods are the technical methods used to express the meaning of speech in one language. The translation has two well-known methods. The first method, is to look at a single word from the source language and its meaning, so the transmitter (the translator) comes up with a single word from the word of the transmitted language and its synonym to denote that meaning. This method is called literal translation.

According to Didaoui (1992), translation methods are "technical approaches for expressing the meaning of speech in a single language" (p.31). There are two well-known methods for translation. The first technique examines a single word from the source language and its meaning, after which the transmitter (translator) selects a single word from the transmitted language and its synonym to denote that meaning.

The second way, according to Didaoui (1992), follows a sentence and absorbs its meaning in his mind before expressing it in the other language with a sentence that fits it, whether the words are equal or different. This strategy is known as "interpretive translation" or "free translation". Every word in the literal translation is paired with a term in another language that has the same meaning. Because of its negative effects on meaning, this strategy is worthless.

**Previous Related Studies**

Some scholars have looked into translation problems, and a number and some past studies on student translation problems have been undertaken. Ehaj (2017) is geared toward locating the obstacles, language issues, and text-related difficulties those students of the Islamic University of Gaza's Diploma in Translation encounter. The study used several assessment methods to analyze the translated texts and discovered that the students had several translation challenges. The professor advised students to understand the origins of these difficulties and find appropriate solutions to avoid them in the future.

Ishaq (2017) investigated the challenges and problems faced by qualified translators when translating scientific words. The challenges, according to the report, are due to the wide range of scientific vocabulary and a lack of Arabic terms. The study looked into the challenges of scientific texts and how they relate to the text's properties. There are also other elements behind these
challenges and problems, such as a lack of technical things, a lack of translation understanding, and appropriate equivalency. A total of 44 students with a specialization in translation made up the sample. The study employed a qualitative approach. Interviews and documents were used to collect the necessary information. According to the findings, translators have various challenges due to a lack of equivalence.

Mostafa (2018), for example, looked into the common translation difficulties that students confront. The goal of the research was to look at the tough terminologies that students had to deal with during the translation process. A test was created to meet the study's goal, which consists of 20 items. According to the study lack of translation practice and translation courses, both of which are thought to be major contributors to translation difficulties, there is a lack of translation practice and translation courses, both of which are thought to be major contributors to translation problems.

Jabak (2018) discussed the problems Saudi undergraduates had translating texts from Arabic to English. He looked at the challenges that Saudi undergraduates experience and how to deal with them; the study aimed to clarify these challenges. The study used a qualitative approach. It collected data using two instruments: evaluation instruments and interviews. According to the research, numerous reasons that contribute to these problems, as well as numerous solutions for overcoming them.

Fahmi (2019) investigated the Challenges that Translators Experience when Translating Texts and Technical Terms. The goal of the research was to learn about the difficulties that translators face when translating texts and technical terms. This research used a test with five technical texts of varying difficulties and a sample of twenty participants, including ten master's students in the language specialization. According to the research, these challenges in language selection were due to grammatical structures, semantics, and vocabulary.

Abdellatif (2019) evaluated the difficulties and problems that arise when translating phone terminology. The goal of this study was to investigate the difficulties and problems that come with translating phone jargon. Using a questionnaire, the researcher attempted to learn about the tactics employed by students who translated specific terms. According to the study, their translations were inaccurate and lacked translation methodologies, and the students struggled to translate several technical terms.

Hikmah (2020) investigated the Analysis of Students' English Texts for Omission and Addition Errors. The study was conducted to identify aspects of addition and deletion errors in English writings created by students. The study was descriptive. The information was gathered by examining the work of students. There were 20 incidental texts written by 11th students. The text is divided into four sections. After gathering data and analyzing it using, students' errors were identified and verified in depth. The information gathered by entering it into the table was then categorized using linguistic classification and surface strategy classification. This study discovered several features of omission or addition errors and concluded that.
Some academics in Saudi Arabia have undertaken studies on syntactic problems in general, but there has been little research on syntactic problems with Saudi students, so this study was conducted to fill in the gaps.

Methods
To analyze syntactic problems in translation, the researchers used a descriptive method. It collaborated on syntactic problems. The information was gathered using written materials in Arabic.

Participants
The study sample comprises a group of English students engaged in a language education program. A text translation test was administered to measure the students' abilities to translate and detect syntactic problems. There were a total of 20 undergraduates in the group. They were second-year boys majoring in English and enrolled in the second semester of 2018. The College of Science and Arts in Baljurashi, Al Baha, offers the program. The participants had completed some of translation courses from English to Arabic and likewise. As a result, they all have the same educational background.

Research Instruments
This study's tools included an Arabic test. After scanning a series of texts and submitting their criticism, this text was graded by a panel of professionals. As a consequence, this text was decided. The researcher instructed the students to translate an Arabic text into English on a sheet of paper provided by the researcher. A translation test was performed on the study's sample. 20 Subjects were asked to translate a paragraph into Arabic, and syntactic issues were detected and assessed.

Research Procedures
The data for the study was collected via a test; the Arabic text was acquired from Dr. Ezzedine Muhammad Naguib's book, Foundations of the Translation. This content was evaluated by a group of experts who expressed their opinion, made changes and clarification some aspects that were taken into account. As a result, they selected this text.

Data Analysis
The term "analysis" refers to the process of describing and determining the causes of difficulties encountered by research participants. The participants created a variety of problems, but the examination was limited to syntactic issues. SPSS was used to provide a comprehensive study of the incidence of syntactic problems and to answer the research questions. After gathering the data needed to complete the study, syntactic problems in translation have been recognized, categorized, and mentioned below.

Findings
Syntactic Problems
The following table reveals that omissions received a score of 103 out of a total of 50.7, while additions received a score of 99 out of a total of 49 percent. There are 202 syntactic problems
in total. The datasets were analyzed using statistical analysis and software in this study. To summarize continuous data, standard deviations were used to summarize continuous data. These findings are similar to the findings of Shehab (2013). Syntactic problems were caused by interaction between the two languages, where the consequence of omission was greater than the result of the addition. Hikmah’s (2020) analysis of Students' English Texts for Omission and Addition Errors concluded that students are not adhering to grammar norms.

The following sentences describe omission and addition, respectively

**Omission**

According to the table, the percentage of omission was higher than the rate of addition, which was 50.7 percent.

In the English translation of the sentence

لا يوجد دور في تربية الأطفال

The school has an important role in educating the generation; this phrase can be translated as "school important for education generation" which means in Arabic.

لا يوجد دور مهم في تربية الأطفال

The English translation is incorrect because the students omitted the article "the," the verb "has," the article "an," the noun "role," and the word "raising" from the English structure; the reader will be unable to comprehend this translated sentence due to the lack of a noun that clarifies and completes the sentence's significance. The target language does not match this sentence.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

لا يوجد دور مهم في تربية الأطفال

The school helps the family raise children; this phrase can be translated as "it helps family raise children" which means in Arabic.

لا يوجد دور مهم في تربية الأطفال

Because the student omitted the words "school" and "the" from the English framework, the translation is incorrect. While translating the statement, the student removed the noun and replaced it with a pronoun, rendering the translation unclear; the reader is unable to comprehend the translation of "it."

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

لا يوجد دور مهم في تربية الأطفال

In school children are taught good morals; this phrase can be translated as "school learn the kids behavior and good" which means in Arabic.
The English translation is incorrect because the students left out the words "in" and "morals." The students omitted the preposition "in" as well as the noun "morals," which caused the translation to be incomplete and unintelligible.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

"مثل الصدق وعدم الكذب والتعاون مع الأخرين"

Such as honesty, not lying, cooperation with others, order, cleanliness; this phrase can be translated as "like lying, cooperation, order and cleanliness important for education" which means in Arabic.

Students omitted the words "honesty" and "not" from the word "lying," causing the structure to change and the meaning to become incorrect; additionally, students omitted the word "with others," resulting in the word cooperation that does not correspond to the target language.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

"احترام الكبير والعطف والنجاح والتفوق و أكثر تنوعا"

Respect for the great, kindness to the young, love of success, excellence and good behavior; this phrase can be translated as "respect great, kindness, success, excellence and more various" which means in Arabic.

The students left out the article "the" and the preposition "for" from the word "great," leaving the meaning in the English grammatical structure incomplete. Furthermore, students omitted the word "young," rendering the meaning illegible; the word "love" was omitted from the word "success," as was the preposition "of," resulting in an English language misunderstanding of the meaning. The two words "excellent behavior" were removed by the students, resulting in the removal of a portion of the sentence in the English structure, which distorts the meaning.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

"تلاضافة إلى أن المدرسة تمد الطالب بالعديد من المواد الدراسية في مختلف المجا

In addition to, the school provides students with many learning subjects in various fields; this phrase can be translated as "it also gave student by much ways" which means in Arabic.
Because the word "in addition to" and the noun "school" were omitted and replaced with a pronoun, the reader was unable to understand the translation of "it." The students also left out the words "fields" and "learning subjects," which resulted in misunderstanding and a lack of understanding of the concept.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

و هذالمواد توؤمه له لازيمون ناجحا ناجحا

These subjects qualify him to be a successful person in his work; This phrase can be translated as "these subjects qualify him to be successful in his work" which means in Arabic.

"و هذالمواد توؤمه له لازيمون ناجح في عمله"

The students left off the word "person" from the English construction; the reader will be unable to comprehend this translated statement because it lacks a noun that clarifies and completes the significance of the sentence. Also, this sentence does not correspond to the target language.

Addition

The addition differs from the omission in that it occurs when a word is added to a sentence that does not exist; it is usually inserted in the target language, as in the sentences below:

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

للمدرسة دور هام في تعليم الجيل و تربيته

The school has an important role in educating the generation; this phrase can be translated by many students as "the school has an important part of educating the and upraising generation" which means in Arabic.

"المدرسة لها جزء مهم من تعليم وتربية الجيل"

Many students added unnecessary words to the statement that were not part of the original structure of the target language, such as "part and of," altering the meaning and rendering the translation literal.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

تشمل جميع المهام الأسرية في تحصية الأطفال

The school helps the family raise children; this phrase can be translated as "the school is helping the family to raise the children in school" which means in Arabic.

"تشمل جميع المهام الأسرية في تحصية الأطفال في المدرسة"
Students added an unnecessary verb to be "is" and "ing" to the sentence; the word "school" was also repeated, which is considered a clear error in English language structure.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

“In school children are taught good morals; this phrase can be translated as "in the school it learns a children ethics good" which means in Arabic.

The students added the pronoun "it" to the sentence, which is a repeat because the noun already exists and the pronoun is unnecessary. The word "children" has been given an extra "a"; this is incorrect because the word "children" is plural, not single. The term "ethics" has been replaced with the adjective "good".

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

"Such as honesty, not lying, cooperation with others; this phrase can be translated as "like honesty not lying, have connections to people cooperation", which means in Arabic."

The students modified the meaning of the sentence by inserting the word "have," which does not appear in the text. The term "people" was added in the target language, which did not appear in the Arabic text, changing the form and meaning of the statement.

The English translation of the sentence is as follows:

"In addition to, the school provides students with many learning subjects in various fields; this phrase can be translated as "in addition to, the school provides students with all of the other learning subjects in various major" which means in Arabic."

Students inserted the preposition of," into the sentence, which does not appear in the in Arabic sentence and can be written correctly without it; this error could be due to language interference.

Discussion

What are the syntactic problems that Saudi students confront when translating?

What are the sources of translation's syntactic problems?

Syntactic problems
The students made 202 errors, 50 omission errors, and 49 additional errors.

The majority of the problems stemmed from omissions.

A lack of familiarity with the rules of both languages.

Interference between the two languages is the most common cause of errors.

Students fail to notice differences between the English and Arabic languages.

Grammar norms are not being followed by the students.

Conclusion

This study looked into the syntactic problems that English students at Al Baha University have when translating. Syntactic problems can be divided into two categories: omission and addition. The majority of the problems stemmed from omissions. According to the findings, the students made 202 errors, 50 omission errors, and 49 additional errors. The findings also revealed that grammar norms are not being followed by the students, a lack of familiarity with the rules of both languages: interference between the two languages is the most common cause of errors, and students fail to notice differences between the English and Arabic languages. These findings are similar to the findings of Shehab (2013). Syntactic problems were caused by interaction between the two languages, where the consequence of omission was greater than the result of the addition. Hikmah’s (2020) analysis of Students’ English Texts for Omission and Addition Errors concluded that students are not adhering to grammar norms.

About the Author

Dr. Mohammed Ali Elsiddig Ibrahim is an Assistant Prof at the English Department, College of Science and Arts AL-Baha University, KSA. He holds a PhD in general Translation. His areas of interest include translation problems, translation difficulties, general translation, translation theory interpretation, and method of interpretation. https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7766-1788

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**Appendices**

**Arabic Translation**

للمدرسة دور هام في تربية الأطفال، ففي المدرسة يتم تعليم الأطفال سرية في تربية الأسرة، دور المدرسة مهم في التحصيل العلمي والأخلاقية للطفل، حيث يتعلم الطفل عادات النظافة، واحترام الآخرين، وحب العمل، وصبر، و自卑، وغيرها من العادات الأخلاقية التي يتعلمه من البيئة. فالمدرسة تساهم في تطوير مهارات الطفل وتقوية بناءه الذاتي.

**English Translation**

The school has an important role in the education and upbringing of the generation. The school helps the family raise the children. In the school, the children are taught good morals. Such as honesty, cooperation with others, order, cleanliness, respect for the elder, kindness to the young, love of success and excellence, and other good behavior. In addition, the school provides the student with many subjects in various fields. These subjects qualify him to be a successful person in his work.
### Syntactic problems

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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>103</strong></td>
<td><strong>99</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>50.7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>49%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>202</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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An Affective Approach to Teaching Literature: I Feel Therefore I am

Allami Moustafa
Department of English
Faculty of Foreign Languages
University of Oran 2: Mohamed Ben Ahmed, Algeria
Corresponding Author: allamim25@gmail.com

Ghenim Naima
Department of English
Faculty of Foreign Languages
University of Oran 2: Mohamed Ben Ahmed, Algeria

Abstract
The present research paper seeks to ascertain whether students respond emotionally to literature—as it is argued that the emotions experienced during reading help interpret literary texts. To that end, the study departs from an investigation of students’ personal responses only to determine whether emotion-based responses exist in the EFL context, thus answering the central question that guides this work: do affective responses to literature exist? The stakeholders involved in this study are master-one, EFL students who specialize in literature and civilization at the University of Oran 2, in Algeria. These students were asked to answer a mixed-methods questionnaire. Of the 61 students concerned with the study, thirty-one have answered. The analysis of the ensuing data showed that affective responses to literature are quasi-nonexistent, thus the urgent need to reassess the current literature teaching approaches.

Keywords: Emotions, EFL students, literature, literary experience, personal responses, teaching approaches

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Introduction

What is literature for? The answer to this question comes with many implications, particularly in the pedagogical realm. When it comes to the teaching of literature, some factors come into play, namely the text, the author, and the reader. Traditional approaches to teaching literature emphasized the text and its author. The analysis of texts to decipher the hidden meanings was primary. Nevertheless, the newly-emerged approaches, particularly the reader-response approach, laid a heavy emphasis on the reader. It has been argued that the reader contributes to the interpretation of literary texts. Through their personal responses—which are based on past knowledge, experiences, emotions, and culture—readers can enrich and vivify the text, making it more meaningful than ever.

Literature is destined to fulfill an aesthetic function. That is to say, all that taps into the essence of the individual: feelings, emotions, perceptions, attitudes, vision, preferences, etc. However, this is not the case in the EFL context where it has been turned into a factual science, since it is devoid of all that characterizes the individual and makes them unique. Although the modern teaching approaches to literature focus the spotlight on students, i.e., the readers, lending them a considerable degree of autonomy to reflect upon the literary text and respond to it, students still lack aestheticism. While they are supposed to be founded in the affective realm, students’ personal responses are generally evidence-based and oriented towards objectivity. This is partly due to the approach taken to teaching literature that, though it encourages reading responses, disallows those responses founded on emotions. The best-case scenario is that in which students would use both their mental faculties and their emotions to interpret the literary text. Thus, the purpose of this paper is twofold: first, to find out whether students’ personal responses to literature exist. Second, to determine whether these responses are based on students’ feelings and emotions. An attempt to fulfill the foregoing objectives means answering the central question of this paper: to what extent do students respond emotionally to literature? In this regard, students—who specialize in literature and civilization, in the department of English, at the University of Oran 2, in Algeria—were asked to answer a questionnaire dedicated to this cause.

Literature Review

The Cultural Approach

The Cultural Model, or language as content (Lazar, 1993), is a traditional approach to teaching literature (Hadjoui & Kheladi, 2014) where learners are supposed to find out about the text’s context from different perspectives: social, political, literary and historical (Rahimipour, 2019). In the words of Isariyawat et al. (2020), “it [the cultural model] urges understudies to find and investigate social, literary and recorded components of the content” (p. 1323). Not only does the cultural model show the universality of thoughts and ideas, but it also promotes learners’ awareness of those cultures and ideologies that are different from theirs (Yimwilai, 2015). Finally, the cultural approach is concerned with the quality of ideas that many educational systems and teachers strive to attain (Rahimipour, 2019). In this regard, Padurean (2015) argued that the cultural approach “does not focus on mere language acquisition but also on the knowledge of the country’s culture and ideologies” (p. 196).
The Language-Based Model

The language-based model, otherwise known as the language model (Hernández, 2011), is concerned with how language is used within the literary text (Hammad, 2012). Simply put, “the main focus is on language as the literary medium” (Fauziah, 2016, p. 148). The language model departs from the idea that students develop their knowledge when working with common and recognizable grammar and lexis (Padurean, 2015). According to Bibby and Mcilroy (2013), “a literary text may be used to provide exemplars of particular grammatical points and/or lexical items” (p. 19). For Fehaima (2018), the language-based model paves the way for learners to increase their understanding of language by confronting them with various themes and topics. Though there are a few literary goals that are expected to be achieved in this model, overall, the study of language overrides that of literature (Isariyawat et al., 2020; Rahimipour, 2019). This means that, insofar as language is concerned, opting for the language-based approach to teaching literature would be the right choice (Rahimipour, 2019). Finally, the language-based model allows students to not only experience literature but also respond to it (Mart, 2019).

The Personal Growth Approach

In this learner-centered approach (Hammad, 2012), the focus is placed on a particular use of language in a text and a specific cultural context (Rahimipour, 2019). In actual fact, this approach—which is an amalgamation of the language and the cultural models (Savvidou, 2004)—has students respond to the narrative by connecting it with their personal experiences (Hadjoui & Kheladi, 2014; Lazar, 1993; Yimwilai, 2015), which is why some associate it with the personal response approach (Mustakim et al., 2018). In general, the personal growth model emphasizes the students’ personal involvement in reading literature. In other words, it helps students attain what Carter and Long call “an engagement” in reading literature (as cited in Hadjoui & Kheladi, 2014, p. 116).

The Integrated Approach

It has been noticed that the aforementioned models, namely the cultural modal, the language-based modal, and the personal growth modal, overlap (Hadjoui & Kheladi, 2014). Thus, taking into consideration those three literature teaching models theorized by Carter and Long, Savvidou went further to set forth what she called an integrated approach to literature teaching (Marin, 2017). The model that she suggested is based on the premise that the foregoing three models can be systematically reconciled (Marin, 2017). She urged that there is a need for a literature teaching approach that not only allows learners to access literature but also helps them develop their language (Savvidou, 2004).

The Reader-Response Theory

The reader-response theory has its origins in the realm of literary criticism, particularly in the work of the famous literary theorist Louise Rosenblatt whose transactional theory of reading emphasizes the rapport between the reader and the text in the process of meaning-making (Ali, 1993; Demény, 2012; Duarte & Castaneda-Pena, 2015; Larson, 2009). The theory is based on the premise that the reader’s response to the text is as significant as the content of that text (Youssef, 2021). In other words, just as the text is paramount—particularly its content—so is the reader’s response to that text (Youssef, 2021). Spirovská (2019) wrote, “The reader, with his past experiences, beliefs, expectations, and assumptions, interacts with the perspectives in the text, and
meaning is determined as the result of this interaction” (p. 22). According to Mart (2019), the act of responding not only contributes to textual understanding but also encourages intellectual as well as emotional involvement with the text. Iskhak et al. (2020) contended that “the notion ‘response’… refers to both intellectual and emotional reactions towards the texts being interpreted” (p. 119). As for Robinson, she maintained that the reader’s emotions help interpret the literary text (Konrad et al., 2019). Mart (2019) added that the emotional responses, which stem from the text-reader relationship, improve class instruction. Regarding the latter, the idea of adopting the reader-response approach comes from the conviction that learners’ needs are important (Takroumbalt & Boulenouar, 2021).

Methods

The aim of this research is to validate the claim that students’ emotional responses to literature are nonexistent in the EFL class. To fulfill this objective, both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used. Qualitative data were important in this study as much as the quantitative data. Students’ thoughts and ideas added more credits and validation to this research.

The Participants

The participants are first-year master students who specialize in literature and civilization. They study in the English department, at the University of Oran 2, to complete their academic year 2018-2019. There are 61 students. However, only 31 of them—28 females and eight males, aged between 20 and 45—returned answered questionnaires.

Table 1. Demographic information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>45-55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Instruments

The present study has made use of a mixed-methods questionnaire, dedicated to students. It comprises 15 questions. Some are closed questions, while others are open-ended. Overall, the questions are centered on such themes as teacher-student relationship, textual interpretation, students’ goals, teacher’s attitudes, and writing about literature.

Research Procedures

Data were gathered by means of an online questionnaire in the period between 2018 and 2019. The latter is designed by Google Forms, an online software that helps create surveys and questionnaires. After identifying the sample, which involves master one, literature-and-civilization students, the researcher took to Facebook to contact the students concerned with the study. In fact, these students are members of a Facebook group where they share all that is related to their studies and master course, such as changes in schedule, the teacher’s leave-of-absence notice, pdf files,
etc. Eventually, the questionnaire was posted in that group. Whenever a student finishes responding to the questionnaire and clicks on/hits submit, the results will automatically reach the sender, i.e., the researcher. However, out of the 61 students who share the aforementioned specialization, only 31 answered the questionnaire. The results were then converted into Microsoft Office Excel sheet to be analyzed and ultimately discussed. Finally, as far as data analysis is concerned, it should be noted that some qualitative data were quantified through the coding system.

Results

Does Your Teacher Inform You About What You Will Accomplish by The End of the Literature Course?

Table 2. The transfer of the intended learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer percentage</th>
<th>Yes, s/he does</th>
<th>No, s/he doesn’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of posing this question is to find out whether students are informed about the learning outcomes that they are expected to achieve by the end of the course. The findings showed that a significant proportion of students (75%) revealed that they are not informed about what they are expected to achieve, while a quarter of them (25%) confessed that they are actually told about what they are supposed to accomplish by the end of the course.

What Do You Think Your Teacher Expects from You?

![Teacher’s expectations chart](image)

Figure 1. Teacher’s expectations

In this question, students had to use their current knowledge and intuition to determine their teacher’s expectations. The findings showed that 40% of the participants bet that their teacher expects good language, while around a third of them (31%) believed that creativity and originality are what their teacher usually expects. A minority of the informants (16%) revealed that they are expected to make correct interpretations. An even smaller minority, representing 8% of the sample, said that drawing upon experiences is probably what their teacher would expect them to do. The tiny minority left (5%) claimed that the teacher expects them to reproduce what they have learned in class.

How Often Does Your Teacher Invite You to Express Yourself in Class?

Table 3. The frequency of being invited to express opinions in class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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The researcher asked students this question to learn how often they express themselves in class. In this regard, half of the informants (50%) express themselves sometimes, while a third of them (33%) always do so. The remaining 17% claimed that they never engage in expressing themselves in class.

**How Does Your Teacher React to Your Personal Interpretation of a Literary Passage/Text?**

![Figure 2. Teacher’s attitudes towards students’ personal interpretations](chart.png)

The purpose of this question is to learn about the teacher’s reaction to their students’ personal interpretation of the literary passage, or text. In this regard, 42% of students claimed that their teacher rejects their false interpretations, while a third of them (33%) revealed that their teacher corrects their interpretations when they are false. Only a quarter of the informants (25%) confessed that their teacher welcomes and accepts their false interpretations. No one (0%) mentioned anything about the fact that their personal interpretations are rejected regardless of whether they are right or wrong.

**In Your Exam, Do You Respond With the Exact Information That You Have Received From Your Teacher During Lectures/Classes?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Yes, I do</th>
<th>No, I don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>percentage</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question was intended to elicit answers as to whether students reproduce the same information they have received from their teacher on their exam papers. In this respect, slightly over half of the informants (53%) disclosed that, in their exam, they respond with the same information that their teacher has provided them with during lectures. On the other hand, the proportion left (47%) revealed that they do not do so.

**Does Your Teacher Accept New Information on Your Exam Paper?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Yes, s/he does</th>
<th>No, s/he doesn’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>percentage</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The informants were asked this question in order to know whether their teacher accepts new information on their exam papers. In this regard, over half of the informants (58%) reported that their teacher does accept new information, while the 42% left claimed that he or she does not.
What Are Your Exam Answers Based on?

Figure 3. The sources of students’ exam answers

The rationale of this question is to learn what students’ exam answers are based on. In this respect, slightly over half of the participants (54%) reported that their answers are based on their understanding and interpretation. Twenty-two percent of the informants said that their answers hinge upon the notes that they have taken during the lecture. Another minority, representing 16% of the sample, disclosed that they rely on their teacher’s handouts. However, the remaining 8% of the participants decided to jot down their own answers:

- All of them.
- 1+2 (the teacher handouts and the notes I have taken during the lectures).
- The teacher handouts and the notes I have taken during the lectures.
- My answers are based on the three suggestions that you proposed.
- It depends on whether the teacher is open to different ideas. Some teachers tend to be stubborn so I needed to give them what they want in order to pass the exam.

Do You Write Your Opinion in Your Literature Essay?

Table 6. Writing opinions in essays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Yes, I do</th>
<th>No, I don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>65%</td>
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</table>

This question is addressed to students so as to find out whether they express their opinions in their essays. Thus, as displayed in the table above, a significant number of students, representing 65% of the sample, confirmed that they write their opinions in their essays, whereas the remaining 35% confessed that they do not do so.

How Do You Interpret the Text?
The main motive in asking this question is to reveal how students interpret the text. The findings showed that slightly over a third of the respondents (37%) admitted that they interpret the text by analysing it, whereas 36% of them stated that they rely on the historical background of the text for interpretation. Another portion of the participants, representing 18% of the sample, confessed that they relate the text to their personal experiences. Only 9% of those students surveyed claimed that they interpret the text by understanding the author’s intention.

**Why Do You Study Literature?**

This question seeks to investigate the students’ goals of studying literature. The findings showed the following: half of the students surveyed (50%) study literature for the purpose of improving their language; a quarter of the students (25%) reported they want to become knowledgeable in the field; a small minority, representing 11% of the total sample, shared their goal of becoming writers; nine percent revealed that emotional development is their ultimate goal; only 5% of the informants confessed they study literature only to pass the exams.

**In the Field of Literature, What Aspect About Yourself Do You Wish to Improve This Year?**
This question intends to uncover what students strive to develop in their master one course. The results showed that slightly over a third of the informants, representing 36% of the sample, are after developing their writing skills, while a quarter of them (25%) seek to improve their reading skills. These results also showed that 19% of the participants want to enhance their research skills in the field of literature, and 16% of them wish to advance their critical thinking skills. Nonetheless, only 4% of those students surveyed set their sights on ameliorating their emotional intelligence.

The rationale behind asking students this question is to find out how students usually respond to literature in their essays. Answers to this question would allow for more than one option. In this regard, the results displayed in the graph above showed that the majority of students (80%) opted for “I think”, which is their usual way of responding to literature. Almost a similar percentage of students (76%) chose “I believe” as their typical response. As expected, about half of the participants (45%) selected the famous phrase “in my humble opinion”, while slightly over a quarter of them (26%) revealed that they usually use “I reckon” when they respond. On the other hand, a minority of students, representing 16% of the sample, picked “I feel”, and an even smaller minority (11%) went for “I understand the character”. This is followed by a tiny proportion, which represents 8%, that usually makes use of the expression “this reminds me of”. Only 4% of students, however, reported that they usually answer with “this strikes me as”.

What Do You Think Literature Is About?

Figure 6. Students’ literature-related goals

Figure 7. Ways of responding in literature essays
This question aims at discovering how students perceive literature. Just as in the previous question, here, too, the participants are permitted to select more than one option. The findings showed that the majority of those students surveyed, representing 78% of the sample, think of literature in terms of “feelings and emotions”, while 70% of them perceive it as “art”. Another proportion, representing 56% of the total number of participants, sees literature as “culture”. For some students, who represent 42% of the total sample, literature is about “relationships”. Others, 39% of the total, believe that literature is about ideas. Around a third of the informants (30%) reported that literature is “philosophy”, while about the same proportion (27%) asserted that literature is about “the self”. Finally, 20% of students concluded that literature is purely about language.

Figure 8. Students’ conception of literature

What Makes You Happy When You Read Literature?

Students were asked this question to learn their source of pleasure behind reading literature. In this respect, nearly half of the participants (44%) revealed that understanding the text makes them happy, while 26% of them reported that learning new cultural information contributes to their joy of reading. A small number of students, representing 19%, disclosed that it is the beauty of language that cheers them up. The tiny minority of students left (11%) affirmed that they feel happy when they relate to characters.

Figure 9. Students’ sources of pleasure in reading literature

What Are Your Debates With Your Teacher Centered on?
Figure 10. The foci of the teacher-student debates

By asking this question, the researcher seeks to find out what a literature debate in a master class is generally centered on. The results demonstrated that according to 37% of those students surveyed, literature debates are centered on textual interpretation. As for the proportion representing 29%, they reported that such debates tackle ideas related to the theme. However, only 15% of the participants said that their debates are based on the author’s biography. Almost a similar proportion (11%) claimed that the debates they have with their teacher revolve around how they felt about reading a particular passage, text, or book. The remaining tiny minority (8%) said that they debate the context where the book was written.

Discussion

This research paper has sought to learn the extent to which students respond emotionally to literary texts. As expected, and based on the foregoing data analyses, students’ responses confirmed that emotional responses are quasi-nonexistent in the EFL literature classroom. Although students think of literature in terms of feelings and emotions, the latter do not constitute their goals. This runs counter to the principles of the reader-response theory, according to which, responses to literature originate not only in cognition but also in personal experiences and emotions. Furthermore, this study revealed that textual interpretations occupy the content of the class, so students study the language and the historical background of the text to make interpretations, which explains the prevalence of some traditional approaches to teaching literature, such as the cultural approach and the language-based model. This can also account for the presence of some old teacher-centered practices, particularly the practice of memorizing and reproducing the content dealt with in class in the exam paper.

Moreover, the respondents have reported that their literature course is based on analyzing literary texts and learning about their backgrounds, such as the author’s biography, the socio-cultural context where the literary work was written, etc. However, these practices rarely invite students’ personal responses, since they deal only with facts or objective analyses of texts. This also explains why students avoid writing their opinions and lean towards objectivity through their frequent use of objective language. Nevertheless, the classroom debates, according to the findings, are not exclusively centered on the study of the author’s biography and the context of the literary work. They also digress to tackle other ideas related to the theme of the work under study, which encourages a flow of ideas (brainstorming), creativity, critical thinking, and communication in the classroom. This insinuates that students’ autonomy in terms of sharing their thoughts and emotions is exercised only in class—not in the exams and assignments. Students are generally invited to
express themselves in class, yet their autonomy is limited since it cannot go beyond the classroom discussions.

Clearly, based on the results, students avoid giving their opinions. This is, probably, because they are not confident about their knowledge and language level. They may think that they can never get to the level of a critic—who was once a beginner, just like them. Or they may prefer to keep it neutral and stay as objective as possible, simply because they do not want to involve themselves—for some unknown reasons. Furthermore, students not sharing their thoughts and emotions can be explained in relation to their expectations as well as their teacher’s. When a teacher has low expectations for his or her students, they will create a Rosenthal effect. Students, in this case, would feel incapable of fulfilling what their teacher really desires them to accomplish. In the reversed scenario where the teacher sets high expectations, the result would be the Pygmalion effect. That is to say, students would be motivated and, therefore, capable of reading and writing about literature.

It is noteworthy that teachers do not communicate their expectations—technically the intended learning outcomes—to their students. This is confirmed by the students’ answers to the first question of the questionnaire. Students do not know what is expected from them. This is probably the reason why they developed the practice of reproducing what they have learned in class, which is still prevalent. Surprisingly, when the researcher asked the students to guess what their teacher expects mostly from them, many reported that it is language. Incidentally, their teacher’s expectation, though unshared, correlates with their ultimate goal—that of understanding the literary text. Teacher’s expectations—termed the intended learning outcomes in this research—provide students with a road map to determine their goal and decide how to attain it. When these expectations are not shared, students will then be forced to guess what is expected from them. Creativity, critical thinking, figurative language, arguments, and illustrations are some of the expectations that teachers may have of their students and which need to be clearly communicated to them.

Moreover, the findings show that students study in a teacher-centered environment as some of them have to rely on either their teacher’s handouts or the notes they have taken during their lectures in order to pass the exam. This insinuates that knowledge is imparted to students as a fixed entity expected to be reproduced in the exams. Though both teachers and students know for a fact that literature is not limited in terms of interpretations, it seems that they are relying on a set of established interpretations that have become factual information expected to be memorized and retrieved when necessary. This research has proved that a lot is at stake, particularly the learners’ autonomy, when teaching is centered on the teacher. Knowledge is neither the teacher’s propriety nor the students’. The world of literature is so vast that it can’t be delimited by the teachers’ views or narrowed to a set of established interpretations. Students’ answers substantiate the claim that the literature teaching instruction is teacher-centered. However, the banking model of teaching and learning numbs creativity and does not contribute to students’ emotional growth, which is one of the aims of this research. The pedagogy of freedom, which is the antidote to the pedagogy of the oppressed, in this context, would encourage students to voice their opinions and emotions.
It should be noted that most of the time, students’ interpretations are rejected, yet this contradicts their claim that their teacher accepts new information and is open to new ideas. They also maintain that they do express themselves in class. Having said that, it seems that the teacher has expectations and preferences as to novel information. In other words, he has a personalized set of assessment criteria to judge whether that information (interpretation) is ‘correct’ or ‘false’. Teachers have their reasons for rejecting their students’ interpretations. A study conducted by the researcher, which involves 23 EFL teachers from seven Algerian universities, showed that teachers have different assumptions as to what makes a ‘correct’ interpretation. While some teachers believe that an interpretation is ‘correct’ as long as it does not go off-topic, others assert that false interpretations are not based on reason, evidence, or theory. They rather exist in the realm of unfounded subjectivity. Thus, the main issue that has been addressed in this research is the rejection of learners’ interpretations, especially when these are based on their feelings and emotions.

Finally, the analysis of the students’ responses shows that students lean towards the mastery of language—they strive to improve their reading and writing skills in particular. Students believe that language is the most important in the field of literature, so, instead of relying upon their personal experiences and emotions, they place an emphasis on the analysis of language. What is more, students think that mastery of language is what their teacher expects them to achieve. There seem to be reasons behind students overfocusing and prioritizing language over other aspects, such as emotional involvement in the text, when dealing with literature. First, students may believe that the only way to improve their language is through reading literature. Second, some students study literature for exams only, so they are convinced that language itself will suffice to pass the exam. Last but not least, there are some students who think that literature is purely about language. For these students, understanding language is synonymous with understanding literature. In this case, as noted by Rahimipour (2019), the language-based approach would be effective within this category of students.

**Conclusion**

This research aimed at substantiating the claim that affective responses to literature are hardly ever present in the EFL literature classroom. Accordingly, the findings of this study showed that students are not involved emotionally in the literary experience. As a matter of fact, these findings drew back the curtain on how some competences, such as linguistic competence and critical thinking, are prioritized over emotional competence, which calls for the reassessment of the current literature teaching approaches. Ultimately, the study underscored the need to put students’ emotional responses at the core of the literary experience, for this will help them develop not only their literary competence but also their emotional intelligence.

**About the Authors**

Allami Moustafa is a secondary school English language teacher. He is also a doctoral student at the University of Oran 2, in Algeria. He holds a master's degree in the Science of Language and the Didactics of English. He is currently working towards his Ph.D. degree in the Didactics of Literature. His fields of interest are TEL, educational psychology, and American literature. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3472-6040
Prof. Ghenim Naima is a professor of English literature at the University of Oran 2, in Algeria. She specializes in comparative literature, particularly postcolonial literature, literary theory, and literary discourse. She is also the author of *A Woman in Black*. Her recent contribution ‘*Ni Oiseau ni Poisson*’: Algerian Jewish Literature offers a glimpse into the Jews’ struggle with their identity in the tumultuous period of decolonization.

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0744-7740

References


Potential Causes of Foreign Language Anxiety among Saudi Female Students in the United States

Haifa Almotiary
Linguistics and Applied Linguistics
Department of English
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, USA
Email: halmotia@asu.edu

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Abstract
This study aims to answer the following main question: What are the possible factors that cause foreign language anxiety (FLA) among Saudi Arabian female students living and studying English as a foreign language in the US? Data were obtained from interviewing nine Saudi females learning English as a second language in the US. There has been increased research into foreign language learning and anxiety. Some studies have focused on Western students learning a foreign language in a Western setting, while others have involved Asian students, ignoring other perspectives. Due to the significant increase in Saudi women currently studying in the US, this study investigated FLA among this population accustomed to segregated classrooms. The results revealed that the participants exhibited some commonly cited FLA types (e.g., communication apprehension, test anxiety, and the fear of negative evaluation). Still, the role of their Saudi cultural background may have been equally important in influencing their FLA. Future research might include a larger sample of students and teachers to investigate FLA and help elucidate students’ experiences.

Keywords: classroom research, English as a second language, ESL context, foreign language anxiety,

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Introduction

For decades, scholars and language teachers have paid attention to the phenomenon of foreign language anxiety (FLA). Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) argued that FLA is a distinct unique construct that differs from other forms of anxiety. The authors defined FLA as a “distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p. 128).

The role that language anxiety plays in the acquisition of a foreign language has been studied extensively over the past several years. However, few of these studies have explored the causes of such anxiety in female Saudi English as a foreign language (EFL) speakers (e.g., AlSaqqaf, Swants, Din, Bidin, & Shabdin, 2017). AlSaqqaf et al. (2017) investigated the factors causing language anxiety among Arab Ph.D. holders and candidates in the US. In addition, they examined anxiety levels, considering that these students come from a male-dominated culture. However, the small sample makes it difficult to extrapolate to the general population, and the selection only includes Ph.D. students limits its application to English as a second language (ESL) students. Dewaele and Al-Saraj (2015) addressed the issue of FLA among female EFL Arabic speakers using different variables but failed to delineate the experiences of male and female learners.

Furthermore, there is little evidence of any in-depth studies exploring anxiety among female foreign language learners in male-dominated societies. In the first part of her study, Al-Saraj (2014) invited Saudi female participants to answer open-ended prompts regarding situations in which they had felt anxiety while learning English, but this is one of few studies involving Saudi female participants. As a result, the topic has received limited attention.

The Rationale of the Study

Due to the significant increase in Saudi women currently studying or residing in the US, more research is needed to investigate in depth the source of FLA among this population. Furthermore, the importance of this study is magnified by the salient differences between the American and Saudi cultures, such as the law that forbids interactions between males and females in public. The contrasting nature of social life and norms in the two environments is blatant. The reality for females in Saudi Arabia is that they are segregated, restricted, and censored, whereas, in the US, they are included and encouraged to share their opinions and perspectives.

Other studies about FLA have not emphasized the influence of cultural background on anxiety formation, especially as it pertains to female Saudi Arabian learners of English language in the US. To address this gap, the researcher conducted a study to explore the factors that can influence anxiety among nine Saudi female participants studying or residing in the US. FLA research has not yet considered the perspectives of Arab female ESL learners. FLA research has been done in only a few countries. Within that body of investigative work, few studies have even been conducted on Arabs as a second language (L2) learners/users. For example, the main countries in which FLA research has been conducted are the US (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Lucas, 1984), Australia (e.g., Woodrow, 2006), and the UK (e.g., Wan, 2012).
The value of considering FLA from the perspective of Saudi females comes from the fact that a vast number of Saudi females are now being educated abroad. According to Zong and Batalova (2018), Saudi Arabia is one of the leading sources of international students in the US. Also, Saudi Arabia is one of the top 10 sources of international students in the UK and Canada (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2018; UK Council for International Student Affairs, 2019). However, even with so many Saudi female students studying in other countries where co-ed classes are standard, the relationship between their level of anxiety and their educational success, specifically in co-ed classrooms, has not been investigated formally.

There is a general dearth of information on Arab ESL students’ gender-specific learning anxiety. However, Marzec-Stawiarska’s (2014) study at least sheds a generalized light on how women become more anxious than men in certain situations when speaking a foreign language in the classroom. To carry out the study, Marzec-Stawiarska (2014) adapted the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al., 1986), added new items specific for this study, and focused on in-class speaking comprehension (e.g., I can overcome the stress of speaking English during classes). The study intended to identify gender-related anxiety experiences within a group of EFL students (61 women and 45 men) at a university in Poland. The results confirmed that women are more prone to feeling anxious in a learning environment. The study showed that anxiety could differ between male and female second language (L2) learners, but the study was conducted in Poland. Due to distinctive cultural differences between Polish and Saudi society, the research could not utilize the same data to obtain the same result for Saudi female learners. The female learners showed anxiety levels that far surpassed their male counterparts, specifically when giving oral performances of their English acquisition progress. Still, the authors did not explain the cause of this difference. With such a conclusion, it is worth engaging in further investigation to determine what might create higher levels of anxiety for female students. However, one of the limitations of this study regarding the focus on Arab female ESL students and their levels of language acquisition anxiety is that it involved Polish culture, where female and male roles in society are starkly different than in the Saudi context. For example, the educational system in Poland is not segregated, while in Saudi Arabia, females are only allowed to study in all-female classes. Therefore, it is more likely that the dynamic in mixed-gender classes will differ from same-sex classes. Therefore, while Marzec-Stawiarska’s (2014) study focus on gender is of value, setting it apart from other studies, the cultural background of that study keeps its findings from wholly applicable to the topic of study at hand.

The current array of FLA studies lacks a gender-specific lens or has involved cultures that promote gender equality. So, it is important to engage in an investigation that focuses on participants from societies where male-female roles and relationships are imbued with unique cultural norms. Based on this pressing need, the current study was designed to investigate the factors that cause FLA among Saudi female students by taking into consideration the segregated nature of the Saudi culture and how mixed-gender classes in the US can trigger specific feelings of anxiety. Therefore, the study will answer the following research question:

What are the possible factors that cause FLA among Saudi Arabian female students living and studying English as a foreign language in the US?
Literature Review

Anxiety in L2 learning has been defined in various ways, and commonality in these definitions has been three main components: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and the fear of negative evaluation. These three components make up the FLA framework, which is a tool that has been used to study FLA. For example, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) defined FLA as “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language L2 context, including speaking, listening, and learning” (p. 284), while Horwitz et al. (1986) defined FLA as occurring when a student has to perform a task in a foreign language. However, despite differing definitions, Horwitz et al. (1986) and Maclyntyre and Gardner (1994) define the three main FLA components as communication apprehension, test anxiety, and the fear of negative evaluation.

The FLA framework begins with the first component of communication apprehension, which is a specific example of state anxiety. For example, learners could experience FLA when speaking a foreign language in the classroom. In his study, Tanveer (2007) conducted research in the EFL classes at the University of Glasgow, UK. Twenty subjects from various nationalities participated in the study, and some of these students were from Saudi Arabia. The study used a qualitative approach through semi-structured and focus group interviews. The data revealed that communication apprehension, especially giving presentations in the classroom, is highly anxiety-inducing. This same situation and anxiety-producing outcome hold true for Saudi students in Al-Saraj’s (2014) study.

The FLA framework also focuses on test anxiety students experience when concerned about their performance on a foreign language assessment. This type of performance anxiety is triggered in students during both oral and written forms of testing, and it is linked to the student's expectations of their performance. For example, Horwitz et al. (1986) suggested that several foreign language students feel that anything less than perfect performance on a test negatively affects their identity, making the basic experience a difficult anxiety-producing situation. Horwitz et al. (1986) also suggested that with an oral test, students may also experience oral communication anxiety in addition to test anxiety. For example, Nahavandi and Mukundan (2013) conducted a study to understand FLA among Iranian students. The study involved 548 EFL students (elementary to advanced learners) studying at the Jahad-e-Daneshgahi institute of Tabriz, Iran, and the FLCAS was used. The results showed that test was a factor of anxiety among the EFL learners.

Lastly, the third component is the fear of negative evaluation. This component is different from test anxiety that ESL students may feel because it encompasses both performance on formal assessments and foreign language linguistic performance in virtually any given social setting (Horwitz et al., 1986). This component helps highlight how FLA can occur outside the classroom setting in dynamics such as job interviews or other situations where the speaker is being evaluated by peers and people of importance to them. Essentially, this is a more broadly impacting and potentially crippling fear. It creates insecurities and heightened sensitivities that keep ESL speakers from communicating successfully in all circumstances, from job interviews to social situations. The fear of negative evaluation has been reported as a source of FLA in many studies. For example, in Alrabai’s (2014) first phase, he identified FLA sources among 596 Saudi EFL learners in the Saudi context using the FLCAS. He reported that the fear of negative evaluation is a significant source of FLA among learners.
Research has produced some findings on the causes of FLA among ESL/EFL learners. Competitiveness is a significant factor associated with FLA. Effiong's (2016) study investigated FLA among 24 Japanese EFL learners. The data were obtained from interviews and class observation and revealed that students having low L2 self-concepts when comparing their English abilities to those of other students could lead to FLA.

Other studies have reported that teacher-student interaction is one of the most common factors of FLA. For example, Subekti (2018) investigated FLA among six university students and six of their teachers in an Indonesian context. The study utilized interviews to obtain data. The participants revealed that teachers' attributes and student-teacher interaction contribute to FLA. For example, when students view their teachers as strict and unfriendly, their FLA increases.

The literature supports that being in a situation of acquiring a new language is almost inherently anxiety-producing but that different personal and situational characteristics determine how intense and, thus, how debilitating the anxiety might be. However, more importantly, for this study, the literature review shows an almost total dearth of studies produced on how gender impacts FLA for Saudi females studying English in the US. The main elements that create anxiety include the new atmosphere of desegregated classroom dynamics, the student-centric instructor approach, and the new instructional methods that prompt a great deal of attention on the students. All these together create a new lens with which to view the situation of Saudi female students in American EFL classrooms and, thus, a new prompting for instructional methods and support that provide them with the tools and comfortable learning dynamics they need to succeed.

While much research has investigated these factors, more research is needed. Researchers who have studied FLA have argued that more research is needed (Al-Saraj, 2011, 2014; Lababidi, 2016). Al-Saraj’s (2011) recommendation provides for future research involve studying Saudi English students’ perspectives within the co-ed English environment, as well as the views of students coming from surrounding nations (who share the same culture as Saudi Arabian students):

Examining individuals in mixed-sex learning environments, and looking at both men and women in other Gulf countries … examination of FLA in students in other Gulf countries would be of interest because, although the countries share similar cultures, they differ in whether men and women are segregated at college levels education. (p. 222)

Nahavandi and Mukundan (2013, p. 11) added, "The present research may encourage further research in anxiety and the related problems it can cause for EFL learners by other interested researchers."

**Methods**

A qualitative approach was adopted for this study to explore in-depth the causes of FLA among Saudi female learners in the US. A qualitative research design is used to investigate in depth the perspective and the beliefs people have towards the issue at hand (Creswell, 2012). Many FLA studies have involved quantitative approaches (e.g., questionnaire surveys). Still, the researcher chose a qualitative study because by asking students to answer an open-ended prompt, it would be possible to determine which situations are relevant to specific groups of learners who
had been included or overlooked. Al-Saraj (2014) stated that the open-ended prompt allows students to respond freely and talk about any issues, concerns, or anxiety without being guided (e.g., by questionnaires or interviews).

**Research Instruments**

Anxiety can be brought about by environmental factors, as the social structures of Western cultures are distinct from Eastern cultures. Oxford noted that anxiety is always experienced within a social context dictated by cultural norms (as cited in Al-Saraj, 2014). According to Al-Saraj (2014), due to the culturally defined experience of anxiety, questionnaires other than the FLCAS are needed to discuss situations where different social contexts apply. Al-Saraj developed a questionnaire that measures the anxiety level of Arab students—the AFLAS (the Arabic Foreign Language Anxiety Questionnaire), basing it on Horwitz et al.'s (1986) model. The AFLAS was oriented toward the Saudi culture and its norms, but it was designed to target Arabic learners studying in Saudi Arabia, not in a foreign country. The researcher used some statements in the questionnaire that concern situations that may provoke anxiety in students to help get an idea of the anxiety level of the participants. I also used part of the questionnaire to initiate the conversation with the participants.

The researcher chose to do oral interviews that would result in evidence specific to Saudi women learning English within an American context. I knew this method would allow the women to volunteer their feelings and experiences that make them anxious in that environment instead of giving them a list of situations that may or may not invoke their anxiety. For example, the presence of male Saudi students in the class may increase the anxiety that female Saudi students feel, but this is a matter that is not addressed in any current FLA questionnaires.

I asked the students an open-ended prompt to elicit their answers. The open-ended prompt that Al-Saraj (2014) suggested states, “Some people feel anxious or nervous from time to time when learning a foreign language. When do you feel anxious (or nervous) in the English language classroom? (Try to think of as many examples as you can.)." (p. 57). I asked the students the question in Arabic to prompt them to talk about their experiences by elaborating on the anxiety-provoking situations they faced when speaking English or when they were in ESL classes. This research is not necessarily a classroom-focused approach, as the participants were encouraged to express their language experience beyond the classroom. Hilleson (1996) used open-ended questions to allow students to discuss their experiences related to FLA freely. This approach provided authentic, insightful, and unexpected feedback that would not have been possible with the more structured forms of questionnaires. I used this same approach for this study with the desire for a similarly insightful outcome.

Adaptation of the FLCAS has been successful in previous studies, such as when Ohata (2005) conducted a study similar to the current one to examine the potential causes of anxiety among Japanese English learners in the US. He adapted some FLCAS statements to understand the participants' anxiety levels in his study, and he was successful. I used the AFLAQ, derived from the most well-known instrument for measuring FL classroom anxiety. I expected it to produce valid results because it has been used to assess similar populations in other studies (Al-Saraj, 2011; 2014).
Participants

This study involved nine Saudi female ESL users/learners as participants. Hilleson (1996) and Ohato (2005), who used a qualitative approach (interview/diaries/journals) to investigate FLA, recruited a similar number of participants because it allowed them to explore the issue in depth without needing to claim that they had employed a representative sample. My purpose of having a small number of participants was also to try and understand the issue from the participants’ perspectives. However, this number does not represent all Saudi female learners in the US. Therefore, I used snowball sampling to recruit participants for the current study. They have to be female Saudi ESL learners in the US and above 18 years old.

Data Analysis Procedure

The early stage of the data analysis employed a top-down approach based on Horwitz et al.’s (1986) FLA framework. The three themes of communication apprehension, test anxiety, and the fear of negative evaluation identified in the first stage of my data analysis parallel the three components of the FLA framework. Further analysis showed several additional recurring themes. This led to the development of an additional phase of the research process that employed a bottom-up approach to analyzing the data from the perspective of previous studies. Other themes that emerged were a cultural influence, competitiveness, and variable anxiety levels related to the four skills: writing, reading, speaking and listening. The responses from the interview sessions were grouped according to themes.

Data Collection

The researcher met with each participant in a café shop in Tempe, Arizona, two weeks apart in June and once in July 2019. The interviews took approximately 10 minutes to complete, tallying up to 18 interviews. During the meeting, I collected personal data (e.g., age, major, and year in college), and I asked the participants about their L2 learning background. In addition, I explained the purpose of the study to each participant and recorded the interviews.

The interviews were semi-structured, using specific prompts to elicit responses (see Appendix A). Additional questions were asked to clarify their intended meanings based on their answers. I attempted to leave an open space for each interviewee to provide their response to prevent interviewer bias. In other words, the questions and prompts were general, but more focused definitions of the questions were given whenever the participant requested clarification. In addition, to allow the respondents to speak more freely, the interview was conducted in their first language (i.e., Arabic).

Findings

In this section, the results of the analysis will be described. The analysis will include themes that emerged, and for each theme, there will be a definition, a descriptive example, and a sample excerpt from the transcripts. The sample excerpts are typical examples of how the participants talked about the themes. More specifically, the data show potential sources of language anxiety among the participants: cultural influences, communication apprehension and the fear of negative evaluation, test-taking, competitiveness, and the effect of four English skills on anxiety levels among participants. The researcher will describe each theme below.
Cultural Influences

All the participants mentioned that the cultural differences between Saudi Arabia and the US had affected their anxiety levels. The main cultural difference brought up by the participants was the situation of mixed classes in the US and how it is different than the all-female classes in Saudi Arabia. In addition, the other cultural difference that several participants spoke of was the different expectations of teacher-student interactions in classes that led them to feel out of their comfort zone and thus induced high anxiety.

Mixed Classes

It seems that having male students in the classroom is a new experience for most participants. Some of them indicated that being in mixed classrooms increased their anxiety level. Three of the participants (1, 6, and 9) showed that having male students in the classroom increased their anxiety levels initially. However, for Respondents 6 and 9, exposure to male classmates over time has lessened their anxiety levels. Respondent 6 indicated that her anxiety level was not high at the time of the interview, although it was initially high in the presence of Saudi male students in the classes. Her experience and anxiety level changed because the male students adapted to her presence with a more open-minded and accepting approach than is customary in Saudi culture.

Embarrassment, anxiety, and culture. It is a new environment! I haven’t lived that before. Being a Saudi female studying in the US and a guy sitting next to me in the class, it was the most difficult things I had to face as a Saudi girl. It wasn’t easy for me. I come from a society that segregates males and females. Communication between me and him is prohibited. It was very difficult at the beginning of the class. (interview 2 with participant 6)

Most respondents reported that having foreign males in the classroom does not affect their anxiety level. However, three respondents (1, 6, and 9) mentioned that they might react differently to a Saudi male than a male from any other country.

When a pen drops, I can bring it to the foreigner but not to you. You got it! It was so difficult. However, Subhan-Allah, after that, the situation has changed; his mentality and mine have changed. So we have become more open-minded, and we can accept each other; we have been immersed in American culture. We learned from it, and we had to adapt to the class rules and the country's culture. (interview 2 with participant 6)

When there are Saudi male in the classrooms, I used to get nervous because we were not used to interacting with each other. It is weird. It is forbidden. If you pay close attention, you will see Saudi guys communicate with foreign girls freely, and you will see Saudi girls talk to foreign guys freely but not with each other. Right? (interview 2 with participant 9)

Teacher-Student Interaction

It seems that the difference between the educational systems in the US and Saudi Arabia was initially a source of FLA because the students were not used to a great deal of the interactive practices that teachers in the US asked of them. For example, asking the professors questions and having a dialogue with professors and other students are challenges that put the participants outside their comfort zone because they come from a structured educational environment. However, many
American professors' open and friendly attitude provides a release from anxiety the participants may have felt back home.

I mean, yeah, in Saudi Arabia, there are things I wish existed, like we didn’t have the agency or the power to challenge our professor. They consider it disrespectful. You cannot even ask the professor questions or challenge their ideas. It is considered rude. Unlike here, they want you to ask questions and to challenge them. This helped me a lot to be more daring, even though it came late, but at least now, I ask questions. Before, I was so shy, and I blamed the educational system in Saudi Arabia. They taught us how to be scared and never ask questions. (interview 2 with participant 8)

Despite this, other dynamics within American classrooms contribute to the participants' anxiety. For example, instructors expect students to speak in class in the US and encourage them to participate. In contrast, this type of participation is not familiar in Saudi Arabia. For some, the anxiety this cultural background causes has lessened over time, but speaking in the classroom, especially during an evaluation of their speaking, creates anxiety for most respondents.

I mean, most of the professors ask me. Why you feel shy to speak or feel fear? Some of you do not do presentations, and do not speak. The Saudi students said that they are not used to practicing English inside or outside the classroom in Saudi Arabia. We barely speak in the class. When we go out the classroom we speak in Arabic and not in English. And maybe that is why we feel anxious when we speak in the classrooms here. (interview 2 with participant 4)

This corresponds with the statements by Participant 8—who felt their anxiety is due to a lack of practice, thus presenting a skills-deficit type of anxiety.

**Communication Apprehension and the Fear of Negative Evaluation**

Almost all the participants in this study attributed their apprehension of speaking to being afraid of being judged. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, given these responses, I felt that combining both communication apprehension and the fear of negative evaluation prevented the confusion that might have occurred since there is an overlap.

In analyzing their responses, it is clear that anxiety levels varied from participant to participant regarding public speaking. A certain level of fearfulness, or anxiety, seemed to be present in all the participants. The way they reacted to this anxiety varied from person to person, as Participant 2 clearly showed that preparation reduced her anxiety level, and Participant 8 explained that she never prepares. Participant 8 also stated that she has ADHD, which makes her feel that too much preparation might increase her anxiety. Interestingly, nearly all the participants reported experiencing some anxiety when speaking in English, but speaking in class was the most referred to as a stressor.

Several participants indicated that they suffered less anxiety in the ESL classrooms since all the students were striving to learn English than in other classes at the college or university level, where various abilities and interests were present. Another source of anxiety comes from their fear
of being judged. At the college or university level, the participants believed that more proficient levels of English were expected of them, which made them feel anxious.

But when I speak with a foreign person, I feel that he understands that I am here to study and that I speak English as a second language, and my language is not perfect. Because in class in college, I feel that I need to know English. If I make many English mistakes, the students would note how this student is doing her master's and her English is not good. But when I speak with someone outside the class, I always tell them that I am from Saudi Arabia, and they always say, "Oh, your language is good." But they do not know that I am studying for my master's here. When they know that, I feel that they will change their mind. (Interview 2 with Participant 1)

Similarly, Participant 3 considered speaking inside the classroom more anxiety-inducing than speaking outside the classroom. She attributed this to her fear of being judged and evaluated based on her English language, affecting her scores and grades.

**Test Taking**

Most participants stated that taking a test is an anxiety-provoking situation because they are afraid of the negative judgment of getting a bad grade. This makes them lack self-confidence or feel inferior to others. They also mentioned that they feel pressure when their assessment has a time limitation. This can be seen in the following excerpt from Participant 5: "When you have an exam, or someone is evaluating you. You will feel more anxious … Like TOEFL and IELTS tests, it is necessary to finish in a certain period. This makes me nervous" (Interview 2).

**Competitiveness**

The data show a prevalent theme of competition in some participants, whether they are aware of it or not, and that it can affect their anxiety level. Respondents 1 and 2 stated that they were comfortable around other ESL students because they were all engaged in a similar experience. This is mainly because they had approximately the same level of English language competency. Within their classes, they were all pursuing a similar learning goal and perhaps even having the same difficulties. Due to their similar levels of English language achievement, they did not experience any emotions of anxiety or competition.

In contrast, Respondent 8 indicated that her experience of comparing herself to someone whose English was better than hers gave her a negative opinion of her own English and increased her anxiety level. This can be seen in the following excerpt from Participant 8: “But sometimes, I feel my comparing myself to others could increase my anxiety level” (Interview 2).

**Discussion**

This study suggests that cultural differences (i.e., mixed classes), teacher-student interaction, communication apprehension and apprehension about others' judgment, test-taking, and competitiveness are the main causes of FLA among Saudi female learners studying in the US.
Mixed Classes

Most of the participants in the current study had a problem at the beginning of their time in the US, as learning to interact with Saudi males in an entirely different context was an abrupt paradigm shift for them. However, over time, their anxiety has lessened through increased exposure to this new environment and the language improvement efforts that several have undertaken to enhance their command of the English language. An interesting discovery within the scope of this study is that almost none of the participants indicated that interacting with foreign males or male native speakers increased their anxiety.

The researcher thought men and women participating in the same classroom would be a significant factor among Saudi female students but was surprised that only a few respondents felt it was a significant problem. Some of them indicated a level of anxiety when the male students in their classes were from Saudi Arabia, but this is attributable to the cultural factor that all classes, and even all sectors of life, in Saudi Arabia are segregated. Most of the respondents indicated that they may have had some anxiety from this at first. Still, this negative feeling has decreased over time due to becoming accustomed to it and noting the open-minded attitudes of the male students involved. This finding, therefore, extends existing research, such as that done by Al-Saraj (2014) regarding FLA in female Saudi students studying in Saudi Arabia, to provide a perspective on the FLA that female Saudi students in US-based ESL classrooms experience and how they process it. Furthermore, several of the questions and recommendations from Al-Saraj’s (2014) study were incorporated into the current study.

Teacher-Student Interaction

Consistent with previous research, the participants in the current study reported that having teachers with specific characteristics, such as being strict and unfriendly, can affect their FLA. In addition, the participants reported that interactions between teachers and students in the US are different than in Saudi Arabia. In other words, the level of anxiety resulting from these interactions may vary depending upon whether the teacher is flexible and friendly with the students. This is consistent with Subekti’s (2018) study, in which the participants reported that viewing their teachers to be friendly and caring reduces their FLA. In contrast, if the teacher plays the role of an authoritarian figure, that could induce FLA among learners.

Speaking

The current study results also show that certain situations induce FLA more than others. All the respondents indicated that certain situations make them more anxious than usual. There were three primary situations that several respondents indicated could produce anxiety. The first was when they were asked to give presentations, and this type of anxiety is related to the second type of anxiety that occurs when they feel that they are being judged on their linguistic performance. Thus, the current study reinforced the findings of earlier studies (Horwitz et al., 1986; Tanveer, 2007). Participants in his study reported that speaking in class (i.e., giving a presentation or speaking in front of the class) is the most anxiety-provoking situation.

Several participants indicated that this is because they have never faced the same situations in Saudi Arabian classrooms. None of them indicated that they had any experience with public speaking in the classroom setting before coming to America. In the US, students often feel that
they are being judged by both their instructor and their classmates (especially in college classes), which creates/increases anxiety. The third anxiety-producing situation is test-taking, and the respondents also felt that tests constitute a situation in which they are generally being judged. There is also the variable of time limits being set for the completion of tests, which increases stress and anxiety. There is a parallel between the ideas that the participants expressed and the three forms of performance anxiety that Horwitz et al. (1986) identified in their discussion of communication apprehension, testing anxiety, and the fear of negative evaluation.

The fear of negative evaluation varied among the respondents, with significant factors including who is in the potential audience and their role concerning the speaker. Respondents indicated that their anxiety levels would vary depending on whether the audience members were Saudis, other Arabs, non-Arabic speakers from other countries, or Americans. They were in ESL classrooms, college classrooms, or outside the classroom. This is similar to Alrabai’s (2014) finding that the fear of being judged by peers and teachers is the most significant source of language anxiety.

**Test Taking**

The participants in the current study indicated that taking tests is one of the factors that affect their FLA. This finding confirms existing research similar to how ESL students find test-taking anxiety-provoking. For example, the participants in the current study and Nahavandi and Mukundan’s study (2013) stated that test-taking is an important factor of FLA. They also attributed their fear of taking tests to their being anxious about the negative consequences of getting a bad grade.

**Competitiveness**

Consistent with previous research, the participants in the current study reported that competitiveness is a major cause of FLA. This aligns with Effiong’s (2016) finding that self-comparison induces FLA among learners. The most insightful matter that Effiong (2016) shared is that when the competition turns from a healthy drive to outdo another into an envious dynamic, it goes from being productive to anxiety-producing. The learner may put too high a value on grades, race through work, or lose focus on the effective acquisition of the language in the desire to show off in a given moment, and all this prevents them from improving their language skills in the long term.

Although some respondents in the current study describe themselves as not being competitive, some of their responses indicated that they ranked themselves compared to other students. According to Bailey (1983), self-ranking is a factor in competitiveness, which means that, despite the participants’ responses, they were more competitive than they believed. As long as they felt equal to other students, they did not feel anxiety; however, if they felt that other students performed better than they did, their anxiety level increased. This corresponds with Bailey’s study (1983), in which she indicates that she was not aware of her level of competitiveness until she read her diaries detailing her language class experience. She noted that, although she did not initially recognize her competitiveness, she had persistently evaluated the level of her foreign language ability and ranked the ability of others in her class. Given how similar this is to what my
respondents said about their own experiences, it is evident that their level of anxiety was related to their subconscious drive for competitiveness.

Limitations and Future Directions

Due to the sample size, the limited range of ages being studied, and the varying lengths of stay in the US, this study can be considered limited in its scope. Future studies might include a larger sample size of students and their teachers, a more formal means of selecting respondents, and more in-depth questioning of why particular responses are given. Within this study, none of the respondents would fit the category of a recent arrival. Some of the participants in the current study indicated that their opinion regarding their anxiety level over having male students in the same classroom has changed over time. New arrivals might give more accurate opinions based on their first impressions, which might have been difficult for the current respondents to recall.

Conclusion

This study has discussed the potential causes of FLA among Saudi female students in the US. The nine female Saudi participants reported the general types of anxiety in this study to correspond to many of the findings previously reported on FLA. Cultural influence (i.e., mixed classes), teacher-student interaction, communication apprehension, negative evaluation, test-taking, and competitiveness. There has been research on FLA; however, previous studies that looked at FLA have not emphasized the influence of cultural background on anxiety formation, especially as it pertains to female Saudi Arabian learners of English language in the US.

About the Author:

Haifa Almotiary, a PhD candidate at Arizona State University in the United States. Her research interest is in foreign language anxiety. She is also a lecturer at Jeddah University in Saudi Arabia. She holds a master degree in TESL from California State University-Dominguez Hills in the US and a bachelor degree in English Language from King Saudi University in Saudi Arabia. ORCid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1526-9841

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Representation of Culture in EFL Textbooks: A Linguistic and Content Analysis of *My Book of English*

Hayat Aoumeur  
Department of English  
Faculty of Foreign languages, Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University  
Mostaganem, Algeria  
Corresponding Author: hayat.aoumeur@univ-mosta.dz

Melouka Ziani  
Department of English  
Faculty of Foreign language, Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University  
Mostaganem, Algeria

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Abstract  
This study explores the representation of culture in *My Book of English*, a second-generation English-language book for the first-year middle school in Algeria. Based on both content and a linguistic analysis method, our objective was to demonstrate the cultural significance of some representational choices. The notion of ideology was exploited in this study to examine the part that language takes in perpetuating ideas about culture, multiculturality, diversity, nationalism, and identity. According to the findings, cultural and social representations capture both the tendencies of cultural heritage preservation and the promotion of innovation and change. The analysis demonstrates that *My Book of English* acknowledges, to a certain extent, the role that English plays in the processes of internationalization and globalism. However, as a foreign language material, the book exaggeratedly highlights the source culture, making it difficult for the learners to transcend national boundaries.

Keywords: Algerian EFL textbook, culture, diversity, ideology, multiculturality, My Book of English, representations

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Introduction

Researchers working on the relationship between culture and foreign language acquisition have developed a range of theories, approaches, and models. According to Weninger and Kiss (2013), during the mid-1950s to early 1990s, culture was referred to as fixed symbols to be learned about the target language culture. The Acculturation Model proposed by Schumann (1978; 1986) suggests that acquiring a second language is widely linked to the acculturation process, and learners’ success or failure is determined in relation to the target language culture. In this respect, Byram (1988) points out that if culture is to be understood from the inside, pupils should use language as it is used by the native speakers in grammatical and semantic terms.

The views calling for promoting more functional approaches were highly inspired by Hymes’s (1972) theory of ‘communicative competence,’ which was further developed by Canale and Swain (1980) in North America and van Ek (1986) in Europe. According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence includes four components: grammatical, sociolinguistic, communication strategies, and strategic competence. A few years later, Van Ek (1986) suggested that foreign language teaching should include more than just communication skills training; it should also include the learner's personal and social development. Van Ek (1986) presented a framework for comprehensive foreign language objectives that included aspects like social competence, autonomy promotion, and the development of social responsibility. The excitement about the communicative approach, according to Kramsch (1995), resulted in making some teachers “dissatisfied with purely functional uses of language” (p. 83), asking for more cultural content to be used.

Intercultural learning and culture pedagogy gained popularity in the 1990s, as many foreign language teachers and academics worldwide began to regard intercultural learning as an essential aspect of language learning. The work of Kramsch (1993) on language, culture, and context from a postmodern perspective and the study of Byram (1997) on intercultural communicative competence are still very influential. For of Weninger and Kiss (2013), the shift from solely focusing on the target language culture to considering a more holistic and complex view of the relationship between language and culture has been represented in literature since 2000. As representations of the new phase, terms like transnational, globalism, hybridity, and multiculturalism began to be associated with the term culture. In this respect, postmodernist education encourages cross-cultural dialogue, promotes diversity, and takes particular interest in the individual students’ qualifications, personal experiences and expectations, attitudes, and ability to deal with different cultural contexts (Risager, 2012). More than ever, current educational practices prioritize helping the learners acquire the knowledge and the skills necessary to develop a critical mind capable of distinguishing real and unreal, between information and disinformation, and between ideas and ideologies (Kumaraverdivelu, 2008).

Over the last few decades, researchers have taken a particular interest in the cultural aspects of the different learning materials, mainly language school textbooks. The examination of the English-language books was conducted using quantitative research tools (e.g., frequency counts of words, images, etc.), qualitative methods (e.g., critical discourse analysis), or any other valuable techniques. Some of these studies required a critical orientation and provided valuable insights.
into how dominant political and cultural ideologies surface in the visual and textual content. Some researchers went further, problematizing the role of EFL books as instruments of hegemony. For them, the fact that the readers must obey these hegemonic values without putting them into question may negatively affect their way of positioning themselves and others.

Li (2016) conducted a study to examine the cultural values conveyed via texts and illustrations in EFL textbooks in China. The study demonstrated that much of the cultural values represented in the textbooks reflected the editors and writers’ intentions to implement the national curriculum as part of the teaching of English to Chinese learners. Behnam and Mozaheb (2013) also attempted to investigate the link between religion and EFL textbooks in Iran. The researchers’ objective was to show the interrelatedness of religion and education in EFL settings. In Turkey, Tüm and Uğuz (2014) examined a textbook teaching Turkish to foreigners for the existence of any cultural elements. Tüm and Uğuz’s study revealed that, unlike the target culture, elements from native and world cultures were slightly inserted within the textbook. Ait Aissa and Chami (2020) carried out a microanalysis of the cultural topics in the Algerian English foreign language textbook New Prospects, designed for third-year secondary school students. The researchers aimed to explore the distribution of the types and categories of culture in the target textbook. The study demonstrated the dominance of big “C” culture and non-target cultural materials over small “c” culture and target culture.

This study is devoted to exploring of embedded cultural representations in My Book of English, a second-generation English-language book for first-year middle schools in Algeria. We aimed to highlight the cultural and ideological implications of representational choices throughout the investigation. The symbolic forms responsible for establishing of specific cultural patterns were given special attention.

This work has, therefore, attempted to address the following research questions:

• To what extent is the Algerian EFL school textbook culturally loaded?
• How is culture embedded in the discourse of My Book of English?
• How does ideology operate in the discourse of My Book of English?
• What culture should be introduced to Algerian English classes?

Literature Review

Discourse of textbooks as a locus of ideologies

Ideology is commonly defined as the set of opinions or beliefs of a group or an individual. Such a neutral understanding of the concept is not what the opponents of the critical theory of society care to gain. Ideology, from this perspective, is just a “general sociological category describing an anthropological feature of humans and society” (Fuchs, 2020, p. 220). In the view of Fuchs (2020), the concept of ideology is only meaningful when it is associated with the justification, dominance, and “legitimatization of class interests, or a group’s ideas by distortion and dissimulation” (p. 220). Dominant ideologies generally serve to justify the interests of dominant groups (Giddens, 1997), and the targets are usually the masses that are dependent on these groups. Such a hegemonic nature of ideology is also significant for a critical theory of language, which interrogates the discursive dimensions of ideologies. Hegemonic ideologies are mediated through powerful political and social institutions (E.g., the government, the school, the
law, and the medical profession), which “have more or less exclusive access to, and control over, one or more types of public discourse” (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 356). In the view of Fuchs (2020), such encoded ideologies manifest themselves “in artifacts, belief systems, concepts, ideas, institutions, meanings, phrases, practices, representations, sentences, systems, texts, thoughts, and words that are employed to misrepresent or distort reality” (p.221).

A very powerful institution is the school where professors, teachers, educators, and educational decision-makers control scholarly discourse. The educational settings are also, where the intricate links between knowledge, power, and identity are established and where learning and meaning making are networked together in specific ways and for particular purposes. In the same vein, Gramsci (1994) pointed out that school as an institution is problematic in that it acts as a vehicle for the transmission of dominant ideologies like gender and patriarchy, which are embodied in both formal and covert forms in the curricula.

Within the educational institutions, many of the dominant ideologies are mediated through the school textbook. In the view of Lisovskaya and Karpov (1999), school textbooks can be considered as collectively produced cultural phenomena that can be used as socialization instruments to maintain and legitimize the status quo. Luk (2004) noticed that, besides playing a significant role in reinforcing what students learn from other contexts, school textbooks could also be used to achieve transformative goals (p. 3).

Over the last few decades, several studies, mostly in the field of critical discourse analysis, have attempted to explore how ideologies operate in discourse. According to Knowles and Malmkjaer (1996), “It is possible to identify typical strategies of symbolic construction through which the general modes of operation of ideology may be realized” (p. 46). Knowles and Malmkjaer asserted that the writers' linguistic choices, whether purposeful or not, may have an ideological purpose. Similarly, Fowler (1986) pointed out that “linguistic codes do not reflect reality neutrally; they interpret, organize, and classify the subjects of discourse. They embody theories of how the world is arranged: world-views or ideologies” (p.27). The scholars, thus, have devoted increasing attention to those linguistic codes present in the school textbook, which embody a lot of experiences, expectations, and assumptions about culture and may be judged to be ideologically loaded. Very recently, Kirkgoz (2019) has conducted a study to investigate whether the Turkish English Language textbooks used in secondary schools “were influenced by ideologically driven policies described in the curriculum of the national ministry of education” (p.107). Gu (2015) used the theory of systemic functional linguistics to examine evidentiality, subjectivity, and ideology in a Japanese history textbook. Bazzul and Sykes (2011), in their analysis of the conceptualization of the notion of gender and sexuality in the science textbooks used in Ontario schools, employed the Queer theory and focused on the discourses of science education. According to Bazzul and Sykes (2011), “a close examination of textbooks is crucial to disrupting the perpetuation of substantive and often invisible heteronormative oppression” (p, 273). A qualitative study by Prihatiningsih et al. (2021) employed Kress and van Leeuwen’s multimodal social semiotic approach to examine the types of cultures represented in the EFL textbooks for the seventh graders. Compared to target and worldwide culture, the data revealed that the source culture was more prevalent.
In this study, the notion of ideology was used to investigate the subtle configurations of ideology in relation to culture and foreign language instruction. Particular attention was paid to such discursive practices as positioning, labeling, naming conventions, describing, and categorizing as they unfolded throughout the book.

**The Algerian EFL Textbook**

In Algeria, French is taught from the second year of primary school until the final year of secondary school, whereas English is taught only in middle and secondary schools. During the period 1963–1964, Arabic became compulsory in all programs and at all levels, following the start of the language Arabisation policy shortly after Algeria's independence in July 1962. (Benrabah, 2007). The amount of time spent on teaching French has gradually decreased because of many reforms (Bennoune, 2000).

Despite the enormous effort made by the Algerian government to promote indigenous Arabic, French is still extensively used in business and professional circles. According to Rebai Maamri (2009), “certain aspects of formal education, and research are still carried in the French language and a great part of the economic and industrial sectors and press still use French extensively” (p.86).

In terms of English language instruction, very few measures have been taken to enhance its use in schools and universities. In 1993, primary school pupils (4th grade) were asked to choose between French and English as a compulsory foreign language. However, this experimental program failed as most parents chose French over English. According to Benrabah (1999), one reason for parents' rejection of English is that Algerians believe French is easier to acquire and more vital for socio-economic prosperity. In 2002, a national education reform planned the teaching of English in the sixth grade (intermediate school), two grades earlier than in the past (Rezig, 2011).

At the tertiary education level, the former higher education minister, Tayeb Bouzid, made the bold decision in July 2019 to replace French with English progressively at the Algerian universities. Two committees of professors were even appointed in September 2019 to discuss ways to gradually enhance the English language at the level of higher education and scientific research (Chorouk online, 2019).

In terms of the English language school textbook, it is worth noting that this teaching and learning material has gone through numerous stages of development at the official level. During the first decade of post-independence, the teaching of English as a foreign language had little significance because the country's school system had not yet been updated to introduce foreign languages. French was the language of administration and education, and demand for 'Arabization' in educational, religious and political spheres was a national priority. The Algerian educational system had to face the complexities of two conflicting mentalities, and the reforms adopted had to maintain a balance between the national needs and foreign resources. The first phase of the teaching of English was characterized by the general use of British course books until the late 70s. These commercial textbooks were designed to address a particular audience, with no emphasis on a specific home culture or educational program. The primary goal was to achieve a particular proficiency in English as a foreign language, not a specific culture (Hamada, 2011). The cultural
content “was characterized by imaginary characters, involved in artificial situations, and illustrated with stick-drawing figures. Proper names, places, activities, roles and environmental setting were stereotypes of the English speaking culture” (Hamada, 2011, p. 3). The first Algerian textbooks with national cultural themes appeared in the 1980s. They were primarily designed to address the country's development needs by allowing students to deal with differences and, later in life, to have better opportunities to communicate with foreign partners and acquire scientific knowledge. The goal was not to promote multicultural variety but to make the Algerian learner a constructive contribution to the international community (Hamada, 2011).

According to Hamada (2011), the teaching of a second language began to integrate some sociocultural components to help the learner transcend local barriers fulfill worldwide international diversity and inclusion requirements. In 2003, new textbooks were introduced due to the adoption of a reform known as the first generation program, based on a competency-based approach as an instructional framework for primary, middle, and secondary education.

More work is still being done despite the efforts made to design English learning materials that emphasize authentic language use in various situations. Messerehi (2014) found that most of the subjects covered in the secondary school textbook Getting Through were broad and provided learners with little opportunity to participate in culture-related activities, such as debates on cultural differences and cross-cultural habits and beliefs.

**Methods**

We opted for content and a linguistic method of analysis to investigate the cultural aspects of the book. The representation of social actors and their activities in the textbook was examined using some elements from Van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semiotic inventory. Within this framework, the study examines how social actors can be excluded or included for ideological reasons through the mechanisms of differentiation, nomination, and categorization and identification. The notion of transitivity has also been used to investigate how specific meanings in texts are pushed in a particular direction or how a text's linguistic structures encode viewpoints and experiences.

This study mainly draws on Thompson’s (1990) inventory of the modes of operation of ideology to discern the typical linguistic structures responsible for the ideological representation of culture in the analysis. We focused on two modes, unification and fragmentation.

**Research Instruments**

*My Book of English* was first introduced in 2016. It was compiled by a team of four teachers and inspectors. It consists of five sequences carefully designed to include a range of communicative linguistic and visual resources and tools. This book falls into the category of the second-generation books, reflecting new perspectives on innovation and openness.

Two years before the book's publication, the Ministry of National Education formed a partnership with the British Council Algeria, providing inspector and teacher trainer training at the Norwich Institute of Language Education and in Algeria to aid in the development and improvement of English teaching and learning in Algerian middle schools. Former Minister of National Education Ms. Benghebrit attended the international conference on education technology.
in London in 1916. This yearly event brings people from all around the world together to talk about the future of education.

Analysis

Unsurprisingly, the three types of culture are represented in My Book of English, The source culture (Algeria), the target culture (UK and USA), and the global culture (Countries representing the four corners of the world), reflecting a gradually established reform agenda. However, this language book looks intriguing because it construes certain social realities in a very unrealistic and manipulative way. What follows is the analysis of the cultural embedment in My Book of English.

National Culture as a Unifying Force

What appears to be a recurring theme in My Book of English is how it uses various symbolic forms to establish a sense of national unity and belonging among the readers. According to Thompson (1990), unification, as a mode of operation of ideology, “embraces individuals in a collective identity” (p.64). This particular discursive practice is linked to two strategies: standardization and symbolization of unity. Standardization refers to making symbolic forms conform to particular framework which “is promoted as the shared and acceptable basis of symbolic exchange” (Thompson, 1990, p.64). In My Book of English, the strategy of standardizing a national culture is rather prevalent. Specific physical characteristics and cultural and social practices are associated exclusively with Algerian social participants using visual and written modes to generate a sense of national identity. In the excerpt below, from the book’s preface, exceptionally in Arabic, the authors overtly remind the reader of what attachment and commitment to one’s own country should mean. The terms ‘Oma’ (Nation) and ‘Watan’ ‘homeland’ are ideologically used to refer to patriotism and national pride.

We hope you will learn this new language to enrich your knowledge. Develop your skills and competencies, imbued with your national values, open to the world, confident in yourself, and capable of using it as a communication tool to raise your homeland's flag high, making your nation lofty among the other existing countries.

The school textbook is heavily exploited to standardize behaviors and practices such as how to behave at school, at home, how to dress, how to engage oneself, and so on, with many of these activities aimed at promoting the source culture. The recurrent use of the pictures of the Algerian flag throughout the six pedagogical units, symbolizing unity and nationhood, exemplifies the symbolization of unity, which involves the construction of collective identity and identification through the use of symbols of national unity. Other symbols present in the texts include photographs of Algerian historical figures such as Djamila Bouhired, Ben Boulaïd, Ben M’hidi, Emir Abdelkader, and Ibn Badis. Some Algerians' celebrity, such as soccer player Riyad Mahrez, is also utilized to symbolize national unity and identity. Other recurring symbols employed as compelling images of collectiveness include the fennec fox, Algerian maps, and other local
locations. The names of Algerian towns are also used to create a sense of belonging and familiarity. The example below shows that the four corners of Algeria are represented.

(2)
- Sétif is in the East of Algeria.
- Tlemcen is in the West of Algeria.
- Algiers is in the North of Algeria.
- Tamanrasset is in the South of Algeria. (p.137)

The historical places and monuments, present in the book, also serve the (re) production and maintenance of positive attitudes towards the Algerian cultural legacy. Assekrem in the Hoggar Mountains, The Roman ruins in Batna, the Kasbah in Algiers, and the suspended bridges in Constantine are all considered sources of national pride. National and religious celebrations like Eid El Fitr and the 5th of July are also strong cultural markers in the book.

(3)
- Hi, I am Amine from Algeria. My national currency is the Algerian Dinar. My national dish is Couscous. One of my national celebration days is the 5th of July 1962. Eid El Fitr is one of my religious celebration days. (p.130)

The repetitive use of specific linguistic features such as national anthem, the beloved country, beautiful country, national heroes, and national dish also serves the need to reinforce the national and cultural identities.

(4)
- My ideal school is a school of values and happiness where the Algerian flag is always up (p.116)
- I sing a song about my homeland, a song I call ‘I love you true.’ The sea, the mountain, and the sand Algeria, the rose with the morning dew (p.136)

In this respect, it is worth noting that the need to establish particular social and cultural affiliations has led to the exclusion of certain social actors and the practices associated with them. According to Thompson (1990), the ideology of unification does not consider the elements that are not common to all individuals, particularly the ones that “may separate them” (p.64). In My Book of English, religious and ethnic differences are overlooked. The representations do not include, for instance, veiled women (except for the grandma) and indigenous people. Indeed, the exclusion of Berber names from a list of 21 names commonly considered to have originated in the Arab world is an ideologically loaded representational choice. According to Van Leeuwen (1996), such patterns of exclusion leave no traces in the representation, erasing both social actors and their activities.

Global Culture as a Changing Force

Since the adoption of the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions issues in 2015, Algeria has put in place several measures acknowledging the crucial role of culture, creativity, and cultural diversity in addressing political, social and economic issues. In this respect, the Algerian Ministry of National Education launched new educational program in 2016 known as the Second-Generation Program, which aimed to
promote global citizenship further. *My Book of English*, as a second-generation language book, stimulates learners' curiosity in diverse cultures both subtly and overtly. The use of words and representations demonstrates a keen awareness of the need to adapt to changing conditions.

(5)

- I have duties and rights at school. I want to add more rights about: exams break, homework, computer room, class council, school website… (p.9)
- Pupils from all over the world introduce themselves on an International friendship blog. I post my information to make new friends and practice my English. (p.63)
- I respect the opinion of my friends from all over the world. (p. 112)

Learning about culture while learning a language like English, which has become a global language, is not just learning about a culture, which is historically rooted in Britain, but has become learning about cultures of the world.

(6)

- I don’t reject others’ ideas; I don’t behave rudely toward my classmates. (p. 118)
- I am happy. I speak English now. I have friends from all over the world. (p.138)

The book's last section contains many pieces of information about other people's cultures. For instance, the pupil may learn that Yorkshire pudding is a typical British food and that the Yuan is a Chinese currency.

(7)

-Hi, I am Chen from China. My national currency is the Yuan. My national dish is Peking roasted duck. The national celebration day I like is the Chinese New Year. (p. 131)

The cover page of the book, which has a photo of six girls and seven boys from varied backgrounds holding hands around the world, is an excellent example of how inclusion and diversity strategies are implemented. The cover's topic may have been inspired by a song composed by Janice Kapp Perry in 2001 called *Holding hands around the world*.

Other symbols of globalization and multiculturalism used by the authors include the globe, the map of the world, the International Friendship Club, the Internet, to mention just a few. The act of nominating the characters provides the readers with some points of identification. According to Van Leeuwen (1996), “It is (…) always of interest to investigate which social actors are, in a given discourse, categorized and which nominated” (pp.52-53). The book contains thirteen foreign proper names, purposely selected to represent at least five continents. Names such as Bonnie (US), Santos (Brazil), Harry (Australia), Annita (Kenya), Chen (china) and Adaku (Nigeria) are used in the book as points of inclusion and diversity.

A significant aspect of global inclusion in the book is the authors’ focus on technology and innovation as changing forces. For example, the reader is continuously reminded of the beneficial effects of electronic settings on human relationships. The frequent use of terms and visuals that
refer to technology, such as the Internet, blogs, e-mail, and tablets, connects readers to the rest of the world.

**Foreign Culture as a Dividing Force**

In My Book of English, culture appears to be a two-edged sword, sometimes functioning as a powerful agent of unification, providing a sense of identity and belonging, and other times serving as a powerful tool of division, setting boundaries and emphasizing differences. The pursuit of unity and autonomy often involves the construction of the ‘us vs. them’ way of thinking. According to Thompson (1990), fragmentation is a mode of ideology referring to the division and separation of groups by directing people toward the areas of differences, resulting in the “construction of a stranger” towards which “individuals are called upon collectively not to imitate” (p.65). The book explicitly or implicitly emphasizes the differences between groups (different names, different customs, and different physical appearances). It overtly foregrounds and highlights anything and everything about Algeria. The Algerian participants (Mounir, Leila, Kamel, Razane, etc.) are represented as the hosts and are allowed enough space. The others (Margaret, Peter, Adaku, Jack) are just guests and keypals.

(8) - Omar is at home with his British guest, Peter. Omar shows Peter photos of his family. (P.44)
- Omar has an English friend. Her name is Mary. He sends her an e-mail to introduce his family members. (p. 8)
- Omar has an English friend. Her name is Margaret. He sends her an e-mail to introduce his family members. (p. 57)

Such representations may lead the reader to think that those who live in other nations and belong to different cultures are total strangers. Many of these assumptions are reinforced by the text's distribution of processes (verbal, mental, physical, behavioral, etc.) that construct human experience by linking words with external events.

The following example illustrates a cultural divide. Family values and social practices are depicted as unique to a particular country or culture. Indeed, Margaret, from England, and Younes, from Algeria, are linked to different social activities.

(9) - Younes: At the weekend, I visit my grandmother who lives in the countryside. I water her trees and feed her pets. (P.80)
- Margaret: On Saturday morning, I attend ballet classes, and in the afternoon, my family goes for a walk in the countryside. (p. 85)

The way the authors describe a typical Algerian family, using words like "large," "extended," and "family relationships" (particularly grandchildren-grandparents relationships), reveals a lot about their attitudes. While many of these details are not explicitly mentioned, the reader would probably take them for granted. Such depictions serve the ideological goal of uniting the reader and writer in opposition to the different and strange characteristics and practices of the other.

(10)
- The family of Omar is large. It’s the morning. The children greet their parents and grandparents. (p. 53)
-Omar is the first to greet his grandma. (p. 53)

A traditional account of culture seems to be implicitly and often explicitly advocated throughout the book. Culture seems to be understood in terms of belonging and otherness; if people are members of one group, they are not members of another. The following example demonstrates how school textbooks play a role in forming cultural boundaries.

(11)
You want to invite your friend to visit our beautiful country and its wonderful places and monuments. Make a leaflet to attract tourists from all over the world (include national dish, national currency, famous people, national and religious celebration days, languages...). (p. 143)

The concept of the 'other' is maintained throughout the book by juxtaposing people, situations, or actions to produce a comparison or contrast effect. Indeed, the e-mail exchanges between Adaku and Razane, Margaret and Younes, Houda and Kathleen, Younes and Margaret, etc., are placed in close proximity to emphasize differences.

(12)
Hi! Razane, My name is Adaku. I am 12 years old. I am from Nigeria. I speak English. (p. 60)
Hi Margaret! These are the famous monuments and places in my beloved country Algeria. (p. 128)
Hi Houda! I am so happy to give you some information about my country, the United States of America. (p. 141)

Discussion
The present study examined the representation of culture in My Book of English, a second-generation book designed to reflect the ministry of education reform agenda. What appears to be a recurring theme in My Book of English is how it uses various symbolic forms to establish a sense of national and cultural unity among the readers through the processes of standardization and symbolization. To develop an understanding of national identity, particularly visual and written modes, descriptions, physical traits, and cultural and social practices are shown to be exclusively associated with Algerian participants. Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of sustaining national cultural standards. A very recent study by Merdassi (2021) involved the investigation of the representation of culture in My Book of English 4, a textbook used in the fourth year of middle school in Algeria. According to Merdassi, although the book has some explicit cultural resources, activities, and discussion that may help students develop cultural understanding, it contains few or no activities that would help students build their intercultural communication skills. A significant finding in Merdassi’s investigation shows that the source culture is dominant in the reading, writing, and speaking tasks.
Although the linguistic and representational choices in *My Book of English* reflect a specific need to open up to the world and the changing cultural and social realities, the need to highlight national standards appears to be more prevalent. A possible explanation for this might be that Algeria, as a former French colony, has always strived to maintain its national values and interests. Indeed, the National Committee, in charge of the development of the curricula for the primary and intermediate levels, ensures that the teaching materials conform to the standards set by the reference texts, including unity of the nation and promotion of the values of citizenship in accordance with the values of Islam, Arabism, and Amazigh. However, one unexpected finding, as regards the analysis of the description of the Algerian cultural heritage, was the radical exclusion of the Berbers, who are Algeria's indigenous ethnic group. Such a pattern of representation, which overlooks differences, may stem from the need to emphasize the sense of unity and belongingness.

In terms of the ideological depiction of culture in school textbooks, our research shows that the writers' linguistic choices may influence the way the readers respond to views about culture and diversity. The descriptions and portrayals of groups of people (e.g., classmates, keypals, historical figures), institutions (e.g., family, school), and social activities and practices (e.g., making friends, visiting relatives, listening to music) may contribute to the standardization, naturalization, and eternalization of specific assumptions about ways of being, thinking, and behaving, resulting in a subtle construction of the "us vs. them" representation. Although the working of ideology is not always the product of a conscious choice on the part of the author (Levorato, 2003), language school textbooks can be deliberately exploited to perpetuate ideas about the self and the other in relation to culture, identity, ethnicity, nationalism, and diversity.

When analyzing the role of language in the perpetuation of ideologies, Thompson (1990) emphasizes that the mobilization of meaning in the service of power not only maintains but also establishes relations of dominance. Ideological embedment in EFL textbooks has recently been highlighted in several studies (Ulum & Köksal, 2019; Kirkgoz, 2019; Mirhosseini, 2018). In an investigation into hegemonic cultural aspects portrayed in an ELT textbook used by the School of Languages in Tunja, Colombia, Caro and Caro (2019) found that the book, implicitly promotes the British culture as universal using positive expressions and adjectives.

Thus far, the present study’s findings have important implications for developing a more holistic approach to elaborating EFL curricula. Indeed, the authors of EFL school textbooks must take into account the learners’ sociolinguistic competency, i.e., their ability to communicate effectively in any situation. When it comes to the teaching and learning of a foreign language, the linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic components should be examined, as evidenced by data since Hymes (1972) introduced the theory of 'communicative competence.' Previous research has pointed to the inadequacies of current language textbooks. Substantial critique has mainly been aimed at the lack of adequate models for pragmatic language use (Gilmore 2007). In a comprehensive study of the role of the target culture in enhancing learners’ socio-cultural competence, Khouni and Boudjelal (2019) found that possessing a great deal of social and cultural information can help learners achieve the right interpretation of any utterance, produce more socially and culturally appropriate comments, and avoid misunderstandings and communication breakdowns. In this regard, Prieto-Arranz and Jacob (2019) advocated for a transcultural approach, arguing that it is more acceptable to introduce language learners to issues that are universally
relevant across all cultures. In their study (2019), the participants were introduced to a series of culturally oriented work units as part of their learning of English as a Foreign Language. The findings contradict the widely accepted belief that transcultural competence leads to a person's view of themselves as culturally closer to members of their imagined communities.

To conclude, our initiative in this study consists of launching a call for adequate representation of culture in materials for EFL classrooms. More than ever, researchers and textbook writers need to work side-by-side, exchanging expertise for new insights.

Nevertheless, further investigations into the rest of the English course books used at middle and secondary school levels are encouraged to track the evolution of social and cultural representations.

Conclusion

This study has examined the cultural representations in My Book of English, a first-year Middle School textbook of English. The linguistic and content analysis reveals that, while My English Book attempts to foster cultural awareness, it fails to convey balanced cultural representations. The examination of the different structures and symbolic forms present in the text shows that the book’s content centers mainly on the source culture, revealing the writers’ intention to construct a form of unity, which embraces Algerian learners in a collective identity, and culture. Specific characteristics of the target culture should, however, be highlighted in an English language book to provide learners with more opportunities for realistic communication processes that can help them improve their sociopragmatic competence. Indeed, the degree of exaggeration in the portrayal of Algeria in a foreign language book can be very confusing.

Algeria, more than ever, is facing the challenge of keeping pace with the growing demands of a globalized world, and a reasonable step would be to consider a more global dimension and a more holistic approach. The goal of fostering global cultural awareness in the classroom could be accomplished by providing resources that inspire students to question some of their commonly held beliefs about themselves and others.

Declaration of conflict interest: None.

About the Authors

Hayat AOUMEUR is an associate professor at the Department of English, Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University. She received her doctorate degree in sociolinguistics from The University of Mostaganem in 2015. Her research interests lie in the area of language and gender Studies, sociolinguistics, didactics and feminist/critical discourse studies. ORCiD ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1000-8893

Melouka ZIANI is an associate professor in didactics and educational psychology at Abdelham iod Ibn Badis University. Her research interests turn around teaching and learning issues in EFL classes. ORCiD ID: Https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7918-6511

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Exploring Kurdish EFL University Students’ Beliefs about Language Learning

Omar Fouad Ghafor\(^1,4\),
Corresponding Author: omar.ghafor@uoh.edu.iq

Hedayat Muhammad Ahmad\(^1,2\)

Goran Omar Mustafa\(^1,3\)

\(^1\)Department of English Language, College of Basic Education, University of Halabja, Halabja, Kurdistan, IRAQ
\(^2\)Department of International Commerce, College of Commerce, University of Sulaimani, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan, IRAQ
\(^3\)Department of ELT, Faculty of Education, Tishk International University, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan, IRAQ
\(^4\)Department of English, College of Languages, University of Human Development, Sulaimani, Kurdistan Region, Iraq

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Abstract
This paper is an attempt to deal with language learners’ beliefs. Researchers used Elaine Kolker Horwitz’s model (1988), Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory, and they applied it to explore the views of Kurdish EFL university students concerning language learning. The study aims to investigate and expose their opinions regarding language learning generally, then English language more precisely. Its significance lies in exploring the beliefs of Kurdish EFL university students about language learning. It mainly answers the question, “what are the beliefs of Kurdish EFL university students about learning English?”. The researchers administered a Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) questionnaire to seven universities to achieve this aim. The questionnaire includes several viewpoints regarding the difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivation and expectations. They collected and analyzed the questionnaire results and found out that the first category, the difficulty of language learning, has the lowest mean score among the five categories. In contrast, the fifth category, motivation and expectations, has the highest mean score. They ended the study with suitable beneficiary recommendations.

Keywords: BALLI, beliefs, Kurdish EFL university students, language learning difficulties, language learning strategies

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Introduction

Beliefs are essential in every human activity and behavior to help individuals know themselves and their surroundings (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006). Beliefs are fundamental tools for determining behavior (Cephe & Yalcin, 2015; Parsi, 2017). Nikitina & Furuoka (2006, p. 2010) state that “Belief is a way of perceiving the world that generates the confidence to act upon matters accepted as true but may be questioned in the future. Beliefs in such a contextual approach are dynamic, socially constructed, situated, paradoxical, and related to action.”

Horwitz (1999) confirms that beliefs about language learning form the students’ perceptions and affect their performance in the classroom (as cited in Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006; Bidari, 2021). Teachers must understand their students’ beliefs to know their context better and deal with it. They should be aware of the learners' views to decide on their language learning techniques and employ appropriate learning strategies to help them enhance their language skills. Educational psychology considers learner beliefs as essential factors of learning behavior. For example, students interested in their studies and consider it significant engage more actively in the learning process and work harder. Teachers must be familiar with their audience to design their materials in the most efficient manner possible for learning.

It is essential to understand language learners’ beliefs for two reasons; first, these beliefs may influence language learners’ expectations. Second, compared with attitude and motivation, these beliefs can be more easily changed (Horwitz, 1987, as cited in Diab, 2006; Jafari & Shokrpour, 2012).

Moreover, research in this field has shown that language learners’ beliefs have a massive impact on their learning process and even affect many other aspects of language learning (Mohebi & Khodadady, 2011; Abdi & Asadi, 2015). Victor & Lockhart (1995, p. 224, cited in Meshkat & Saeb, 2014, p. 211) defined beliefs about language learning as “general assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners, about factors influencing language learning, and about the nature of language learning and teaching.” Hayati (2015) defined beliefs as learners’ opinions about language learning. They determine the learners’ actions. Rokeach (1968, p. 113), cited in Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006), states that “Beliefs are predispositions to action.” Beliefs and actions help language learners to know themselves better and recognize their own identity in language learning (Kalaja et al., 2015).

Foreign language learners have different perspectives on the way languages are learned. Some learners think this process is easy, while others believe the opposite. Some others believe that children learn languages more easily and quickly than adults. Many believe that it does not need much time and others think it does. Several learners consider language learning a unique gift that some people have. There are many other such beliefs among language learners, and each learner has their own set of beliefs when s/he starts language learning and even during the process. These beliefs affect their language learning behavior and experience positively or negatively. In addition, these beliefs help them choose suitable learning approaches and strategies (Horwitz, 1988, 2008). Moreover, the views of language learners are affected by their past language learning experiences and cultural background (Hong, 2006; Saeb & Zamani, 2013; Azar & Saeidi, 2013; Cephe & Yalcin, 2015).
Many linguists and scholars have studied language learners' beliefs in different contexts. They discovered that these beliefs have a significant role in learning a language successfully (Horwitz, 1999). Most of them used Horwitz's (1988) BALLI questionnaire tool to explore foreign language learners' beliefs on language learning in their contexts. The purpose of this study is to explore and learn more about the ideas of Kurdish EFL university students about learning the English language. The study addresses the following research questions: What are the opinions of Kurdish EFL university students about learning English? Do Kurdish EFL university students have the same beliefs as the participants of Horwitz’s (1988) study? The study adopts Horwitz’s (1988) approach to data collection and analysis and descriptive statistics, but in a different context and with another research community.

Literature Review

Since the mid-1980s, researchers have been increasingly interested in the function of individual learners in language learning. Due to this curiosity, they were interested in learner variables as a technique for assessing students' performance in foreign language learning. The beliefs regarding language learning examined in foreign language learning are factors (Meshkat & Saeb, 2014).

Horwitz (1988) was the first researcher who practically researched second and foreign language learning beliefs. She works at the University of Texas as a professor. She investigated the language learning beliefs of French, German, and Spanish university students in the United States by developing the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). The study's findings revealed that many students held opposing views to language educators. The participants in the research, for example, thought the language they were learning was simple and that they could acquire it in two years. They believed that learning a foreign language mostly entailed memorizing many new vocabulary words, grammatical rules, and translation. Horwitz (1988) concluded that language learners come to class with preconceived notions about language learning, some of which prevent language learning successfully. One of the aims of Horwitz was to inform teachers about their students’ beliefs and perceptions (Horwitz, 1987, 1988, as cited in Riley, 2006).

As mentioned earlier, Horwitz researched the beliefs of students and instructors at the University of Texas at Austin. Later, other researchers used her tool worldwide. For example, Yang (1992) examined students’ beliefs about language learning at six Taiwanese universities; Park (1995) studied learners’ beliefs at two universities in Korea; Truitt (1995) explored Korean University students’ beliefs about learning English (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006).

Meshkat and Saeb (2014) state that there have been many other studies on language learners’ beliefs that employed Horwitz’s instrument (1987), Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), for different purposes. Some of these studies looked at the relationship between beliefs and other factors that influence language learning, such as strategies (Wenden, 1986; Yang, 1999); gender (Bernat & Lloyd, 2007; Tercanlioglu, 2004); language proficiency (Abedini et al., 2011); foreign language anxiety (Jee, 2014; Oh, 1996), (Truitt, 1995; Young, 1991); culture (Horwitz, 1999); and the secrets of beliefs (Sakui & Gaies, 1999). Moreover, Jafari and Shokrpour (2012) state that the BALLI has been broadly used in different ESL and EFL contexts and cultures to evaluate or explore the beliefs of ESL and EFL students. For example, in
Diab (2000) modified the BALLI and used it to explore the beliefs of 284 students learning English and French as foreign languages at three Lebanese universities. He realized that the students learning English had the following viewpoints: integrative motivation, the difficulty of speaking and learning English, the importance of accuracy in speaking English, and English in Lebanon. While the students learning the French language had the following beliefs: “motivation/confidence in speaking French, the nature of learning French, the importance of French in Lebanon, and the importance of accuracy in speaking French.” In terms of language learning difficulty, most of the participants believed that English is an easy or very easy language, but French is difficult. More French learners than English thought of learning a foreign language in a native country.

Apart from English language learners, the BALLI tool was also used to explore learners’ beliefs in the other languages. For example, Horwitz (1988) researched the learners’ French, German, and Spanish views at the University of Texas at Austin. Kuntz (1996) looked at Arabic and Swahili learners. Smith (1989) and Tumposky (1991) investigated the views of Russian language learners. Kern (1995) discovered French language learners’ beliefs. Bacon and Finnemann (1990) researched Spanish language students’ beliefs. Mori (1999) explored Japanese learners’ ideas (Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006). Furthermore, Oh (1996) used the BALLI questionnaire with 195 first and second-year Japanese learners at the University of Texas at Austin to explore their language learning beliefs and anxiety in learning foreign languages.

Methods
The researchers used a quantitative method, which is a questionnaire, in conducting this study because it is a suitable way to achieve the aim of the study. The participants of the study reflected on the items of the questionnaire based on a Likert-type linear scale (Likert, 1932); strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree, as it is a reliable rating scale to measure attitudes and gives more freedom to the participants in showing their agreement or disagreement with the statements than usual yes/no responses. The results of such scales are more precise and can be analyzed better.

Participants
The participants of this study are the Kurdish EFL university students studying English as a foreign language at the English language department during the academic year 2021/2022 in seven public and private universities located in different areas of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. They are five public universities: the University of Halabja, the University of Sulaimani, Salahaddin University, Koya University, and Soran University. And two private universities; the University of Human Development and Tishk International University in Sulaimani. The overall number of the students who participated in filling out the questionnaire was 420. Their age is between 18-25 years, as shown in table one.
Table 1. Students’ ages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table two shows the frequencies and percentages of the students’ genders. As seen in the table, more female students participated in filling out the questionnaire than males.

Table 2. Students’ genders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table three indicates the distribution of the students according to their stages. The first-year students participated more, followed by the third, second, and fourth-year students.

Table 3. Stages of the students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, the participant's responses to the three background questions are shown in table four below.

Table 4. Participants’ answers to the background questions

Q1. How much do you usually study the English language outside the classroom daily?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Fewer than 30 minutes</th>
<th>30 to 60 minutes</th>
<th>1 to 2 hours</th>
<th>2 to 3 hours</th>
<th>3 hours and more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fewer than 30 minutes</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2. What is your main reason for studying and learning the English language?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>7.1%</th>
<th>67.6%</th>
<th>22.4%</th>
<th>2.9%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) To get a degree</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) To get a better career and education in the future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) I like the English language and culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q3. Which language do you usually use to speak with your colleagues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>36.2%</th>
<th>15.5%</th>
<th>25.7%</th>
<th>11.2%</th>
<th>3.3%</th>
<th>7.4%</th>
<th>0.7%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both (Equally)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly Kurdish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that (27.4%) of the participants spend less than 30 minutes studying English outside class per day, (25.7%) spend 30 minutes to 1 hour, (26.4%) spend 1 to 2 hours, (and 11.7%)
spend 2 to 3 hours, and only (8.8%) spend more than 3 hours. Most students spend less than two hours per day studying the English language outside class.

Concerning the participants’ main reason for studying and learning the English language, only (7.1%) of them study to get a degree. While (67.6%) study it for future careers and education, and (22.4%) are interested in the English language and culture. This means that most students have a relevant aim in studying and learning the English language, not just to get a degree.

Regarding the students’ preferred language for communication with their colleagues; (36.2%) use only Kurdish, (15.5%) use only English, (25.7%) use both equally, and (21.9%) use either English or Kurdish with various portions. Only (0.7%) use other languages, especially Arabic. This means that all the participants are Kurdish nationals and are learning English as a foreign language. In addition, they do not use the English language only for everyday communication outside the classroom.

**Research Instrument**

**Questionnaire**

The researchers intended to investigate the language learning beliefs of EFL students in Kurdish universities. To achieve this aim, they adapted Horwitz’s (1988) questionnaire “Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI).” They distributed it among the target group at the English language departments in seven universities in Iraqi Kurdistan Region.

They divided the questionnaire into two parts; part one asks about demographic information of the participants and three background questions concerning their own language learning experience. The second part is devoted to the items of the BALLI questionnaire, which consists of 34 statements. According to Horwitz (1987), the statements are grouped into five categories: “the difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies (learning strategies and communication strategies), and motivation and expectations.”

They have modified or restructured some items in the original BALLI questionnaire to adjust to the present study’s aim and setting. For example, they changed expressions referring to “foreign language” in general to “English language” or “English as a foreign language.”

According to the Likert-type linear scale, they asked the students to show their agreement with the statements (Likert, 1932; McLeod, 2019). The rankings are referred to as follows: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neutral, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree). However, the fourth and fourteenth items have different scales. The fourth item has the following scales: (1) a very difficult language, (2) a difficult language, (3) a language of medium difficulty, (4) an easy language, and (5) a very easy language). While the fourteenth item has the following scales: (1) you can’t learn a language in 1 hour a day, (2) 5-10 years, (3) 3-5 years, (4) 1-2 years, and (5) less than a year).
**Procedure**

The researchers used the “Google Forms” platform to collect the research data and sent the online questionnaire link to the students of the English language departments to fill. The link was active during January 2022 to let the target students access it. They described the paper’s topic to the students and instructed them to complete the questionnaire correctly. They allowed them to ask questions if they needed clarification on any item to ensure they understood everything before answering it.

They analyzed the quantitative data using Google Sheets, Microsoft Office Excel, and IBM SPSS Statistics Software. They determined percentages, averages, and modes of all the questionnaire items and shaped them into the form of a table, see the Appendix. Based on the data, they made discussions, outlined the most significant conclusions, and provided specific recommendations to show the importance of language learners' beliefs and how language educators consider them.

**Results and Discussion**

This section presents the questionnaire results and discussions that address the research questions and attain the study's goal. The table in the appendix illustrates the results of each statement and category of the questionnaire and summarizes all the information provided by the respondents. Moreover, it demonstrates the percentages, means, and modes of all the responses for the questionnaire items. In addition, it shows that the beliefs are five categories.

The first category is *the difficulty of language learning*. The average of the beliefs of this category is (3.3), and its mode is (4). Learning a foreign language in general and English is of medium difficulty to the study participants. This category has the lowest mean score among the five categories of the BALLI questionnaire. It consists of six beliefs; 3, 4, 6, 14, 24, and 28. Half of the participants agree that some languages are more accessible to learn than others. While (16.9%) strongly agree and (20.7%) neither agree nor disagree with this belief. Over half of the participants (52.9%) regard English to be a medium-difficult language. While (20.5%) of them consider it a complicated language, and (17.9%) of them consider it an easy language. This finding is opposite to the results of Diab (2000), in which the participants think of English as an easy language, and it is in line with the findings of Horwitz (1988). Most of the participants believe that they will eventually learn to speak English very well; (45.2%) of them agree, (26.2%) strongly agree, and (19%) neither agree nor disagree with this belief. Concerning the time needed for a learner to become fluent if s/he spends an hour a day when it comes to learning English, (40.2%) of the participants think that it takes (1-2) years, (29.3%) of them believe that it takes (3-5) years and (19%) believe that it takes less than a year. This finding is in line with (Horwitz, 1988). In comparison between speaking and understanding, (40.5%) of the participants agree with the idea that speaking English is more accessible than understanding it, (16.7%) strongly disagree, (18.6%) neither agree nor disagree, and (20.5%) agree. Most of the participants think that understanding English is more accessible than speaking. When comparing reading and writing to speaking and understanding, many participants (37.6%) agree with the idea that reading and writing English are more accessible than speaking and understanding, (18.3%) strongly agree, (20.5%) are neutral, and (18.8%) disagree. This indicates that most participants believe reading and writing English is simpler than speaking and comprehending it.
The second category is foreign language aptitude. The average of the beliefs of this category is (3.4), and its mode is (4). It means that the participants’ anticipation level of language learning ability, in general, is high. This category consists of nine beliefs; 1, 2, 10, 15, 22, 29, 32, 33, and 34. Most participants believe that learning a foreign language is easier for children than adults; (45.5%) strongly agree, and (36.4%) agree. Concerning foreign language learning ability, (45.7%) of the participants agree that some people have a special ability for foreign language learning, (17.4%) strongly agree, and (21.9%) are neutral. Most of the participants believe that learning another language is simpler for someone who has already learned one; (48.6%) of them agree with this belief, (16.2%) strongly agree, and (22.4%) are neutral. Regarding their own foreign language learning ability, (38.6%) of those polled are undecided about having a remarkable talent to learn other languages, (38.1%) agree, and (14.5%) disagree. Concerning gender, (34.3%) disagree with the belief that says women are better than men at learning foreign languages, (31.7%) are neutral and (16.7%) agree. Most of the participants do not see any relationship between language learning and mathematics and science subjects; (41.4%) disagree with the belief that “people who are good at mathematics and science are not good at learning foreign languages,” and (16.9%) strongly disagree, (19.8%) neither agree nor disagree and only (15.2%) agree. Most of the participants feel that persons who are fluent in many languages are extremely brilliant; (40.7%) agree with this belief, (27.4%) strongly agree, (18.3%) are neutral and only (10.7) disagree with it. Moreover, (37.4%) of the participants neither agree nor disagree with the belief that “people from my country are good at learning foreign languages.” While (26.4%) disagree and (25.2%) agree with this belief. The study participants are not certain about Kurdish people’s ability to learn foreign languages. However, many of the participants feel that everyone can acquire a foreign language; (49.8%) agree with this belief, (26.9%) strongly agree, and only (14.5%) are neutral.

The nature of language learning is the third category. The average of this category's views is (3.7), with a mode of (4), indicating that most respondents agree with the questionnaire's opinions regarding language learning. This category carries six beliefs: 8, 11, 16, 20, 25, and 26. Concerning the relevance of culture in acquiring the English language, (47.4%) believe that knowing English-speaking cultures is necessary to be able to communicate effectively in English, (17.1%) strongly agree, and (23.1%) neither agree nor disagree. Most of the participants felt that learning English in an English-speaking nation is the best way to learn it; (43.1%) agree with this belief, (34.8%) strongly agree, and only (13.3%) are neutral. This finding is opposite to the conclusions from Diab (2000) about the nature of English language learning. Regarding vocabulary, (48.3%) agree with the importance of vocabulary in mastering the English language, (20.7%) strongly agree, and only (18.8%) neither agree nor disagree. However, (38.6%) agree with the role of grammar rules in mastering the English language, (12.4%) strongly agree, (25.5%) say they don't agree or disagree, and (19.5%) say they oppose. The results of these two beliefs, the role of vocabulary and grammar in language learning, are in line with the results of (Horwitz, 1988). Many participants felt that studying English is not the same as learning other academic topics; (52.9%) agree with this belief, (13.6%) strongly agree, and (21.9%) are neutral. Concerning translation, most of the participants believe that learning English is typically a matter of translating to/from their native language; (44.5%) agree with this belief, (13.6%) strongly agree, (26.7%) are neutral and only (12.4%) disagree. This result is also in line with (Horwitz, 1988).
The fourth category is learning and communication strategies. It consists of two parts. The first part is learning strategies, which includes two beliefs; 17 and 21. The second part is communication strategies, which comprises seven ideas; 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 18, and 19. The average of the beliefs of this category is (3.6), and its mode is (4). The first belief in this category is about the role of practice in mastering the English language. (45%) of the participants strongly believe that it is critical to practice and repeat in learning the English language, and (40.2%) agree. Moreover, (48.8%) agree that “it is important to practice in the language laboratory (or with CD players or headphones),” and (29.5%) strongly agree. Most of the participants would like to have friends who are native English speakers; (47.4%) of them strongly agree with this belief, and (37.9%) agree. Regarding accent, (40%) of the participants agree that it is essential to speak with an excellent accent, (32.6%) strongly agree, and (16.7%) neither agree nor disagree. In terms of saying things correctly, (31.9%) disagree with not saying anything until you can say it correctly, (26.2%) strongly disagree, (19.3%) agree, and (15%) neither agree nor disagree. There is no need to worry about making mistakes, especially during communication activities. More than half of the participants would like to go and speak when hearing somebody speaking English. In addition, (47.1%) of the participants agree with the belief that says: “If you don't know a term in English, it's fine to guess,” (19.5%) strongly agree, and (22.4%) neither agree nor disagree. When it comes to feeling self-conscious when speaking English in front of others, (35.2%) of the participants agree that they feel conscious, (22.4%) neither agree nor disagree, and (15%) disagree. Moreover, (28.8%) of the participants disagree that if you're permitted to make mistakes at first, it'll be challenging to get rid of them afterward, (14.5%) strongly disagree, (28.1%) agree, and (19.8%) neither agree nor disagree. The participants believe that mistakes should be allowed to achieve fluency at the beginning of language learning and it does not harm the process. This finding is opposite to the conclusions from Diab (2000).

The fifth category is motivation and expectations. The average of the beliefs of this category is (4.2), and its mode is (4). This is the highest average among the five categories of the questionnaire. It consists of four beliefs; 23, 27, 30, and 31. The participants believe that if they could speak English very well, they would have many opportunities to use it; (44.5%) of them agree, and (36.9%) strongly agree with this belief. Moreover, (56%) of them strongly agree that learning English helps them get a good job, and (32.6%) agree. Among the 34 beliefs in the questionnaire, this belief had the highest average (4.4). Learning English is crucial in getting an excellent job in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region’s job market. In addition, (41.9%) of the participants agree that Kurdish people think that knowing the English language is essential, and (40.5%) strongly agree. Finally, (46.2%) of them agree with the belief that says, “I would like to learn English to know native English speakers and their culture better,” and (32.6%) strongly agree.

**Conclusion**

The main aim of this study is to explore the beliefs of Kurdish EFL university students about learning the English language. The questionnaire results show that the mean score for language learning difficulty is the lowest, and motivation and expectations is the highest among the five categories of the BALLI questionnaire. Furthermore, most of the study’s findings are parallel or close to Horwitz’s (1988) study. At the same time, there are apparent differences.
The study's findings reveal that language learners enter the process of language learning with certain, sometimes unexpected, beliefs that affect the way they behave during the process. Below are the most significant views of the Kurdish EFL university students about mastering the English language:

1. English is a language of medium difficulty.
2. Typically, a learner takes (1-2) years to become fluent if s/he spends an hour a day mastering the English language.
3. Understanding the English language is more straightforward than speaking it.
4. Children have an easier time learning a foreign language than adults.
5. A foreign language, such as English, may be learned by anyone.
6. To master the English language, repetition and practice are essential.
7. Mistakes are expected and expected at the beginning of language learning.
8. Learning English helps EFL students in getting a good job.

**Recommendations**

The researchers recommend the following based on their inquiry into the issue of this article and the results reached:

1. EFL teachers should be acquainted with their students' beliefs to understand their needs and design their modules accordingly.
2. Mistakes should be allowed at the beginning of language learning for fluency.
3. When EFL students hear someone speaking in English, they should practice speaking. They may also have pals who speak English as a first language.
4. EFL students can make educated guesses if they are unfamiliar with a word in the English language.
5. EFL students learn the language better in an English-speaking environment.
6. EFL students should learn new vocabulary to use the language better.

**Research Limitations and Suggestions for Further Studies**

This study is aimed to look at the beliefs of Kurdish EFL university students in seven institutions' English language departments. The researchers chose a sample of students rather than all of them since the study's goal and scope are restricted, and it's challenging to obtain the opinions of all EFL students from all universities. They also wanted to learn about the perspectives of a definite number of EFL students from each university.

Similar studies on the following issues can be conducted by researchers interested in examining language learners' beliefs:

1. Choosing the same target group at all the region's institutions.
2. Increasing the number of participants from all or some of the region's universities.
3. Finding out the correlation between language learners’ beliefs and other factors affecting language learning, such as strategies, approaches, methods, and techniques.
4. Examining the effect of language learners’ beliefs on foreign language learning.

**About the Authors:**

Omar Fouad Ghafor has an MA degree in English language and linguistics at Salahaddin University-Erbil. Currently, he is an Assistant Professor at the University of Halabja, department
of English language. His research interests are English language and linguistics, teaching and learning English as a foreign language, and technology and language learning. So far, he has seven publications. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6737-5670

Hedayat Muhammad Ahmad received his MA in English language and literature from Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University/ India in 2012. He has been working as a university lecturer since 2013 and has been teaching a variety of modules, including literary subjects and language skills. He has four publications. Currently, he is the head of the English language department at the University of Halabja. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6906-6188

Goran Omar Mustafa received his MA in English literature from Pune University/ India in 2012. Since 2013, he has been working as a university lecturer. He has experience in teaching literary subjects and language skills. He has four articles published in national and international journals. He is currently teaching at the University of Halabja and Tish International University as a visiting lecturer. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6383-2953

References


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### Results of the BALLI questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Percentages of Scales</th>
<th>Averages (Out of 5)</th>
<th>Modes (Out of 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Difficulty of Language Learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. English, which is the language that I am trying to learn, is:</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I believe that I will eventually learn to speak English very well.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. How long would it take for someone to become fluent in English if they spent one hour a day learning the language?</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. It is simpler to speak than to comprehend English.</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Reading and writing English is easier than speaking and understanding it.</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign Language Aptitude</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Learning English as a foreign language is easier for children than adults.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Some people are born with a special ability for learning a foreign language, such as English.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Someone who already speaks a foreign language can easily learn another one.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I have a special ability for learning English language.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Women are more adept at learning English than males.</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. People who excel at mathematics and science struggle to acquire new languages.</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. People who can communicate well in more than one language are extremely brilliant.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. People in my nation are excellent at acquiring English.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nature of Language Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Everyone can learn to speak English language.</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To speak English, it is vital to understand the cultures of English speakers.</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. It is better to learn English language in an English-speaking country.</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Learning English language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Learning English language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Learning English as a foreign language is different from learning other academic subjects.</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Learning English is primarily a matter of translating from my original language to English and vice versa.</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Learning Strategies | Communication Strategies |  |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17. It is critical to practice and repeat. | 1.9% | 2.4% | 10.5% | 40.2% | 45.0% | 4.2% | 5 |
| 21. Practicing in the language laboratory is essential (or with CD players or headphones). | 2.1% | 6.0% | 13.6% | 48.8% | 29.5% | 4% | 4 |
| 5. I desire to make acquaintances with those who speak English as their first language. | 1.9% | 4.3% | 8.6% | 37.9% | 47.4% | 4.2% | 5 |
| 7. It is critical to speak English fluently and with a good accent. | 2.1% | 8.6% | 16.7% | 40.0% | 32.6% | 3.9% | 4 |
| 9. You should not speak anything in English unless you are confident in your ability to do so. | 26.2% | 31.9% | 15.0% | 19.3% | 7.6% | 2.5% | 3.6 |
| 12. If I heard someone speaking English, I would approach them and practice speaking the language with them. | 3.6% | 10.5% | 23.6% | 48.3% | 14.0% | 3.6% | 4 |
| 13. If you don't know a term in English, it's fine to guess. | 2.4% | 8.6% | 22.4% | 47.1% | 19.5% | 3.7% | 4 |
| 18. I feel self-conscious speaking English in front of other people. | 3.8% | 15.0% | 31.9% | 35.2% | 14.0% | 3.4% | 4 |
| 19. If you're permitted to make mistakes at first, it'll be difficult to get rid of them afterwards. | 14.5% | 28.8% | 19.8% | 28.1% | 8.8% | 2.9% | 2 |

| Motivation and Expectations |  |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23. If I improve my English language skills, I will have numerous opportunities to put it to use. | 2.4% | 2.9% | 13.3% | 44.5% | 36.9% | 4.1% | 4 |
| 27. If I learn to speak English language very well, it will help me get a good job. | 1.4% | 2.6% | 7.4% | 32.6% | 56.0% | 4.4% | 4 |
| 30. People in my country think that it is important to speak English language. | 1.4% | 4.0% | 12.1% | 41.9% | 40.5% | 4.2% | 4 |
| 31. I want to study English so that I may better understand native English speakers and their culture. | 3.3% | 5.2% | 12.6% | 46.2% | 32.6% | 4% | 4 |
The Impact of Self-Regulated Strategy Development on Enhancing Saudi Female English majors’ Reading Comprehension Skills and Self-Efficacy

Ashwaq A. Alreshoud
College of Languages and translation,
Al-Imam Mohammed Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Corresponding Author: aalrehoud@imamu.edu.sa

Safaa M. Abdelhalim
College of Languages and translation
Al-Imam Mohammed Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract
The present study investigated the impact of self-regulated strategy development reading intervention on improving Saudi female English majors’ reading skills and reading self-efficacy. The study is significant with respect to its implication for the pedagogy of English as a foreign/second language that hopefully may broaden insights into the self-regulated reading process and reading self-efficacy among Saudi female university students. The study addressed three main research questions: (1) What is the effect of self-regulated strategy development on enhancing first-year Saudi female English majors’ reading comprehension skills? (2) What is the impact of self-regulated strategy development on enhancing first-year Saudi female English majors’ reading self-efficacy? (3) What is the relationship between enhancing students’ reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy? Based on the quasi-experimental design, two intact classes of first-year EFL English majors at the college of languages and Translation, Imam University, were randomly assigned into two groups (control and experimental). The experimental group students (N=40) were taught using the self-regulated strategy development, while the control group (N=40) students were taught using the traditional teaching method. The research data were collected from two equivalent reading comprehension tests (pre-and post-tests) and a reading self-efficacy scale. The results revealed statistically significant differences between the two groups’ mean scores on the post-tests in favor of the experimental group. Results also indicated an enhancement in the experimental group students’ reading comprehension skills and subskills, and reading self-efficacy. Pedagogical implications for reading instruction and recommendations for future studies are discussed.

Keywords: Metacognitive strategies, reading comprehension skills, reading self-efficacy, Saudi English majors, self-regulated learning, self-regulated strategy development

Introduction

Reading comprehension is a primary academic skill for university students. In most academic subject areas, success is conditioned by students’ ability to read, understand what has been read, and then apply the content to future learning (Bastug, 2014). Similarly, in English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) learning contexts, reading is viewed as a superior and complementary skill (Hermida, 2009). Second Language (L2) undergraduate students, throughout their academic study, are exposed to a myriad of reading texts which are sometimes beyond their proficiency level. However, L2 and subject matter teachers, more often than not, work with the false assumption that students possess the necessary cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies to cope with the comprehension difficulties they face. Hence, students hardly ever receive the assistance they desperately need (Levine, Ferenz & Reves, 2000). Inevitably, such a view has resulted in students experiencing reading comprehension gaps, as represented in their inability to adequately answer questions testing their deep assimilation of the text content; Thus, unequipped with the necessary reading strategies, L2 learners tend to nurture negative perspectives toward reading comprehension activities (Ehlers-Zavala, 2005).

In this vein, Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) strategies have been proposed to be among the significant factors in enhancing reading ability, especially when figuring out the intended meaning of expository content (Kumi-Yeboah, 2012). According to Davis and Gray (2007), the ability to comprehend a text thoroughly is conditioned by using adequate SRL strategies, including setting goals before reading, monitoring, and adjusting the reading performance to meet these goals. Moreover, one’s awareness and monitoring of his/her comprehension process have been classified as two crucial aspects of a successful reading process (Do & Phan, 2021). These two aspects are pertained to metacognition, which can be conceptualized “as the knowledge of the reader’s cognition about reading and the self-control mechanisms they exercise when monitoring and regulating text comprehension” (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002, p. 250). Even though, the reality of L2 classroom instruction has revealed a noticeable gap in reading performance between those who are achieving as expected and those who seem uninvolved in the reading act, despite being exposed to meta-cognitive monitoring instruction (Ruddell & Unrau, 2004). This raises questions about whether other factors relevant to the reader himself might be at play (Vaughn, Klingner & Bryant, 2001). In this vein, self-efficacy has been highlighted as a significant factor in mastering the reading comprehension skill (Ghonsooly & Ghanizadeh, 2013; Waleff, 2010).

In the Saudi EFL context, research has identified many reading challenges and difficulties Saudi students encounter. These difficulties have been attributed to dominant teaching practices such as unsupportive learning environments, a lack of explicit strategy-based instruction, and the adoption of a teacher-centered approach (Al-Qahtani, 2016; Alenezi, 2021). Other contributing factors relate to students’ characteristics, such as lack of knowledge and practice of adequate strategies necessary for managing their reading comprehension process and lack of enthusiasm and motivation for reading (Alsamadani, 2009; Awad, 2002). Accordingly, the present study sought to investigate the impact of SRSD on developing reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy of Saudi female students majoring in English.

The present study is significant for its contribution to the Saudi 2030 vision that focuses on preparing female university graduates who possess learning strategies that help them to be
autonomous and life-long learners, which is the essence of utilizing SRSD. This study is also significant with respect to its implication for EFL/ESL pedagogy. Hopefully, it may broaden insights into the self-regulated reading process and reading self-efficacy among female university students. Additionally, the findings of the present study can contribute to L2 reading strategy research by exploring the cognitive-based nature of self-regulated reading processes. It can also provide reading instructors with evidence-based metacognitive self-regulated reading strategies correlated with skilled reading comprehension. Thus, instructors can plan for and employ adequate teaching and learning tasks to support their students’ reading comprehension and reading self-efficacy. The study addressed three main research questions:

1. What is the effect of SRSD on enhancing first-year Saudi female English majors’, at Imam Mohammed bin Saud Islamic University, reading comprehension skills?
2. What is the effect of SRSD on enhancing first-year Saudi female English majors’, at Imam Mohammed bin Saud Islamic University, reading self-efficacy?
3. What is the relationship between enhancing Saudi female English majors’ reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy?

Accordingly, the research objectives comprised:
- measuring the impact of SRSD on developing first-year Saudi female English majors’ reading comprehension skills.
- measuring the impact of SRSD on developing first-year Saudi female English majors’ reading self-efficacy.
- measuring the relationship between the development of students’ reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy.

**Literature Review**

**Interactive Cognitive Processes in Reading Comprehension**

Reading is a dynamic process, through which the reader interacts with the text by connecting and interpreting ideas. This process requires the execution and integration of numerous cognitive processes (Kendeou, Broek, Helder & Karlsson, 2014). Throughout the reading process, whenever the reader encounters a new piece of information, a unique combination of cognitive strategies is put into effect. Employing the proper strategy at the right time is an indispensable part of skilled reading. Accordingly, it is essential to comprehend where cognitive strategies might be unsuccessful for struggling readers and how these strategies can be positively influenced (Rapp, Van den Broek, McMaster, Kendeou & Espin, 2007).

Theoretical models capture the complications of the reading process through describing its various linguistic and cognitive processes. Reading comprehension cognitive processes are almost presented in two main categories: lower-level processes, which focus on transforming the written codes into comprehensible language units, and higher-level processes, which center around connecting these linguistic units into a comprehensible and coherent mental depiction (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp & Jenkins, 2001). Though reading comprehension processes at both higher-level and lower-level can independently predict student’s reading comprehension level (Kendeou, Van den Broek, White & Lynch, 2009), automatization of lower-level processes help in providing the higher-level reading process with increasing mental resources (Luna, Garver, Urban, Lazar &
Sweeney, 2004). Learners’ awareness of and metacognitive knowledge about their own cognitive processes and their ability to regulate them, are considered the basis for the efficient reading comprehension process (Edossa, Neuenhaus, Artelt, Lingel & Schneider, 2019, Schneider 2015).

**Self-regulated Learning and Reading Comprehension**

Several studies place self-regulation, as the cornerstone of academic endeavors and consider it a determinant of learning and development (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). This research line emphasizes the role of teachers as critical social models and the role of learners as proactive and self-directed seekers in all learning endeavors. SRL concept has been designated by many researchers in various ways; however, the core idea underlying it is close, which is about using a combination of metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral strategies to achieve certain learning goals, assuming reciprocal causation among these processes. (Zimmerman, 2008). Self-regulation strategies play a vital role in guiding learners’ comprehension. Thus, to effectively comprehend a reading text, students must monitor and manage their reading practices at metacognitive level (Thiede & De Bruin, 2018).

The present study focused on the metacognitive strategies due to their promising influence on reading comprehension, which in turn is considered to be a complex cognitive skill that requires metacognitive awareness from the reader. Students are said to be metacognitive to the degree they are engaged in thinking about themselves, the nature of learning tasks, and the social contexts (Cleary & Zimmerman, 2012). In this vein, effective readers who practice metacognitive strategies are aware of their strengths and limitations and find ways to remedy the latter. Metacognitive strategies are used in different phases of the learning process and are classified into goal setting and planning, self-monitoring, organizing and self-evaluation (Zimmerman, 2000).

**Self-Regulated Strategy Development and Reading Comprehension**

Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) is an instructional approach designed to help students learn, use, and adopt the strategies employed by skilled learners (TEAL Center Fact Sheet, 2019). It is an approach that adds the element of self-regulation to strategy instruction for reading by encouraging students to monitor, evaluate, and revise their reading. There are six stages within the SRSD instructional method that can be used to develop students’ metacognitive self-regulated reading strategies (Teng, 2020):

**Stage 1.** “Develop and activate students’ background knowledge” (Graham & Harris, 2009, 125). During this stage, teachers begin by developing and activating any prior knowledge necessary to use the strategy effectively.

**Stage 2.** Discuss it: the mnemonic for remembering the strategy is introduced in this stage.

**Stage 3.** Model it: in this stage, self-instruction and self-regulation behaviors are modeled.

**Stage 4.** Memorize It: in this stage, students practice memorizing the mnemonic of each strategy and their personal self-statements.

**Stage 5.** Support it: This stage involves support and scaffolding from the teacher to assure that the students meet the criteria of mastering the strategy; prompting fades as the students achieve mastery.

**Stage 6.** Independent performance: The student uses the strategy correctly and independently in this final stage. Students should be able to use self-instruction without support.
Empirical Research on SRL Strategies and Reading Comprehension

Skibbe, Montroy, Boeles and Morrison (2019) examined how different self-regulation development trajectories (early, intermediate, late) prophesy how the language and literacy skills develop from kindergarten through second grade. The research sample (351 students) was tested two times per year across four years on exponents of decoding, phonological awareness, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The findings of the study indicated that earlier exponents of self-regulation correlated with earlier development and higher levels of decoding and reading comprehension. These findings highlight the long-lasting and interrelated nature of self-regulation and language and literacy development.

In her quasi-experimental research study, Lipari (2014) investigated the potential impact of explicit, scaffolded instruction on sixth-grade students’ engagement in utilizing metacognitive reading strategies and reading comprehension outcomes. Findings revealed a positive treatment effect on the measure of metacognitive knowledge with an effect size of .27. Students were able to regulate their cognitive-based reading activities better in light of the received direct metacognitive strategy instruction and modelling relevant strategies, which in turn allowed for various practice opportunities, and included evaluation practices of individual progress.

In addition, a study by Nash-Ditzel (2010) revealed that using metacognitive-based teaching methods and techniques could significantly result in enhanced reading comprehension skills among college students. Through various data collection tools (informal observations, think-aloud protocols, document analysis, and interview), Nash-Ditzel found that the awareness of and the capability to use reading comprehension strategies supported students' practice of self-regulation while reading.

A recent study by Do and Phan (2021) examined Vietnamese undergraduate EFL students’ metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the predictive role of gender and reading proficiency level of students’ awareness of these strategies. Results revealed that students’ frequent use of the three identified reading strategies (problem-solving, support, and global reading) was at a medium level. Results also showed that female students used support strategies more frequently than males. Students with high reading proficiency employed the reading strategies more frequently than their counterparts with low reading proficiency. The study recommended integrating direct reading strategies instruction among L2 learners.

Self-efficacy and Reading Comprehension

According to Nes Ferrara (2005), “Self-efficacy for reading refers to individuals’ assessments of how well they think they can accomplish a particular reading task and is reading influenced by how well they have performed on similar tasks, including any accompanying feedback and encouragement received” (p. 216). Within the reading domain, efficacy beliefs can fluctuate based on the difficulty of the given task. Though some students may feel confident in their ability to understand single words within a text, they may at the same time have difficulty with comprehension of the same passage (Piercey, 2013).
Empirical Research on Self-efficacy and Reading Comprehension

Solheim (2011) examined the role of EFL learners’ self-efficacy in the reading process. He hypothesized that those students possessing low self-efficacy have a problem coping with the more difficult reading tasks, especially in test situations. Findings revealed that reading self-efficacy strongly predicted participants' reading comprehension scores. Further findings showed that with low-self-efficacy students, self-efficacy positively predicted comprehension scores only with multiple-choice questions, not written-response questions.

A study by Habibian and Roslan (2014) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy in reading and language proficiency as well as reading comprehension. The study sample included 64 Malaysian postgraduate students from two public universities. The results pinpointed a significant correlation between the reader’s self-efficacy and reading comprehension.

From the previous literature review, it can be assumed that L2 students suffer from noticeable weaknesses concerning their reading comprehension skills and self-efficacy, which can be partly attributed to the traditional teaching reading methods adopted. Moreover, explicit self-regulation strategy teaching proved to be more conducive to learning than indirect instructional methods, which rely on learning by chance or extensive exposure to comprehensible input. On the other hand, most previous studies, noticeably, did not pay enough attention to the weakness of students’ reading comprehension skills, mainly at inferential and critical levels, which is the current study's main focus. Moreover, no research has investigated the correlation between university students’ use of self-regulated reading strategies, mainly metacognitive strategies, and their reading self-efficacy. Aiming to bridge these gaps, the current study sought to examine the impact of SRSD reading intervention on improving Saudi female English majors’ reading skills and reading self-efficacy, as well as investigate if there is any possible correlation between students’ reading comprehension skills and their reading self-efficacy.

Methods

Design of the Study

This quasi-experimental study used a non-equivalent group design. This design is also known as pretest-posttest control group design, in which two equivalent versions of the reading test and a reading self-efficacy scale were used as pre-and-post-tests. The researcher, based on the purposive convenience sampling method, selected two intact classes from the first year EFL students at the College of Languages and Translation, Imam University, and then assigned them into a control group and an experimental group. The control group received the standard teaching method, while the experimental group received training on SRD strategy to help them integrate metacognitive self-regulation strategies into their reading process. One of the researchers taught both groups to reduce the possibility of interaction between the treatment and instructor resulting from having different teachers. The study lasted for three months and a half (14 weeks) during the second semester of the academic year 2020/2021.

Participants

The sample comprised 80 Saudi female students (Two intact study groups, 40 students each) at the College of Languages and Translation, Imam University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. All
participants were first-year students, enrolled at level two, and all joined the researcher’s assigned reading classes. Their age ranged from 19 to 21.

**Research Instruments**

*The Reading Comprehension Pre-and Post-tests*

Two equivalent versions of the reading comprehension test were used as a pre-post test. These tests were designed and developed by the researcher. Each version of the test consisted of one reading text (425-500 words in length) that has the same readability level as the students’ textbook, followed by 20 questions distributed in three sections (multiple choices, true/false, and short answer questions). The questions measured the specified comprehension skills (10 skills) two times at least for each skill.

The researchers assured the content validity of the reading tests by submitting them to a jury of three specialists in applied linguistics to decide the relevance and appropriateness of the test to the study purpose and students’ language proficiency level. The two test versions were piloted on a sample of 30 students at the same study level. Results revealed that all coefficients of ease and difficulty varied between 0.30 and 0.70, and all discrimination coefficients varied between 0.22 and 0.71. This means that all coefficients are acceptable. Coefficients Cronbach's alpha calculation was performed to check the reliability of the test. The overall tested skills had Cronbach’s alpha value (0.90), and individual skills had values greater than 0.77, making all of them acceptable.

*The Reading Self-Efficacy Scale*

The reading self-efficacy scale consisted of 30-items assessed on a five-point Likert scale. It was adapted from Tobing’s (2013) English Reading Self-Efficacy Measure, Demirel and Epçakan’s (2011) Scale of Belief Self-Efficacy Reading Comprehension (SSERC), and the revised version of the “Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ)” (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997).

To assure the content validity of the self-efficacy scale, the first version was submitted to a jury of four applied linguistics specialists. Based on their feedback, some items were modified. Also, based on a pilot study with ten students other than the research sample, the self-efficacy scale reliability coefficient turned out to be 0.94, following Cronbach’s alpha.

**Research Procedures**

The present study data was gathered over three months (12 weeks) in three main phases (see Figure 2). In Phase One, all students of both control and experimental groups filled in the reading self-efficacy scale and sat for a reading comprehension pre-test two weeks before the SRSD training sessions. In Phase Two, the experimental group students received training on SRSD, focusing on integrating metacognitive self-regulated strategies in the reading process. In Phase Three, students of both groups (control & experimental) sat for the reading post-test and filled in the reading self-efficacy scale for a second time.

*The Intervention – Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) Stages and Activities*

The intervention took place over twelve weeks following the procedures identified by Harris et al. (2008). The intervention was organized in four phases: Introduction, Explicit Strategy
Instruction, Guided Practice, and Independent Usage. See Figure one for the instructional timeline. Throughout the intervention, students were encouraged to learn through practice and then share their ideas through discussion and reflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Timeline</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1 Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2 Explicit Strategy Instruction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3 Guided practice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4 Independent Usage</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Instructional timeline

In phase one, students received two orientation sessions (50 minutes each) about reading comprehension skills, the role of self-regulation (SR) and reading self-efficacy in enhancing reading performance, and the self-regulated metacognitive strategies used by successful readers.

Phase two- over a block schedule of two lectures (100-minute each week) for three weeks, students were provided with explicit instruction of the four metacognitive self-regulated reading strategies (goal setting and strategic planning, organizing, self-monitoring, self-evaluation) following the six iterative stages of the SRSD strategy, counting “develop and activate background knowledge, discuss it, model it, memorize it, support it, and independent Performance” (Harris & Graham, 1996, 125). Cognitive modeling (talking out the thought of the strategy implementation process) and collaborative learning were encouraged in this phase by engaging students in peer and small group activities to assist each other memorize and practice the strategy mnemonic.

In phase three, students were given opportunities to engage in meaningful, supportive practices of the four metacognitive self-regulated reading strategies following the SRSD with three selected reading texts from their reading textbook, Reading Explorer 3rd ed (Douglas & Bohlke, 2019). During this phase, students were encouraged to graph their performance on the reading text and fill in the Goal Tracking worksheet in three steps (see Appendix A).

The role of the instructor was to answer students’ questions about the self-regulation strategies, prompt them to discuss and share textual evidence in pairs or small groups and accentuate the necessity for adjusting their employment of the SR strategies to align appropriately with diverse text structures (narrative, expository, descriptive, … etc.).

In phase four (Independent Usage), students were encouraged to apply the reading SR strategies to diverse reading texts. During each class, the instructor assigned an independent reading task to the entire class and informed them to use the goal-tracking worksheet as she walked around to monitor their performance, mainly how they integrated the SR strategies in their reading process. Supplemental instruction and guided practice were included in this phase only for students who needed support.
Results

Pre-implementation of the Study Instruments

To control variables before implementing the intervention, the T-test for independent samples was administered to investigate if there were significant differences between the control group and the experimental one on the reading self-efficacy scale and the pre-reading comprehension test and. The results disclosed that the differences between the means of the two groups on the self-efficacy scale (p= 0.93) and on the pre-reading test (P=0.46) were not statistically significant.

Results Related to the First Research Question

To answer the first research question, first, the researcher applied the Independent Samples T-test to check if there were significant differences between the control and the experimental groups’ mean scores on the post-test reading. Results showed that there were statistically significance differences between the mean score of the two groups (experimental and control) on the post-test concerning the overall reading test scores as well as all reading comprehension sub-skills in favor of the means of the experimental group; all values were less than the level of significance (0.05). Second, to examine the impact of SRSD significantly on the experimental group students’ reading comprehension from pre-test to post-test, the Paired Sample T-test was run. See Table one.

Table 1. T-test results comparing the experimental group’s pre- and post-test mean scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Effect size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skimming</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>-7.16</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>-2.92</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infer writer’s attitudes</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>-3.02</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>-1.63</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infer specific details</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>-3.02</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>-3.64</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanning</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>-6.84</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>-5.84</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guess the meaning</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>-4.11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>-5.84</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish main ideas &amp; details</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>-7.46</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>-4.94</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing conclusions</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>-4.94</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>-3.42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish facts &amp; opinions</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>-4.26</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>-4.94</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify explicit relationships</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>-6.30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>-3.42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infer implicit relationships</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>-5.30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>-3.42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall test</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>17.90</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>6.73</td>
<td>-7.55</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30.93</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>9.67</td>
<td>-7.55</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table one shows that the mean scores of the experimental group significantly improved in the post-test. As the difference between the pre-test and post-test overall means score is (-7.55). All statistically significance values were less than the significance level of (0.05). Moreover, the effect size values shown reveal that the SRSD intervention had a large effect on the experimental group students’ overall reading comprehension performance as the effect-size value (1.56) was greater than (0.80); thus, indicating a high impact of the SRSD intervention on developing students’ overall reading comprehension skills. As for the reading subskills, the effect-size values ranged from high to medium. The largest effect size was for “Distinguish main ideas and details,” followed by “Skimming”, yet the effect size values for ‘Guess the meaning’ (0.75), Infer writer’s attitudes’ (0.70), and “Inferring specific details’ (0.64) were less than 0.80, which indicates that the size of the impact is medium. These results answer the first question posed by the present study.

**Results Related to the Second Research Question**

To answer the second research question, the researcher ran the Independent Samples T-test to determine if the control and the experimental groups differed in their replies on the post-application of the reading self-efficacy scale. Results revealed that the mean scores of the experimental group (m=3.91) was significantly higher than the control group’s mean scores (m= 3.36) (p= 4.78). Second, the Paired Sample T-test was used to compare the pre- and post- mean scores of the experimental group students’ responses to the reading self-efficacy scale. See Table two.

Table 2. *T*-test results comparing mean scores of the pre vs. post application of the reading self-efficacy scale for the experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T-</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Effect size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-4.22</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*** significant at 0.01

Results in Table two display that the difference between the experimental group’s pre- and post-mean scores on the self-efficacy scale was highly significant, in favor of the post-application, as the t value was less than the level of significance (0.05). Moreover, the value of the effect size turned out to be greater than (0.08), which indicates that the effect of the SRSD intervention on the experimental group students' reading self-efficacy was large. These results answer the second research question of the present study.

**Results Related to the Third Research Question**

To address this question, the researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficients for the experimental group students’ reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension skills (see Table three).
Table 3. *Pearson correlation between the reading comprehension and reading self-efficacy of the experimental group students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading comprehension skills</th>
<th>Reading self-efficacy</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>P-value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skimming</td>
<td>0.758**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infer the writer’s attitudes or intentions</td>
<td>0.789**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infer specific details</td>
<td>0.784**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanning</td>
<td>0.835**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases</td>
<td>0.410**</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish between main idea &amp; details</td>
<td>0.780**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing conclusions</td>
<td>0.708**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish between facts &amp; opinions</td>
<td>0.234</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify explicit cause &amp; effect relationship</td>
<td>0.760**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infer implicit cause &amp; effect relationship</td>
<td>0.924**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall test</td>
<td>0.869**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results showed that the P-values of the relationship between reading comprehension and self-efficacy are less than the level of significance (0.05). Consequently, it can be assumed that the relationship between the experimental group students’ reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy level is solid and positive at the level of significance (0.05) or less between. Thus, the third research question of the present study is answered.

Since the overall correlation between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension was significant, the researchers tried to determine where this significant difference resides by examining the correlation coefficient between the ten reading skills and the reading self-efficacy. Table three indicates that the p-values were 0.00 for all reading skills except for the skills of ‘Guessing the meaning of unknown words/phrases’ (p = 0.004), and ‘Distinguish between facts and opinions’ (p = 0.073).

**Discussion**

Results of the present study revealed that the experimental group students performed better than the control group students on the post-reading test, in terms of the overall reading comprehension skills and in each reading sub-skill, and on the post-application of the reading self-efficacy scale. These findings show that the SRSD intervention provided a means for the experimental group students to self-regulate their reading comprehension and boost their reading self-efficacy; explicit instruction of the SRL strategies and student-centered activities seems to impact students' reading performance positively. Throughout the four phases of the intervention, the researcher intended to encourage the students to practice self-regulation, using controlled, guided, and free exercises through setting a reading goal, planning for reading, pausing to think, asking questions, restating specific confusing ideas in their own words, and reflecting on their performance.
Additionally, utilizing the goal tracking worksheet may have offered students significant insights into the sequence of integrating SRL strategies in reading smoothly and their ability to develop their reading skills through questioning themselves in each reading stage. These practices helped the students to master the integration of self-regulation strategies into their reading process in a natural way that enhanced their reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy. These results align with the findings of other research studies (e.g., Li & Kaur, 2014; Teng, 2020), which assured that strategy training could assist language learners in becoming strategic readers and improving their reading comprehension. Jafarigohar and Khanjani (2014) highlighted that being a strategic learner can help students in planning, organizing, and assessing their language learning, as well as in being more autonomous. In terms of reading ability, Li and Kaur (2014) added that reading strategy training can help students become more aware of the numerous reading methods available to them in diverse reading settings.

Moreover, findings of the study showed that though there was a statistically significant difference in the reading performance skills of the experimental group on the pre-and-post reading tests in favor of the post-test scores, the development of some reading skills exceeded the development in others as the effect size ranged from large to medium. The skills that had the minor effect size were ‘Guess the meaning’ (0.75), ‘Infer writer’s attitudes’ (0.70), and ‘Inferring specific details’ (0.64). This result can be credited to the students’ learning background concerning reading; they were not used to working out the meaning of new words and deducing from a reading text based on their intuitiveness (Al-Qahtani, 2016; Alenezi, 2021).

In addition, the experimental group's superior performance on the reading self-efficacy scale after the intervention indicated that students’ mastery of integrating self-regulation strategies in their reading gave them a sense of self-confidence and autonomy; in other words, they started to trust their ability to read and apply strategies that are systematically used by good readers. Based on classroom observation, the researcher noticed, mainly in the independent practice phase, that students, through their practice of self-monitoring and self-evaluation strategies, tended to reflect on their own reading strengths and weaknesses in a trial to support the improvement of their reading comprehension. This may have helped their self-efficacy in becoming more aware of what is needed and how to read successfully as good readers. In this vein, Abdrahim (2020) argued that L2 learners who are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and possess self-awareness could "adjust their learning strategies to be adaptive in order to advance their learning" because they are aware of their metacognitive knowledge and are capable of transferring it to various contexts. For example, when students of the control group faced a confusing reading text or part of a text, they got disappointed quickly and directly started to ask for the teacher’s help. On the other hand, the experimental group students were better capable of utilizing appropriate self-regulation strategies to tackle such perplexity or difficulties.

Finally, the results of the current study disclosed a robust positive relationship between developing reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy among the experimental group students. This finding corresponds to the findings of other previous studies (e.g., Salehi & Khalaji, 2014; Tobing, 2013), which indicated that self-efficacy and reading comprehension are related and that gains in self-efficacy can positively improve reading comprehension.
Conclusion

The present study focused on investigating the impact of self-regulated strategy development on improving English majors’ reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy. The findings revealed that explicit instruction of SRL strategies enhanced students’ cognitive awareness of the mental processes that good readers practice as they engage in reading and provide them with specific personal (metacognitive) strategies they can utilize to reinforce and repair their understanding while reading various texts. Therefore, it is noteworthy to point out some pedagogical implications for reading comprehension: first, reading instructors need to be aware of SRL strategies and how they can integrate these strategies into students’ reading process by incorporating strategy-based instruction in their teaching and providing various supplemental activities to support students’ mastery of these strategies. Second, reading instructors also need to create a safe and encouraging learning context where students have no concerns about thinking aloud, inquiring, posing critical questions, and interacting in the reading class. Although this study has reached noteworthy findings, one limitation remains that researchers should address in future research investigations. This study was confined to investigating the impact of explicit strategy-based instruction of only metacognitive SRL strategies on enhancing Saudi female students’ reading comprehension skills and reading self-efficacy. Therefore, future research could investigate the usage of other SRL strategies in both male and female English majors.

About the authors

Safaa M. Abdelhalim- Professor of applied linguistics/ TESOL, College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University, and an international certified teacher trainer. Her areas of expertise include TESOL, EAL, CLIL, second language acquisition and assessment, computer-assisted language learning, teaching effectiveness and teacher education. She is an author of 18 research articles and three books in the field of applied linguistics. Her research interests lie in the areas of, L2 writing and reading, language assessment, use of corpus linguistics in language learning & teaching, and teacher cognition. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6995-4553

Ashwaq A. Alreshoud is a lecturer at College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University. She graduated with a bachelor’s degree in English language and its literature and a master’s degree in Applied Linguistics from Al-Imam Mohammad Ibin Saud Islamic University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh. Her research interest includes L2 learning strategies. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6266-0288

References


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**Appendices**

**Appendix A**

**Goal Tracking Worksheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before reading</th>
<th>During reading</th>
<th>After reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Set a goal for your reading?</td>
<td># Self-monitor your comprehension actively.</td>
<td># Summarize what you read</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| # Put a plan for reading the text. | # Organize the ideas (main, supporting) | # Discuss what you have understood |

Think about and describe the SR strategies you use and write your self-statement…
Saudi EFL Learners' Speaking Skills: Status, Challenges, and Solutions

Abdulbari Mahboob Ahmed Al-Hassaani
Department of English, College of Arts, University of Bisha, Bisha, Saudi Arabia
&
Department of English, College of Education, University of Aden, Aden, Yemen
Corresponding Author: barihasani9@gmail.com

Abdulkarim Fadhl Mahmood Qaid Al-Saalmi
Department of English, College of Education, Saber, University of Aden, Aden, Yemen.

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Abstract:
This study focused on Saudi female English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, second-year level, English Department, College of Arts, Bisha University. Most the learners are exposed to the English language at a late stage, which is one of the challenges they encounter. The main objective of this study was to identify the main challenges faced by the Saudi female EFL learners in English-speaking skills. Main question of this research was what are the Saudi EFL learners' main challenges in English-speaking skills in and outside the classroom? The significance of this study was to get a benefit both learners and teachers. This study contributed to finding solutions to the challenges encounter the Saudi EFL learners need enough time to practice English-speaking skills in the classroom and they should be motivated to speak English with anyone in and outside the classroom. The syllabus and teaching materials of the English-speaking skills courses need development to match the needs of the learners in their daily lives and to meet the demands of the labor market. The recommendations and solutions would help to tackle the current status and challenges in learning English-speaking skills.

Keywords: Bisha University, Challenges, EFL learners, Saudi female learners, Solutions, Speaking Skills

Introduction

This study was concerned Saudi EFL learners of English-speaking skills of the second-year level, female section, English Department, College of Arts, University of Bisha. Although, Saudi EFL learners learn English as a foreign language from class seven till they join the university, the Saudi EFL learners still face challenges in English-speaking skills when they try to speak English in the classroom. They lack motivation, encouragement, and enough practice. Fearing criticism for making mistakes and shyness inhibit the learners from speaking English. This factor affects the speaking fluency of Saudi EFL learners. When learners are afraid of mistakes, they are probably more hesitant, Al-Ghazali, (2019). Practicing phonological or grammatical features through a speaking performance can be self-initiated or done in pairs (Brown, 2007). Speaking English as a foreign language was much harder than speaking our mother tongue language due to its different complex rules.

The rationale of the study

This study would help understand the challenges and factors that hinder English-speaking skills' learning and teaching process at the University of Bisha. It would also help the teachers to improve the situation in teaching the English-Speaking Skills course. The present study would also raise the awareness of the Saudi EFL learners to master the English-speaking skills at the university level. This study will contribute to identifying the challenges encountered by Saudi EFL learners. This study will benefit both the learners, the teachers, and educationists.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the main challenges of the Saudi English as a foreign language (EFL) learners in English-speaking skills.
- To investigate the main reasons for the learners' low English-speaking skills.
- To investigate the adequacy and appropriateness of the current syllabi and teaching materials for English-speaking skills courses at Bisha University.
- To provide some recommendations and solutions that might help both teachers and learners to improve and develop learning the English-speaking skills at Bisha University.

Questions of the research:

1- What are Saudi EFL learners' main challenges in English-speaking skills in and outside the classroom?
2- What are the reasons for the Saudi EFL learners' low English-speaking skills?
3. How adequate and appropriate are the current syllabi and teaching materials for English-speaking Skills course at Bisha University?
4. What are the solutions and suggestions that can help the current situation to improve the Saudi EFL learner's English-speaking skills at Bisha University?

Literature Review

The Saudi EFL learners encounter challenges in English-speaking skills at the University of Bisha. For English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, speaking English is a crucial skill since it is essential for communicating verbally with others. Poor environments, lack of interest, and
lack of motivation are the primary factors behind learners' inability to speak English (Alhmadi, 2014; Ali, et al. 2019). Therefore, English-speaking skills need a good background.

Dewi, (2015) stated that English is used in every corner of the world to communicate with people from different backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures. Al Hosni, (2014) indicated that anxiety and unwillingness to participate in speaking skills lessons are the main barriers to practical English-speaking skills learning. Teachers of English at University should focus on speaking skills such as fluency and accuracy because learners should be accurate and fluent in learning English speaking skill. The English language teaching objectives are to improve the learners' comprehensive ability, especially oral expression, and motivate EFL learners to have adequate opportunities to use the foreign language fluently, Al-Tamimi, (2014). Saudi EFL learners are exposed to the English language at a late stage. English-speaking skills are considered one of the most challenging aspects of EFL learners in the Arab world. Many Saudi EFL learners found it difficult to speak English fluently. Classroom activities such as storytelling, speeches, and debates could alleviate the problem of poor oral skills. Saudi EFL Learners can practice English-speaking skills in the classroom using the learner-centered approach rather than a teacher-centered approach where they feel free to discuss and correct each other (Gathumbi & Masembe, 2005; Larasati, 2018; Bin-Hady, 2020). Saudi EFL learners will need the teacher's feedback while practicing English-speaking skills in the classroom.

The researchers, as university teachers, realized that motivation and practice are the most critical factors to improve the Saudi EFL learners in English-speaking skills. If the learners of English are well-motivated to practice different real-life situations in English-speaking skills, this way will improve their level of English-speaking skills. Motivation and practice are two sides of the same coin. Al-Hosni, (2014) observed that some learners are not motivated to communicate in English as they do not see a need to learn or speak English. Therefore, English language teachers should explain the significance of studying English-speaking skills to their learners.

English-speaking skill is an essential part of communicating with others for social interaction and other communication purposes. The need for good communication skills in English has grown worldwide, according to Richard, (2006). Ability to speak English is one of the essential skills in English due to its superior status. Thus, English teachers must prioritize English-speaking skills in the classroom. Therefore, teachers should adopt a communicative approach when teaching English-speaking skills in the classroom. English-speaking skills are vital for the Saudi EFL learners in and outside the classroom. In the communicative approach, language is essentially an instrument of communication. Brown, (2007) indicated that communicative language teaching is an approach to language teaching methodology that emphasizes authenticity, interaction, student-centered learning, task-based activities, and communication for the real world. Practical speaking skills create many benefits for communicating in both the targeted and mother tongue languages. The EFL learners had the experience of their mother tongue language. When they study English, they find many differences between the two languages. Therefore, they try consciously to learn the English language (Al-Sobhi & Preecce, 2018; Al-Ahdal, 2014).

**Communicative Language Teaching Materials and Syllabus**

Teaching materials intended to facilitate communicative language usage in communicative instructional systems. This teaching strategy will assist teachers and improve Saudi students' proficiency in interacting with others in English. According to Richards and Rodgers, (1986), three
materials are used: 1) Text-based materials. 2) Task-based. 3) Realia. Teachers of English speaking-speaking skills at the University of Bisha should provide a variety of authentic and communicative materials for teaching English-speaking skills to improve the level of their learners. The current English courses should focus on communicative English to meet learners' needs and achieve the desired teaching objectives of English-speaking skills.

Methods
This study used only one instrument/tool of the scientific research methods to gather data and information which was quantitative research method (Students' questionnaire). Collecting of data by using questionnaire has many advantages, according to Sarantakos, (1998). Few of these advantages are:
- Questionnaires produce quick results.
- They give greater assurance of anonymity.
- They also provide a more comprehensive look at the responses because researchers can reach respondents more rapidly than other research methods.

Participants
Participants in this study were female students from the English Department, second-year level, College of Arts, University of Bisha in Saudi Arabia. The total number of respondents was 50, and all were female.

Research Design
The researchers designed a questionnaire for the Saudi EFL female learners at the College of Arts, University of Bisha. Teachers specialized in ELT in the English Departments referred to the questionnaire before administering the tool to ensure validity. The questionnaire was distributed to the participants of this study during class time.

Results of the Study
The research tool used in this study was a quantitative scientific research method (students' questionnaire) for collecting data and information. The questionnaire was classified into three parts; the first part of the questionnaire was about general background knowledge of the learners and learners' main challenges in English-speaking skills, the second part of the questionnaire was about the reasons behind the Saudi EFL learners' challenges in English-speaking skills and learners' motivation to learn English. The third part of the questionnaire was about the exposure of the learners to the English language and the learners' opinion about the appropriateness of the syllabus and teaching materials for the English-speaking skills courses at Bisha University.

Table 1. Sex of the Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows the sex of the respondents who participated in this study. Fifty of the learners, 100% from the College of Arts at Bisha, were female. Statistical data indicated that all the participants of this study were female.

**Table 2. Learners Began Learning English in Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This item asked the participants when they began to learn English in schools. Two of the learners, 4%, answered they started learning English in class two, and no one opted for class one. Three of the learners, 6%, began to study English in class three, and three of the learners, 6%, began to learn English in class three. Two of the learners, 4%, began to learn English in class five, and forty of the learners, 80%, began to study English in class seven. The above table indicated that most of the learners in Saudi schools started to learn English at a late age, making it difficult to quickly handle courses in English in their College of Arts, Department of English, Bisha University.

**Table 3. Saudi Learners faced challenges in English-speaking skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Yes</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. No response</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This item asked the learners if they faced challenges in English-speaking skills. Forty-two of the learners, 84%, replied with yes, and only five of the learners, 10%, said they didn't find any problem with English-speaking skills. Three of the learners, 6%, didn't respond. The statistical data implied that most learners still face English-speaking skills problems due to their weak background knowledge of English.

**Table 4. When the learners speak English in and outside the classroom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The learners were asked if they feel afraid and anxious about making mistakes when speaking English in and outside the classroom. Twenty-six of the learners, 52%, strongly agreed that they felt frightened and anxious when speaking English, and fourteen of them, 28%, agreed. Four of the learners, 8%, didn't respond, and four, 8%, disagreed. Only two of the learners, 4%, disagreed on this item strongly. It indicated that there is no encouragement for the learners from the teachers' side to practice English-speaking skills in simple different situations, whatever mistakes they can make.

Table 5. *The practice of the learners in English-speaking skills classes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. No</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. No response</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We asked the learners if their teachers give them enough practice and exercises in English-speaking skills in the classroom. Five of the learners, 10%, replied yes, and forty of them, 80%, answered no. Only ten of the learners, 20%, answered yes, and thirty-five of the learners, 70%, replied no. Only five of the learners, 10%, didn't respond. These responses implied that most learners didn't practice enough in English-speaking skills classes. Teachers should control the class time for the sake of the learners to improve their English-speaking skills practice.

Table 6. *The Motivation of the Learners to Speak English*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. No</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. No response</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The learners were asked if their teachers motivate and encourage them to speak English in the classroom and anywhere. Ten of the participants, 20%, said yes, and thirty-five of them, 70%, said no. Only five of the learners, 10%, did not reply. It implied that students were sometimes motivated by English-speaking skills teachers. Inspiration and encouragement will allow the learners to break the wall of anxiety and fright.

Table 7. *The Class Time Allotted in practicing English-speaking Skills.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Enough</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Not enough</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Neutral</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Rather enough</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this item, the learners were asked their opinion about the sufficiency of the class time allotted in practicing English-speaking skills. Five of the learners, 10%, said that the class time allotted for practicing English-speaking skill was enough, but thirty-six of them, 72%, said it was not enough. Three of the learners, 6%, were neutral and six of them, 12%, said it was enough. This implied that the class time was insufficient for practicing English-speaking skills because most learners negatively replied. It also meant that the teachers rushed in their teaching the lessons according to the week’s study plan because they wanted to finish the syllabus of the course English-speaking skills without giving the learners enough practice in English-speaking skills.

Table 8. *The Teaching Methodology Employed by the Teacher*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this item, the learners asked if the teaching methodology employed by the teacher of English-speaking skills were learner-centered. Only two of the learners, 4%, strongly agreed that the teaching method was learner-centered, and three of them, 6%, agreed that the teaching method was learner-centered. Five of the learners, 10%, remained with no opinion, fifteen of the learners, 30%, disagreed that the teaching method employed by the teacher was learner-centered, and twenty-five of them, 50%, strongly disagreed that the teaching method used in teaching the English-speaking skills was learner-centered. These responses implied that the teaching methodology employed by the teacher of the English-speaking skills course was not learner-centered, but it was teacher-centered.

Table 9. *Learners’ Opinion About the Topics for the English-speaking Skills*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this item, learners were asked about the appropriateness of the topics included in English-speaking skills syllabus. Fifteen of the learners, 30%, strongly agreed that the issues were appropriate, and another fifteen of them, 30%, decided that issues were appropriate. Two of the
learners, 4%, didn't answer. In contrast, ten of them, 20%, disagreed that the topics in the syllabus of this course were appropriate, and eight of them, 16%, strongly disagreed that issues were appropriate. These responses implied that the topics were rather good and needed some additions and changes for development.

Table 10. Learners' opinion About the Materials in Teaching English-speaking Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The learners were asked if the materials in teaching the English-speaking skills course were challenging. Eighteen of the learners, 36%, strongly agreed that the available materials were challenging, and thirteen of them, 26%, agreed that the available materials were challenging. Four of the learners, 8%, didn't give their opinion, while eight of the learners, 16%, disagreed that the available materials were challenging, and seven of them, 14%, strongly disagreed that the available materials were challenging. This statistical data revealed that most learners replied that the available materials in teaching English-speaking skills were challenging.

Table 11. The Motivating and Communicative Teaching Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this item, the learners were asked about their opinions, and if the teaching materials in teaching English-speaking skills were motivating and communicative. Nine of the learners, 18%, strongly agreed that the teaching materials in teaching English-speaking skills were motivating and communicative. Eight of the learners, 16%, decided that issues were motivating and communicative. In contrast, two of them, 4%, did not answer. Sixteen of the learners, 32%, disagreed that the teaching materials in teaching English-speaking skills were motivating and communicative.

Fifteen of the learners, 30%, strongly disagreed that the teaching materials in teaching English-speaking skills were motivating and communicative. This statistical data indicated that most of the learners didn't agree that the teaching materials in teaching English-speaking skills were motivating and communicative. This implied that the teaching materials of teaching English-speaking skills need supplementary materials to go with the needs of the Saudi EFL learners.
Findings of the Study
1. The statistical data showed that most of the learners started to study English from class seven of their schooling, i.e., at a late stage before joining the university. It affected their level of English-speaking skills.
2. The Saudi female EFL learners at their second-year level encountered challenges in studying English-speaking skills because of their limited background knowledge in English.
3. Most of the teaching classes of English-speaking skills were teacher-centered rather than student-centered. Besides, the class time allotted for teaching English-speaking skills was not enough to give the Saudi EFL learners the chance to communicate in English. And to improve their level of English-speaking skills.
4. Some of the current syllabus topics and teaching materials were not appropriate to meet the needs of the EFL learners and match their needs in their daily lives in the labor market.
5. The absence of enough practice, motivation, and encouragement to the learners of English-speaking skills from the teachers' side made the Saudi EFL learners feel anxious and afraid of making mistakes when they tried to speak English in and outside the classroom.

Conclusion
The researchers, as university teachers, recognized that the Saudi EFL learners need to have enough time to practice English-speaking skills in different status of real-life situations in and outside the classroom. The English-speaking skills should teach Saudi female EFL learners using a communicative language approach (CLT). Using communicative authentic teaching materials to teach English-speaking skills will benefit Saudi EFL learners who have positive attitudes toward studying English skills. Thus, teachers of English-speaking skills should change their teaching method from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered approach in teaching English-speaking skills at the University of Bisha. The teaching materials and syllabus topics on English-speaking skills should be motivating, communicative, authentic, and interactive. The solutions mentioned above tackle the current challenges in teaching and learning English-speaking skills encountered by Saudi female EFL learners in the College of Arts, English Department, Bisha University.

Recommendations and Solutions
1. Teaching English should be taught at early stages in Saudi schools. Learning English at the beginning of their primary education will enable them to speak it as early as possible.
2. The Saudi EFL learners of English-speaking skills should be motivated and encouraged positively.
3. Enough class time should be allotted for the learners of English-speaking skills to better practice the English language in the classroom.
4. Teaching English-speaking skills should be a student-centered approach in the classroom rather than a teacher-centered approach. The student-centered approach will give the Saudi EFL learners a positive attitude towards learning English-speaking skills and understanding its strategies. On the other hand, this approach will enable Saudi female EFL learners to break the wall of anxiety and fear of making mistakes when speaking and communicating in English.
5. The teachers of English-speaking skills courses should develop the teaching materials to reach the level of realistic situations, authentic materials, and communicative topics in teaching English-speaking skills at Bisha University.
About the Authors

Dr. Abdulbari Mahboob Ahmed Al-Hassaani is a Ph.D. holder. He graduated from India, in 2009. He is an assistant professor of applied linguistics, English Department, Aden University. He is currently teaching at English Department, College of Arts, University of Bisha, Saudi Arabia. DOI. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0017-4436

Dr. Abdukarim Fadhil Mahmood Al-saalmi is a PhD holder, graduated from India, in 2008. He is an assistant professor in methods of teaching, English Department, Aden University. He is currently working at Aden University. He is also a vice dean for the academic affairs, Community college in Yemen. DOI. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4204-7176

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Jeffrey Dawala Wilang
School of Foreign Languages, Institute of Social Technology
Suranaree University of Technology
Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand
Email: wilang@g.sut.ac.th

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Abstract
Studies on positive emotions in language learning have increased over the years. However, gratitude, a moral virtue, which may have a novel effect in learning a foreign language, remains underexplored in applied linguistics. This paper aims to know the antecedents of gratitude and its constructs in English as a foreign language context. Nineteen antecedents of gratitude were generated to create a survey questionnaire called Foreign Language Gratitude Scale, a 4-point Likert rating scale. An open-ended question was also added to gain qualitative data. Convenience sampling was used to collect data from 240 undergraduate students. Descriptive statistics results showed that the participants were very grateful in all situations in the survey, specifically for their improved outputs and the corrections initiated by their teachers. Further, principal component analysis was used to explore the underlying dimensions of gratitude. Two factors were elicited – positive reinforcement and language practice. The first factor includes the following grateful situations: encouraging students to do better, appreciating students’ output, correcting students’ mistakes, using media resources in learning, sharing practical knowledge, providing examples and practices, treating students equally, encouraging language activities, and managing classroom effectively. The grateful situations in the second factor are having fluent English speakers, doing productive activities, providing opportunities, sharing ideas, and having a better output. Other factors coded from the qualitative data include promoting collaborative work, gaining comprehension and knowledge, language success, encouraging productive activities, the teacher acts, and designing out-of-class activities. Finally, implications of results and suggestions for future studies were presented.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language, Foreign Language Gratitude Scale, gratitude, Principal Component Analysis

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Introduction

A class of students in an English foundation course was asked orally to identify persons, agents, or situations that they are grateful, thankful for, or appreciative of when studying a foreign language. Some of the answers identified persons including the teacher, friends, and classmates; technology such as smartphones, projectors, and Google; traits like kindness, helpful, open-minded, friendly, and positive attitude; foreign language class including productive activities, motivating tasks, challenging assignments, collaborative activities, independent learning tasks and many more. It appears that as a foreign language learner, there is so much to be grateful for in English language learning.

In life, the benefits of gratitude have been known as a reinforcer of prosocial behaviors (see Emmons & McCullough, 2004; Froh, Sefick & Emmons, 2007; Wangwang, 2015), and it brings higher life satisfaction and well-being (Ackerman, 2022; Adler, 2002; Adler & Fagley, 2005). In academia, practicing gratitude fostered closer teacher-student relationships (Howells, 2004; Unsworth, Turner, Williams & Piccin-Houle, 2010) and resulted in higher motivation, engagement, and achievement (King & Datu, 2018).

As gratitude may have overwhelming benefits in language education, understanding its constructs in foreign language learning (herein, English) may have implications for language acquisition or learning among students in EFL and ESL speaking contexts. An online search of gratitude and gratitude-related words or phrases such as (1) “gratitude,” (2) “gratitude in learning,” (3) “gratitude in language learning,” and (4) “gratitude in foreign language learning,” yielded the following results. The first word in Google Scholar generated more than a million articles, eleven articles for the second, and zero for both third and fourth keywords and phrases. In a more specific database, ScienceDirect, the first keyword yielded 93,412 entries, seven for the second, and none for both third and fourth vital phrases. Gratitude, per se, remains underexplored in applied linguistics. Perhaps, it is crucial to know the constructs of gratitude in foreign language learning as it may spiral learner’s well-being and overcome negative emotions such as language anxiety, lack of engagement, and demotivation resulting in learner’s well-being. Accordingly, gratitude bring happiness (Emmons, 2010), reduces anxiety (Wood, Froh & Geraghty, 2009), and makes us more resilient (Kashdan, Uswatte & Julian, 2006).

The present investigation aimed to explore gratitude among students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Two study objectives were sought – to know the antecedents of gratitude in foreign language learning and explore its underlying constructs. Therefore, the following research questions are sought - (1) What are the antecedents or specific situations of gratitude in foreign language learning? To what extent do learners feel grateful? (2) What are the underlying dimensions of gratitude in foreign language learning?

Literature Review

Psychology of Well-being

Gratitude, as an emotion, is a response from a ‘moral agent’ either a person or ‘non-human sources’ (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Froh, Sefick & Emmons, 2008). In the conceptualization of gratitude as an affective trait, McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2002) espoused the
‘generalized tendency’ of a beneficiary (for example, in the classroom context, the student) to express gratitude to the benefactor (the teacher). Accordingly, the act of grateful disposition involves two steps – encouraging a positive outcome and attributing it to an external source (Weiner, 1986). Thus, a less grateful person may recognize fewer people, fewer aspects of life, and less grateful experiences. For example, in the foreign language classroom, it could be hypothesized that a grateful language learner may recognize teachers, peers, and activities as helpful toward language acquisition, language achievement, or success. In fact, in Oxford’s framework of EMPATHICS, she hypothesized that learners with high well-being express their gratefulness to educators, classmates, family, friends, among others (Oxford, 2018). The EMPATHICS, which include nine dimensions, stands for the following: E for emotion and empathy; M for meaning and motivation; P for perseverance, including resilience, hope, and optimism; A for agency and autonomy; T for time; H for hardiness and habits of mind; I for intelligences; C for character strengths; and S for self-factors (self-efficacy, self-concept, self-esteem, self-verification). Oxford hypothesized, for example, that learners with high well-being persevere in their language studies.

To flourish in life, Seligman (2011) developed the concept of PERMA – positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishments. Related to this, Fredrickson (2013) introduced the ‘broaden-and-build’ hypothesis arguing that expressing positive emotions can increase language learners’ well-being. In effect, the more grateful learners become, the more they feel better in language learning. In fact, negative emotions, for example, language anxiety, have had adverse effects on confidence in language learning (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Liu, 2012; Wu, 2011).

Since gratitude promotes life’s well-being, several researchers have indicated the need to develop a more precise and more reliable measurement (Datu & King, 2018; Renshaw & Olinger, 2016). In conceptualizing gratitude, McCullough et al. (2002) used self-report and informant reports. As a result, a rating scale, GQ-6 (Gratitude Questionnaire), was developed and tested. It consists of six items with a 7-point scale, including “I have so much in life to be thankful for,” “I am grateful to a wide variety of people,” “If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list,” among others. However, valid, it might be enough to cover specific grateful situations in the foreign language classroom as it covers generalized situations such as being grateful in life, being grateful for things or people, and timeliness of being grateful.

Eight aspects of appreciation were included in Adler and Fagley’s (2005) 57-item Appreciation Scale, a 7-point rating scale. It includes “Have” focus (10 items, i.e., “I count my blessings for what I have in this world”), Awe (six items, e.g., “I reflect on how lucky I am to be alive”), Ritual (six items, i.e., “I give thanks for something at least once a day”), Present Moment (seven items, e.g., “I enjoy the little things around me like the trees, the wind, the animals, sounds, light, etcetera”), Self/Social Comparison (5 items, i.e., “When I see someone less fortunate than myself, I realize how lucky I am”), Gratitude (10 items, e.g., “I say please and thank you”), Loss/Adversity (eight items, i.e., “Thinking about dying reminds me to live every day to the fullest”), and Interpersonal (five items, e.g., “I remind myself to appreciate my family”). Like GQ-6, the items cover wide-ranging topics related to life in general and not specific to foreign language learning.
In another measurement, Morgan et al. (2017) proposed four components in their Multi-Component Gratitude Measure (MCGM). Accordingly, it includes conceptions of gratitude, grateful emotions, attitudes toward gratitude, and gratitude-related behaviors. Unfortunately, there has been no foreign language context-specific gratitude measurement to date. Furthermore, given that gratitude in the foreign language context is new, it is of utmost importance to consider students’ insights in creating an acceptable measure of gratitude.

**Gratitude in Education**

Gratitude and its relationships were quantitatively and qualitatively explored. Assessing teachers’ gratitude and teacher effectiveness and other variables, Augustine, John and Francis (2017) used a six-item self-report gratitude scale developed by McCullough and colleagues (2002). Among the hypothesis confirmed were as follows: grateful teachers improve their teaching, prepare well before teaching, and strive to know more knowledge of the subject, have positive teacher characteristics, and have better interpersonal relations. The teacher could be an essential source of gratitude in the classroom.

Correlational studies have been done to look at the effect of gratitude on learning. And several studies were found indicating the positive impact of gratitude. For example, in life, McCullough, Emmons and Tsang (2002) inferred that gratitude has a positive effect on affect, well-being, prosocial behaviors, spiritual state, and the big five personality traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism. In education, gratitude was reported to increase positive affect and improved working relationships (Unsworth et al., 2010); enhanced teacher-student relationships, students and teacher well-being as well as teacher-parent relationships (Howells, 2004); improved affective traits in learning (King & Datu, 2018; Yagciouglu, 2017); higher teacher efficacy (Augustine, John & Francis, 2017); and, increased student academic performance (King & Datu, 2018).

Froh et al. (2008) attempted to determine the relationship between gratitude and behavior and the subjective well-being of an early adolescent population. They reported positive outcomes for children who have so much to be thankful for, including going to school, enjoying school, finding a school enjoyable, feeling good at school, and believing in the learning process. In their experiment, gratitude situations, which were provoked intentionally, resulted in positive outcomes. In the foreign language learning process, gratitude could likely have positive outcomes, such as good grades and good attendance. As the topic is under research in applied linguistics, it is imperative to know the sources of gratitude and then, for example, to explore its correlates with other language variables such as anxiety, motivation, and language performance, among others.

Among Turkish students, Yagciouglu (2017) claimed that students who are appreciative of themselves (for studying) and their teachers (for their efforts) while learning have a higher motivation than other students. Similar to Howells, students’ loved attending the activities’ and ‘enjoyed attending class hours.’ Further, students thought that tasks were beneficial. Indeed, Peterson and Seligman (2004) asserted that being appreciative of oneself is beneficial. In another study, King and Datu (2018) found a positive association between gratitude and autonomous motivation, gratitude and engagement, and gratitude and achievement. It would be interesting to
conceptualize gratitude in foreign language education and further explore its relationships with other language learning variables such as language anxiety, motivation, and enjoyment. Although the above variables are not included in the present study, they show how further gratitude could be studied.

Using a case study, Howells (2004) explored the effects of gratitude in student-teacher relationships. In classes where the teacher practices gratitude, students have improved attendance, a higher engagement level, enhanced relationships, and enhanced well-being. In the same vein, teachers reported better well-being, for example, a better rapport with their students. Furthermore, the positive effects of gratitude extend to the community, where the teachers get more connected with parents. Overall, positivity in the learning environment is increased. Howells implores researchers to expand gratitude’s conceptual framework in specific contexts, such as foreign language learning or other fields of study, such as applied linguistics. Thus, this paper aims to identify and measure the antecedents or grateful situations and to know the factors of gratitude in foreign language learning.

Recently, an undertaking to recognize positive psychology in language education has gained special attention among notable scholars, including Peter MacIntyre, Tammy Gregersen, Sarah Mercer, Jean-Marc Dewaele, and Rebecca Oxford. For example, Mercer, MacIntyre, Gregersen, and Talbot (2018) proposed combining two disciplines – positive psychology and language education as Positive Language Education (PLE). Accordingly, the PLE framework, which applies to diverse cultural and linguistic contexts, would enhance the learners’ well-being alongside developing their linguistic skills. However, though positive psychology is gaining traction in applied linguistics research (Dewaele, Chen, Padilla & Lake, 2019), gratitude remains underexplored in English as a foreign language context to date.

**Methods**

Mixed methods were used to provide numerical and qualitative data to explore the construct of the topic at hand. Since gratitude is in its infancy in applied linguistics, knowing students’ insights about gratitude were elicited in the pilot study. These insights were then collated and coded to generate items for a survey questionnaire used in the final study to measure how grateful learners are in English language learning and explore its underlying factors.

**The Pilot Study**

Thirty students ($n=30$) from English foundation courses voluntarily participated in generating initial items for a survey questionnaire. At this stage, an open-ended questionnaire was distributed to the students. They were told to write as many specific situations as possible for being appreciative, grateful, or thankful in their current English class related to language learning. The main question was – *In your recent English language class, could you identify specific situations that you are grateful or thankful for?*

The insights from the students were coded accordingly. In total, there were 228 statements generated (see Table one below). First, the initial list was recoded based on antecedents to find similar meanings and delete ambiguous statements. Afterward, the coding yielded 84 specific codes.
A list containing 84 codes was resubmitted to the participants to identify common antecedents of gratitude in foreign language learning. Only 27 specific codes received 100 percent agreement. It was then submitted to two raters to assess specific codes with similar meanings for deletion. In the end, only 19 specific codes of antecedents were included as proposed items to answer the first question and create an instrument to measure gratitude in foreign language learning (see Results section, Table three).

Table 1. Antecedents of grateful situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample antecedents of grateful situations</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides an opportunity to say something knowing that I am not good</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining topics that I don’t understand</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning communication skills</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not asking questions during my presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to different accents</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursuing to understand the hard thing</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being practical in real-life situations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting me anything I wanted to learn</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing a comfortable learning space</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing convenient learning</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing information quickly</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving more time to find answers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requiring students to study a foundation course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling foods while hungry because of language learning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing English language skills every day</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting teachers who can teach well</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing very good language learning resources</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating unknown words</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggesting things on how to improve my English</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a conducive learning environment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing grammar points</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing writing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing suitable lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing to post ‘my’ English</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching answers instantly</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing on my everyday</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing the opportunity to practice in real-life situations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking English in the classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing a thesis writing course in English</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching information online</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing listening skill</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants

Using convenience sampling, two hundred forty students \((n=240)\) from various universities in Thailand partook in the online survey questionnaire from April to August 2020.

Data Collection Instruments

The newly created Foreign Language Gratitude Scale (FLGS) was distributed. It consists of 19 antecedents and a 4-point Likert rating scale to know the respondents' position. The scores
were interpreted in Table two (see below). At the end of the survey, an open-ended question was asked about the situations they feel grateful or appreciative for in the English language class. They were told to identify agents and antecedents as many as possible.

Table 2. Scores and interpretations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.00 – 1.75</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.76 – 2.50</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.51 – 3.25</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.26 – 4.00</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics was used to compute the means of scores, standard deviations, and percentages of agreements or disagreements. Cronbach Alpha was utilized to calculate reliability. Moreover, principal component analysis and coding of qualitative data were utilized to know the factors of gratitude.

**Findings and Discussion**

This section answers questions one and two, and their implications are discussed afterward.

**Antecedents of Gratitude in EFL Context**

To answer question one, Table three shows two interesting findings: (1) there are 19 antecedents or grateful situations in learning English as a foreign language, and (2) the participants feel very grateful as the 19 antecedents received strong agreements from the participants. The results highlight item 10 receiving the highest mean score of 3.59, SD=0.54, of which students would be grateful when their output becomes better in the foreign language class. Also, the second-highest item was item 3, having M=3.58, of which the students are grateful when their mistakes or errors are corrected in the foreign language class.

A reliability test was conducted to establish the reliability of FLGS. As a result, Cronbach Alpha was computed at 0.94, a highly acceptable measurement scale.

Table 3. Foreign Language Gratitude Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Antecedent of gratitude</th>
<th>M, SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I would be thankful when my foreign language output is appreciated.</td>
<td>3.39, 0.54</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I would be appreciative of open-mindedness in the foreign language class.</td>
<td>3.45, 0.50</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I would be grateful if my mistakes or errors were corrected in the foreign language class.</td>
<td>3.58, 0.51</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I would be thankful when foreign language activities are encouraging.</td>
<td>3.48, 0.52</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I would be grateful when I am encouraged to do better in a foreign language class.</td>
<td>3.51, 0.51</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>When comprehension is one of the goals of the language lesson, I am thankful for it.</td>
<td>3.48, 0.56</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I would be grateful when I experience a positive impact in my foreign language class.</td>
<td>3.42, 0.56</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gratitude in Foreign Language Learning

Dimensions of Gratitude in Foreign Language Learning

To know the factors of gratitude, the principal component analysis was used. To establish the reliability of factors, KMO and Bartlett’s Test (refer to Table four) was computed at .96, which means superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). It means that the patterns of item correlations were compact and elicited two distinctive and reliable factors (Field, 2005).

Table 4. KMO and Bartlett’s test

| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy | .961 |
| Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity | 2715.747 |
| Approx. Chi-Square | 171 |
| df | .000 |

To answer question two, two factors of gratitude in foreign language learning were deduced, including positive reinforcement and language practice (refer to Table five). The extracted factors accounted for 57.54% of the variance.

The first factor explains 30.96% of the variance, having eleven items with positive loadings of 0.50 and above. It contains specific grateful situations such as students are encouraged to do better, appreciation of their output, their mistakes are corrected, media resources are used in learning, practical knowledge is shared, examples and practices are provided, equal treatment, encouraging language activities, and effective classroom management.

The second factor accounts for 26.58% of the variance and received loadings of 0.50 and above from eight items. It includes grateful situations where fluent English speakers are...
appreciated, productive activities and opportunities are provided, ideas are shared, and better output, among others.

Table 5. *Principal component analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive reinforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am encouraged to do better</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mistakes or errors are corrected</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media resources are used</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical knowledge is shared</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples are provided</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All are treated equally</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language activities are encouraging</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language practice is provided</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class is managed effectively</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My output is appreciated</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-mindedness in the class</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having students who speak fluent English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive language activities are done</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced a positive impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice is provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities are provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension is one of the goals of the language lesson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas are shared</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My output becomes better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another six factors were deduced from an open-ended question in the survey questionnaire (see Table six). These factors include promoting collaborative work, gaining comprehension and knowledge, encouraging out-of-class activities, the teacher acts, doing productive activities, and language success. Sample antecedents of grateful situations were also elicited and were shown in the table below. Notably, the teacher was mentioned as one of the agents of gratitude in the classroom.

Table 6. *Other factors of gratitude*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Antecedents of grateful situations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative work</td>
<td>(1) Doing activities with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Helping friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) Doing activities with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4) Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5) Have fun in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension and knowledge</td>
<td>(6) People understand me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7) Understanding English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(8) Get some knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9) Can listen to my friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of-class activities</td>
<td>(10) Recording video clips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(11) No homework is given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher acts</td>
<td>(12) Teacher’s kindness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(13) Teacher cares for the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14) Teacher praise my language ability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gratitude in Foreign Language Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Productive activities</th>
<th>(15) Can speak English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(16) Not afraid of making mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17) Teacher dares students to speak English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18) Speaks better English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19) Using English to talk to a foreigner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20) Being able to tell a story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21) Being able to converse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(22) Using English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(23) Able to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(24) Able to exchange ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(25) Speaking with the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(26) Presenting in front of the classroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Language success       | (27) Passing the exam |

Based on the results, a greater understanding has been gained in the exploratory study of gratitude in the foreign language context. Therefore, the antecedents, factors of gratitude in foreign language learning, and agents of gratitude are of particular importance.

The antecedents offer essential insights into how gratitude can be promoted in English language learning and understand the construct of gratitude in the EFL context. As earlier investigations indicated that gratitude increases prosocial behaviors in life, promotes motivation, enhances relationships, among others (see Ackerman, 2022; Augustine et al., 2017; Froh et al., 2008; Howells, 2004; King & Datu, 2018; Wangwang, 2015), the list of antecedents could lead to improve language learning. This is evident with the two factors elicited in the factor analysis, including positive reinforcement and language practice. Through positive reinforcement, learners may become more motivated and interested in learning English. Moreover, the students' speaking skills may improve significantly by providing language practice. The two factors are related to the results of the coded qualitative data, for example, productive activities. With the constructs found in this study, gratitude can be defined as the state of being thankful, grateful, or appreciative in learning a foreign language (herein, English), including but not limited to the antecedents related to positive reinforcement and language practice.

In the present context of the study, the results indicated high levels of gratitude among the participants. This could be explained by the cultural and religious background of the Thais. As gratitude is embedded in the Thai education system and religious places (Wangwang, 2015), Thais are expected to reciprocate pleasant emotional experiences with gratitude. The antecedents list could then be used to promote positive language learning experiences enhancing well-being in language learning but not necessarily on better language performance.

The responses in the open questionnaire highlighted teachers, friends, as well as activities as agents of gratitude in the foreign language learning context. This fits with the conceptualization of ‘moral agents’ as persons and non-human sources (see Emmons & MuCullough, 2003; Forh, Sefick & Emmons, 2008). Such finding is essential to note as previous studies confirmed that being grateful, thankful, or appreciative enhances academic-related processes (Howells, 2015; Froh et al., 2008). Future studies would be interesting to explore its relationships with other language learning variables. Like in positive psychology, teachers play crucial roles (as a mentor, a leader, a designer, and an adviser) to promote positive emotions and how gratitude is provoked in the
language learning process. Since teachers play a significant role in students’ academic lives, promoting gratitude could positively impact teachers themselves, students, activities, the learning atmosphere, positive emotions, and relationships (see Augustine et al., 2017; Howells, 2004; King & King & Datu, 2018). It would be essential to explore the effects of gratitude as evoked by the teacher in the foreign language classroom, for instance, motivation and or demotivation.

**Implications for Language Teaching**

Promoting gratitude in teaching a foreign language (e.g., English) has potential positive impacts on the language learning process. As an agent of gratitude, teachers may consider the list of gratitude antecedents to serve as guidelines on how they can provoke learners’ gratitude. For instance, teachers may need to praise students’ work (to provoke self-appreciation), promote collaborative activities (to share or brainstorm ideas), and work in pairs (to encourage peer feedback), among others.

Though students tend to be grateful for error corrections, teachers must carefully consider how corrections should be given. In Asian culture, losing face could lead to negative language learning experiences, resulting in anxiety episodes and demotivation. Teachers may find the ‘right’ time and ways to correct errors when giving feedback. Instead of face-to-face in-class feedback, the teacher may opt for individual sessions and focus on dealing with mistakes.

**Future Research Directions**

Future research may consider FLGS, a survey questionnaire designed to measure gratitude in foreign language learning contexts. The result of the reliability test showed a highly reliable instrument. However, succeeding research can explore the underlying constructs in other contexts. Currently, FLGS is the only measure to offer insights concerning the conceptual understanding of gratitude in foreign language learning.

Unlike previous studies in psychology and education, where gratitude has been established to promote well-being in life, the effects of gratitude in language learning can be explored in future studies. Thus, it would be possible for future research to establish directional or bidirectional relationships between gratitude and language performance, gratitude and language learning behaviors, gratitude and language learning strategies, gratitude, and metacognitive strategies, among others. In addition, future research could also explore the depth of antecedents by considering qualitative-driven frameworks.

**Conclusion**

This study aimed to (1) know the antecedents of gratitude in the foreign language classroom and (2) know the factors of grateful situations. In this exploratory study, 19 antecedents were used to create FLGS, and various factors of grateful situations were elicited. The underlying constructs of gratitude were known, such as positive reinforcement and language practice. Other grateful situations were also deduced. As gratitude may have potential benefits for foreign language learning, future studies may continue to explore this ‘moral’ construct and its effects on other emotions in language learning, language achievement or success, among others.

**About the Author**

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Jeffrey Dawala Wilang is an Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Foreign Languages, Institute of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology, Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand. His research interests are emotions in language learning, English Medium Instruction, and ELF.ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6322-8799

References


Appendix A
Foreign Language Gratitude Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Antecedent of gratitude</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I would be thankful when my foreign language output is appreciated.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I would be appreciative of open-mindedness in the foreign language class.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I would be grateful if my mistakes or errors were corrected in the foreign language class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I would be thankful when foreign language activities are encouraging.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I would be grateful when I am encouraged to do better in a foreign language class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>When comprehension is one of the goals of the language lesson, I am thankful for it.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I would be grateful when I experienced a positive impact in my foreign language class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I am appreciative of having students who speak fluent English in the language class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>When productive language activities are done in a foreign language class, I am thankful for them.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I would be grateful when my output improves in a foreign language class.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I would be thankful when the foreign language class is managed effectively.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I would be appreciative of language practice in the foreign language class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I would be thankful when advice is provided in a foreign language class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I would be appreciative of the examples provided in the foreign language class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I would be grateful when foreign language learning opportunities are provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I would be thankful when ideas are shared in a foreign language class.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I would be appreciative of the practical knowledge shared in the foreign language class.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I would be grateful when all are treated equally in the foreign language class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I would be thankful when media resources are used in a foreign language class.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Pulling-Strings: Narratives of Conflicting Identities from Saudi Novice English Language Professors

Miriam Alkubaidi
English Language Institute
King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia
Email: malkubaidi@kau.edu.sa

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Abstract
The present study explores the struggle led by academic novice English language professors against a robust hierarchical administrative system in a Saudi university. The study adopts a qualitative narrative approach. Data were collected in the form of narratives through interviews with six assistant professors who have availed of the King Abdullah Scholarship Program and recently returned to Saudi Arabia. Grounded theory was applied to analyze the data. Thematic analysis was performed to examine the data. The study results showed that the participants claimed that their relationships with colleagues were weak. They shared no interest and are different in sub-majors. Thus, participants found themselves isolated and disconnected. The study concludes that the views of Saudi academics need to be considered. In contrast, the university as an organization needs to be reshaped and restudied to meet the needs of its academic staff. The study's significance lies in filling the literature gap about how the Saudi professors perceive their identity after returning home and how they deal with the administrative challenges to cope with their working environment.

Keywords: academic identity, administrative challenges, English language professors, higher education, novice, Saudi university

Introduction

The Higher Education (HE) system of Saudi Arabia is one of the best-funded systems for developments in the Gulf Arab states (Koch, 2014). It has witnessed rapid changes in policy structure, and several universities have been founded around the country (Alamri, 2011). For instance, the government had only eight public universities in 2010, which rose to 25 universities in 2015 and 30 privately-owned universities (Abubakar et al., 2016). It also invested extensive funding and efforts toward internationalization, one of which included sending its staff abroad. In 2012-13 about 200,000 Saudi students were sent abroad to continue their higher education (Ahmed, 2015). The Ministry of Higher Education monitors and directs policies and practices adopted by different Saudi Arabian universities (Alamri, 2011). Each university's higher administrative council is responsible for hiring staff, devising policies, allocating funds, setting curricula, and supervising academic and administrative activities (Alkhazim, 2003). Therefore, the universities are being transformed to have more centralized administrations.

Under such conditions, there is a significant lack of information about the faculty member and administrative body regarding teachers’ expectations and practices (Alzuman, 2015). Therefore, the present study verifies this assumption, reviews the different insights, and seeks information on alternate stances. It further aims to examine the coping strategies used by Saudi English language professors that affect their experience and academic identities. It also intends to indicate the role of six Saudi English language professors' as they adapt to their Saudi educational settings. It highlights their experience and the problems they encountered in Saudi higher education.

There is a gap in the current literature about how Saudi professors perceive their identity after returning home, how their university received them upon their return to Saudi Arabia, and how they deal with administrative challenges to cope with their working environment. To address this gap and answer the above questions, the study used academic identity to understand the strategies used by the Saudi professors to cope with the higher education context. Firstly, academic identity is elaborated, and the conception of coping strategies within a teaching context is explained. According to Norton (1997), identity refers to individuals' understanding of the surrounding world and knowing their potential for the future. In this study, our participants are a group of Saudi professors who experienced an academic identity shift by being individuals who spent time overseas. This may have impacted how they perceive their identity, potential, future possibilities, and coping with their working environment (Norton, 1997).

Moreover, it is evident in the literature that teachers drawback to their beliefs, needs, and preferences to build their paths (Mora, Trejo & Roux, 2014). Therefore, the study looks at how the values and beliefs that constitute their academic identity inform how they cope with the challenges and complexities found in their working environment. It is believed that the context and the way policies are constructed within any university structure would heavily influence academics' identity, relationships with colleagues, and the way they position themselves in such a context (Clegg, 2008). It became apparent that with a shift in higher education towards new structured practices such as managerial (Laiho et al., 2020), there may be a change in the way teaching staff to construct paths and strategies to adjust to these complex changes that may cause tension between their held beliefs and values and working environment demands (Arvaja, 2018).
The rapid and dynamic changes that are taking place in HE is bringing significant strains on how academics perceive themselves (Pick et al., 2017). For example, in the Saudi higher education sector, there is a strong movement in favor of the managerial structure of higher education practices to comply with the demands of accreditation and emphasize high-quality education (Darandari & Cardew, 2013), which means that there would be a violent escalation in the workload of Saudi teaching staff (Allui & Sahni, 2016) to ensure high levels of quality and accountability.

Furthermore, the education policies in Saudi Arabia are described as being top-down, and the institution-power is predominant, where a rigid hierarchy exists in the form of the policies and mandate norms (Elyas, 2011). Most of the literature discussed was more in personal context but did not explain how individuals perceive the influence of the context on their actions and thoughts (Beijaard et al., 2004). According to the authors, studying academic identity might promote an understanding of how teachers identify the quick changes that are taking place in the Saudi educational system, mainly when it is clear that these changes will not be able to meet the desires and expectations of the teachers (Beijaard et al., 2004). Thus, it is essential to know how those professors cope with changes and make sense of their experiences.

Research Questions

Based on the aim of this study, the following research questions have been formulated:
RQ1. How do Saudi Professors perceive their identity after returning home, and how do their university receive them upon returning to Saudi Arabia?
RQ2. How do the professors deal with administrative challenges to cope with their working environment?

Methodology
Narrative Design

In this research, a collaborative biography narrative approach was adopted. Participants of the study include assistant professors known to be recent returnees of the King Abdullah Scholarship Program. They were invited through a WhatsApp message sent to 10 random assistant professors from a Saudi University, to which only six replied (three females and three males). Therefore, the study sample constitutes six individuals, from which data was collected in the form of narratives. Table 1 shows the demographic information of selected participants. The data for this study is about the professors’ narratives, constructed within a “glocalization” (Khondker, 2001) whereby they are experiencing a clash between their local and newly established identities.

Collaborative biography in education is defined as "a disciplined way of understanding people's beliefs and actions based on his or her past" (Berk, 1980, 94; Cortazzi, 2014). Cortazzi (2014) explains collaborative biography as “the combined description and interpretation of a teacher's life experience carried out by him/her concerning working with one or more researchers." This constituted levels of narration, including "the life as lived and experienced, interpreted to the teacher's self then and now; the life as told the researcher." Therefore, the professors are the teller of their own stories in this study. This approach aims to provide teacher-centered knowledge within a Saudi university context (Cortazzi, 2014, 14).
The Narrative took place through meeting and interviewing the professors. The data selection was made based on several data elements, such as promotions, isolation, experience with organizational changes, and changes in policies and regulations. The professors were asked the following prompts:

- Tell the story of how you perceive your identity after returning home.
- Tell the story of how your university received you upon your return to KSA.
- How do you deal with administrative challenges in your university?

Table 1. Demographic Information of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Length of Interview (Hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sami</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omar</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maha</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amira</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

Data in this study were collected through in-depth and semi-structured interviews that lasted from one to three hours in the Arabic language, which were later translated to English. The main objective of conducting interviews was to find the strategies used by the participants to cope with the Saudi higher education context, academic experience before and after taking their Ph.D. degree, self-perceptions in different their home and host communities, and views of teaching. English supplementary explanations were provided for translating some expressions with cultural connotations, such as professors' beliefs and values.

Data Analysis

Grounded theory was applied to analyze the data. The transcript of data acquired from each participant was based on the open thematic coding. The transcribed data of the interviews were coded to uncover the following themes, personal connections, isolation, and administrative work. The present study has sought to situate the story within a place and setting. The study has dealt with the six assistant professors who were abroad for several years and returned to their home
country Saudi Arabia to expand their knowledge area. The study has reflected on the conflicting identities faced by these returnees due to cultural differences. The participants provide insights on how they maneuver and cope with themselves while facing conflicts associated with their newly formed selves.

**Results**

**Personal Connections**

As outlined by the six participants, personal connections were highlighted as a vital strategy that would increase the participants' claimed chances of success in their academic careers. They further added that they would get promoted through personal contacts, occupy prestigious administrative positions, receive valuable and reliable responses to their inquiries and needs, and be added to the university's VIP parties. One of the male participants i.e., Sami, indicated that he spent five years abroad in the US before returning to Saudi Arabia in 2013. From the offset, he recalled coming back from the US as an ambitious academic full of ideas but found himself to be outcasted. He said that his boss treated everyone like his children, and he was their father, and the college was 'his home.' Sami justified this attitude by blaming it on the 'cultural community' in Saudi Arabia. He also accused the university of not considering the effect on the academic returnees returning from scholarships and the conflict that may be caused by the young and the old generations working together. He further despaired that no one cared to discuss the studies conducted by the abroad colleagues. Unlike the US, there was no appreciation or acknowledgment of research in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the experiences of the repatriated professors brought forward remained unrecognized.

On the other hand, a female participant named "Sara" explained personal connections and pulling strings as something commonly found in the Saudi culture. It also showed the importance of context where such practices occurred and how values and ethics were embraced. They were adapted according to each context's dominant cultural and social norms. In the case of this study, it was all about exchanging benefits based on personal interests, particularly personal connections. For her, this was not an easy way of working, and in fact, it made her think of quitting. Even though she had been back for six months, Sara admitted that there were certain things that she would never 'adjust to,' but she would attempt 'to try to cope.' From an academic level, she 'would like to see less focus on international standard and more focus on what our Saudi students needs. We had a great variety of incredibly talented staff and had earned PhDs from all over the world. They could bring a lot to the table, but they were not given a chance. Upon her return, she had not received any support. The ethics issue was huge for Sara, and she realized in Academia in her college that ethics is not even discussed, let alone practiced. She criticized the environment as not collaborative, saying that her colleagues are deceitful and take advantage of her ideas and contributions. Opportunities for innovation were scarce. She sums it up by saying;

‘Our faculty was warped with people who took advantage of one another, walked over, and put people down. You had to pull the right strings, which was very difficult to do for me. I was raised with the concept; that if you work hard, you get to your destination.’

Another participant, Maha, complained about the lack of clarity on procedures, such as the lack of cooperation, stating that 'no support' was offered. She suffered due to a lack of support in her
teaching environment and frustration with the content that she had to teach as she believed strongly that it had not met the students' needs. Another concern that Maha raised was the self-defining way that her colleagues adopted. She brought to light that they generally used their sub-majors to define themselves. She described that 'an uncomfortable environment resulted from their defining practices.' She highlighted that 'each group was trying to impose its ideas or agendas over others.' This had impacted her behavior and made it challenging for her to befriend anyone.

It was striking that any of the participants did not mention the idea of fairness. Fairness was meant as providing equal opportunities to faculty members, which was not mentioned either by male or female participants. Social justice was not a moral issue that concerned faculty members of this study. The actions of different individuals define how academic identity is linked with educational practice, research, scholarship, and teaching (Evans & Nixon, 2015). Even though Gornall et al. (2013) argue that an emotional commitment toward work is required for sustainable working relationships, it is essential to growing academic identity and practice. In line with this, the professors changed their rules, which do not match their identities or their vision of themselves. However, it is observed that the notion of an opposite belief system with these professors holds certain specific identification that they openly admit confessing.

Isolation

Participants shared thoughts about their personal experiences with personal connections. Male participants openly admitted using personal relationships to obtain what they sought to achieve. Female participants, however, found it challenging to pull strings to reach their goals. Male participants narrated that personal connections enabled them to attend conferences. Although attending a meeting was a right by default, in the case of this study, participants claimed that to get exercise such a right, they needed to pull a few strings to get their paperwork done in a speedy timeframe. The promotion was also an issue for all the six participants.

However, two male participants believed that they could get their papers processed through personal connections. They emphasized the importance of knowing influential people, especially leaders who hold prestigious positions and can open doors for ample opportunities in their college. Sami described his feelings by saying that he felt 'a gap' between himself and his colleagues at work. It worked only if his network of contacts was strong, which did not rest well with him. He has given an example of working 'with an experienced and aged man exposed to a wide range of cultural experiences in the workplace.' He described the working atmosphere as 'full of tension.' He did not explain why but emphasized that he could not communicate with him and, in fact, 'avoided communication...out of respect of his age' so as not to clash.

Although Sami emphasized that work is his priority, the family has a social life, which impeded his accomplishments. He found comfort in isolating himself from society because he got used to achieving so much abroad by following the same approach. Sami highlighted the university's lack of accountability. He explained that an assistant professor teacher is not accountable for anything. This is annoying. This is an injustice on the students' part. We do not know how this doctor is teaching. The doctor has all the power. Such practices are absent among international institutes. He further added that he used to hope that every college has its research that could support its
college. He further communicated with the higher studies department to press postgraduate students to research the college's problems to find solutions.

Omar pointed out that his promotion was achieved after an intensive struggle ‘because of bureaucracy procedures.’ He said he was one of the 'lucky ones' who had some idea on how to apply for his promotion as he was previously responsible for that task before being a repatriate. When he faced difficulties, he would ask his colleagues, who would often refuse to guide him or make excuses. He could not find the forms to fill in. He was constantly being told to go from one person to the next. After a long process 'and much talking back and forth,' he achieved it. He points out that the achievement resulted from his efforts, i.e., without the cooperation of his colleagues. This is because he went through such an erroneous process. He took it upon himself to create a file with all the necessary forms so that other people would not have to go through what he had to experience.

Omar continued to explain his struggle and outlined that the College Board took five months to hold a meeting, which resulted in the delay of his promotion. He, therefore, had a lower income, taught for extended hours, and had been stripped of the advantages of conducting research. He further emphasized the lack of cooperation between faculty members, which he described as 'selfish.' He stated that one who got promoted does not care about others. Generally, they tend to excuse themselves and throw the responsibility from one person to another. He went on to say:

‘That even academic development was lacking. Though there were attempts of academic organization for improvements, still many efforts were needed. It felt like we were doing the same thing repetitively, and honestly, until now, I cannot understand why we were still relying on this way of teaching. The aspect of the research was not utilized in the college because the focus was on how to meet the policies and keep everything internationalized. This practice had neglected the needs of the Saudi student population in a university which were generally put aside.’

Relationships with colleagues were deceptive. They claimed that they had different interests and management perspectives. Such as, they were divided into groups and parties according to their ethical beliefs and specialization and, more importantly, their connections. Participants felt disconnected because they could not contribute to significant policy changes or be respected or acknowledged for the knowledge they held in research and teaching. They were comfortable teaching their classes and leaving without being involved in meetings or extra-academic activities.

**Administrative Work**

Administrative work was a two-coin strategy that participants used. They either escape from it or run into it. Most of our participants were not interested in admin work and viewed it as paperwork that had little to offer to make substantial changes or professional development. They perceived admin work as to where they had gone to do what was required without considering their experience or knowledge. Most of the participants assumed the position to be of trivial importance. They even expressed their discomfort in approaching people who worked in the admin department of their college. Sami also blamed leaders who fear the failure of an idea 'because it will reflect upon him and his position.' However, he had pointed out that even though his boss was afraid, he nevertheless provided opportunities for discussion, and he had 'an open-door policy,' but no decisions were made. He describes the process as 'self-development.' He further pointed out
that these benefits were received because he had good connections. Priority was given to those in administrative positions because 'administrative work at the university is extremely strenuous.'

Ali, like Sami, was unhappy with the system as he explained that it was a 'centralized system,' meaning one has to refer back to the top of the pyramid, i.e., 'the bottom-up policy.' The emphasis was placed on the need for a 'new infrastructure' in the university. Ali stressed the importance of having good relationships with people. He reminded the researchers that it is crucial to have a good relationship with people. He gave an example of why a personal connection is essential, saying that he was added to all-important WhatsApp groups by his friend, the "Dean" of the college. However, the need to accept 'bureaucracy' is one of the challenges. Even though he admitted that one is recognized by their work, not by how nice or kind one is to their colleagues, Ali still received no help for his paperwork. The administration was not helpful, and he had to do everything by himself. He said someone eventually helped him, but he had a friendly relationship with that person.

Omar pointed out how he was treated differently when he was promoted. He described how he was treated when he was a Teacher's assistant regarding how his colleagues dealt with him. He felt as if he was 'a nobody' and indicated it as 'they do not even look at you.' However, he pointed out the striking difference between then and the time when he came back after completing his Ph.D. This difference was in terms of being welcomed and embraced by staff while offering him a variety of administrative positions. Still, he refused any administrative work as he simply wanted 'to go to class and return home.' He reasoned his decision by explaining that the environment was unsuitable, and there was no financial gain from it, so why should he 'exhaust' himself. He preferred to concentrate on research. Administrative work was 'paperwork,' and 'there was no decision making.' Omar's academic aim was to see research projects as a reality and publish 'in high impact journals' even if it took up to a year to post. He described his challenges of not being able to go to conferences because of the college's delay. He highlighted that it was not the university's fault, but instead, the college itself was to be blamed. Even though many people traveled and came back, the Saudi 'mentality' was the same.

Maha and Sara indicated a lack of professionalism; people do things for favors, not because it is their job. As Maha pointed out, 'When I needed something from admin, I went with a smile and ensured I got on her good side because otherwise, I might not get answers if I asked questions, or she might stall me. Policies were blurry and hidden. Admin needed to be completely revamped ethically, and it needed better supervision. You make connections so you can be informed. It feels very degrading as an academician in a respected university, as it made me think of leaving.' Amira seemed to be distressed with the unsupportive attitude of college personnel and the absence of explanation of its processes related to promotion, appraisal, and occupational process. She concluded, 'I strongly felt that this practice must be revised as I knew my academic position and then planned my course of action accordingly.'

He adapted the Saudi way of living over three years. He further emphasized the significance of knowing people at the university, especially the deans or vice deans. He stated that there is a lack of cooperation among colleagues in the college. Initially, he anticipated working in collaboration with people but instead realized that colleagues were forming 'groups.'
Discussion

This study provides insights into the coping strategies used to construct academics' identities in Saudi higher education. The findings indicated that participants in this context used three strategies: namely, personal connections, isolation, and administrative work. Personal contacts were found helpful in coping with their working demands. At the same time, it was regarded as a disgraceful strategy by the female participants who would never use it to get their hard work rewarded. This was considered an ethical value that participants would like to believe and hold, but personal connections and relationships were crucial with the people in power. Isolation was the second strategy mentioned by participants. They were exhausted from academic practices inconsistent with their interest and expectations. They were pushed to the edge and marginalized by not being allowed to speak their thoughts concerning teaching practices and policies. A similar pattern of results was obtained by Churchman & King (2009), who used a narrative lens to explore the identity perspectives of academic staff. They pointed out strategies such as; isolation and anonymity that were used to show passive resistance to the changes in their workplace.

Overall, the findings of this study are backed by the results of another study conducted by Knights & Clarke (2014), who found that insecurity and fragile academic identities take three forms: imposters, aspirants, and preoccupied with existential concerns. It is because they lack confidence in their educational capabilities. They doubt their capacity to write research papers and act as an excellent academic staff. A gap was identified between the ideal and possessed academic image, which increased their sense of insecurity and anxiety (Knights & Clarke, 2014). Parkinson (2017) believed that higher education was a place where unstructured education could occur. It was further thought that the new structured norms set in education, such as writing learning outcomes and teaching aims, may leave no room for spontaneous learning. Another reason for isolation was their relationship with colleagues. In this study, participants claimed that their relationships with colleagues were weak. They shared no interest and are different in sub-majors. Thus, participants found themselves isolated and disconnected. These findings are in line with those proposed by Gizir (2014). The participants have individual values and goals, and they are ignorant of the organization's functions or faculty goals.

Administrative work was a strategy that appealed to a few participants and was resented by the majority. Omar indicated that he had prior experience in admin work before completing his degree. Still, upon finishing his degree, he did not want to do anything with admin work, which he referred to as paperwork. These findings agree with the study of Allmer (2018), as it stated that the way of organizing and practicing management impacted the participants' sense of loyalty and ambition. Unlike male participants who showed a vast understanding of admin work practices, female participants had little knowledge of the admin work or duties. Such a finding was also concluded by Allmer's (2018) study where women were disadvantaged in the higher education system and could not occupy higher positions.

It could be a universal reality that women had ineffective knowledge of admin work not because they were incompetent but because men side-lined them (Allmer, 2018). This could be an area that requires further investigation, especially in the Saudi context, where women are restricted to specific cultural and social boundaries. The asserted claims in the present study were consistent with earlier studies, which considered it a universal topic and an emerging issue. The present study
believed that structured universities might deprive one of drawing back the knowledge as professors, where one had no choice but to deal with it and think of how one could survive and adapt to the system. The study directed and motivated the researchers to examine this matter in further research.

Conclusion

The present study provides a detailed insight into the practices of the higher education sector in KSA. It reveals how a group of professors use specific strategies to navigate higher education and construct their academic identities. In addition, incidences related to the conflict of two opposite parties with different values and expectations, the participants and the structured administration system, where each struggles to have its way of teaching and managing administration work in the university, are also provided. The range of changes and stressors have shown that identity changes advance the quality of students' learning and teaching at universities together with greater student diversity. On the contrary, analysis of these reflective narratives portrays fundamental concerns associated with the transition from assistant teachers to assistant professors. Therefore, there is a need for teachers' mentorship and opportunities to develop and maintain practical scholarly communities. Such a clash would likely surface with the rapid movement toward achieving a highly structured education system. Both parties must find common ground through which they can practice their beliefs that may lift the university's academic level. Also, the desired level of job satisfaction of the administrators and academics can be achieved in an environment where no party feels the oppressive control of the other.

Implications

The adoption of academic positions emphasizes both the learning and its increasing importance to universities. In addition, a range of benefits has been offered by these positions to the university, individual academics, and departments that would not otherwise be possible. For instance, the active participation of academics in the King Abdullah Scholarship Program is likely to have far-reaching positive impacts on students. Acceptance and respect from the broader university community will be required for these academic positions and identities, with academics being identified for their commitment and dedication to continuously enhancing education practice. Faculty and departmental leaders should focus on these identity changes and offer support and opportunities for academics to explain leadership in education at international, institutional, and national levels. Essentially, validating this academic identity will depend on academics presenting to their peers using high-quality pedagogical investigation and its scholarly dissemination, leading to national and international recognition in higher education.

About the Author:

Miriam Alkubaidi received her Bachelor degree in English literature and English Language Teaching from King Abdulaziz University in 2004. she completed her PhD in the prestigious Trinity College: The University of Dublin in Applied Linguistics in 2017. Her interests in applied linguistics include Action research, Second language writing, Critical pedagogy, Curriculum Development, Policy reform, and Teacher Identity. ORCid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5205-5586
References


A Systemic Functional Grammar Approach to the Study of Emphatic Constructions in English and Arabic Scientific Texts

Ruaa Jassim Mohammed
Department of English
College of Languages, University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq
Corresponding AuthRuua199135@gmail.com

Nawar Hussein Rdhaiwi Al-Marsumi
Department of English,
College of Languages, University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract
The study deals with emphatic constructions in English and Arabic scientific texts. To the researcher's best knowledge, this topic received little attention from linguistic researchers, exceptionally in functional grammar analysis. The importance of this study arises from the fact that some syntactic forms are effective linguistic choices for conveying the meaning of emphasis to the readers. The study aims to identify and analyze different types of linguistic constructions in English and Arabic scientific texts and show the similarities and differences between the two types of scientific texts under investigation. The study intends to analyze the structure of complex clauses by adopting Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) modal of 'Systemic Functional Grammar' of syntax and Prince's (1978) modal of 'Given-New' information of discourse analysis. These models analyze-samples of English 'Spaceport' magazine and pieces of Arabic 'Sadeem Bulletin' magazine. Moreover, the study depends on a qualitative approach to answer the research questions and confirm its hypothesis. The results show that both languages use some syntactic forms, but Arabic is rich in its constructions. This difference is due to the nature and flexibility of both languages. The findings will be helpful for researchers concerned with syntax and scientific issues because it provides a rigorous analysis of complex clauses into simple parts and shows the focus of information in its suitable.

Keywords: Arabic, emphatic constructions, information focus, linguistic devices, scientific texts, Systemic Functional Grammar Approach

Introduction

One of the main characteristics of scientific texts is the objective representation of facts. Andrews and Blickle (1978) point out that an excellent scientific text should be accurate, precise, conscious, and appropriate. Scientific authors should present the information clearly without complexity in the syntactic structures. Trotzke (2017) indicates that the term 'emphasis' refers to information structural aspects of language; phonetics, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. It belongs to the field of scope-discourse semantics and encodes in the functional makeup of the clause. It is essential to note that the general approach to determining the emphatic in syntactic structure goes back to Chomsky (1970) and Jakendoff (1972). They mentioned some crucial notions such as focus and presupposition. The former denotes newly supplied information. The remaining part of the sentence indicates the latter. According to Al-Samarrai (2000), 'emphasis' in Arabic aims to reinforce the meaning of important information in the sentence and remove doubt from the readers/hearers.

Literature Review

According to Hart (2014), systemic functional grammar (SFG) presents a theory of language based on purpose and choice. Halliday developed SFG in (1973, 1978, and 1994). This theory is concerned with what speakers are doing when they use language and why on particular occasions of use, they formulate their utterances in the way they do. Hence, the main objective of SFG is "to facilitate explanation of meaning in context through a comprehensive text-based grammar that enables analysts to recognize the choices speakers and writers make from linguistic systems and explore how those choices are functional for constructing meanings of different kinds." (Gee & Handford, 2012, p.12).

Emphatic Constructions in English

There are various linguistic ways for achieving the meaning of emphasis in the sentence. These ways encompass (the phenomenon of fronting, passive voice, cleft constructions, the concept of negation, and modal auxiliaries).

1. The Phenomenon of Fronting

Crystal (1980) defines fronting as a transformational process that requires transposing a constituent from the middle or end of a string to the initial position. It provides emphasis in sentences:

(1) The strange man entered the house.
(1a) Into the house, the strange man entered. (fronting of prepositional phrase)

2. Passive Voice

Depending on Maggie's (1998) view, the formation of passive voice in English relies on transitive verbs. In passivation, the subject and object change grammatical relations. The object of the active sentence promotes to the subject of the passive sentence. In contrast, the real subject of the active sentence demotes in the prepositional position, as in:

(2) The scientist counted the cells. (Active sentence)
(2a) The cells were measured by the scientist. (Passive sentence)
3. Cleft Constructions

Trask (1992, p.46) defines cleft constructions as "A marked structure in which a focused constituent is extracted from its logical position and often set off with some additional material, including an extra verb." There are several types of Cleft Constructions in English:

A-It-Cleft Construction

Wales (2011, p.57) states that "it-cleft is used in GRAMMAR to describe a process whereby EMPHASIS OF FOCUS a simple sentence appears to have been 'cleft' or divided into two CLAUSES. One contains CATAPHORIC it+ AUXILIARY VERB be, the other a RELATIVE CLAUSE."

(3) It is nice that you could come.
(4) It was the sparrow who killed Cock Robin.

B-All Cleft Construction

Collin (1991) notes that the secondary type of cleft construction in English is 'all-cleft' with a nominal clause headed by the word (all). All clefts concentrate on the object of the verb, whether it is a noun phrase or a nominalized sentence:

(5) She enjoyed the hotel.
(6) All she enjoyed was the hotel.

C-Existential Cleft Construction

Banks (1993, p. 20) defines an Existential Cleft construction as "An existential clause begins with a there which is a semantically empty and is followed by the verb be." This type of a Cleft Construction refers to the notion of existence:

(7) There is a book in the cupboard.
(8) There are two patients in the writing room.

4. The Concept of Negation

Gibbons and Whiteley (2018) demonstrate that the concept of negation in English usually contrasts affirmative constructions and occurs on several levels, such as syntactic, morphological, and semantic. In the case of the syntactic level, negation uses the negative participle (not):

(9) This is not a letter.

Other syntactic forms of negation are negative nouns (none, nothing, nowhere), negative pronouns (nobody, no one), negative adverbs (never), and conjunction (nor), such as:

(10) There is no logic to that.
(11) None can escape death.

5. The System of Modality

Based on Praninskas's (1975) system, English comprises ten model auxiliaries that used in different academic texts like (must--should--ought to--can--could--will--would--may--might), as in:

(12) The lecture must begin now.
(13) Should we go to Europe next year?
(14) George can read English well.
Emphatic Constructions in Arabic

Several methods of conveying the meaning of emphasis in Arabic used to strengthen the purpose in texts (the phenomenon of fronting, passive voice, the manner of restriction and modality expressions).

1. The Phenomenon of Fronting

Fronting is one of the essential characteristics of the Arabic language. It enables the author to front whatever they want to emphasize. Ghazala (1995) mentions that fronting or 'foregrounding' can be used widely at sentence and the text levels. It requires moving a phrase or clause from its original place at the end of the sentence to the front position of that sentence.

(15) Our guard is working hard in the garden.

(16) In the garden, our guard is working hard.

2. Passive Voice

Ryding (2005) points out that the passive sentence in Arabic is formed inflectionally by altering of vowel pattern within the verb:

(17) Ahmed held the meeting (Active sentence)

(17 a) The meeting was held (Passive sentence)

Hawary (2016, p.105-106) states that "passive voice in Arabic used mainly when the subject/doer of the verb/action is not known. In this case, the object/recipient of the action takes the grammatical position and nominative case ending of the subject/doer and is called deputy subject/ doer."

(18) Reputation for producing the excellent perfume was gained after many years.

3. The Pronoun of Separation

It is essential to note that a vital pronoun, labeled as 'the pronoun of separation' used for an emphatic purpose in Arabic. Wright (1976) defines the 'pronoun of separation' as a type of Arabic pronoun appended to the subject to give it a special prominence and contrast it with another topic:

(19) Sami is the martyr.

4. The Concept of Negation

In Arabic, the manner of restriction refers to the concept of negation. Awe (1989, p.84) defines the manner of restriction as "specifying something by something else." The manner of restriction consists of two ways:

1- Negation and exception: This type of negation focuses on something or someone specifically other than anything else:

(20) There is no boy but Ali, and no sword but Thulfiqar.

2- Negation by syndetic tools and the device 'but' /Enma/ This type of negation uses some linguistic tools like ('not' /la/ 'but rather' /bal/ 'and but' /laken/)

(21) Saeed is an engineer, not a doctor.

(22) Saeed is not a doctor, but an engineer.
5. Modality Expressions

Aziz (1989) notes that several lexical and verbal words refer to willingness, ability, obligation, and necessity like ('should' / yajib an/ يجب أن, 'It is possible to' / min-Almumkan an/ من الممكن أن, 'It is necessary to' / min-Al dharury an/ من الضروري أن, and 'capable of' /Kader/ قادر). These lexical items denote a high degree of emphasis in sentences:

(23) You should visit me in Beirut.
(24) It is necessary to get 8 hours of sleep.

Nama (n.d.) articulates that the Arabic particles like ('may be' / qaad / قد, 'will' / al–seen/ السين, and 'will', sawfa, سوف) are used for the emphasis, followed by a verb in the past or present tense. Syntactically, these particles are an expletive (meaningless) like:

(25) I will visit you tomorrow.


This model clarifies three layers of meaning present in the clause. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.60) describe the clause as a meta-functional construct that comprises three meta-functional lines of meaning: Textual, Interpersonal, and experiential sense.

1-The Textual Meaning

This type of meaning consists of two essential parts: the 'theme' followed and commented on by the 'rheme.' Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.66) define the 'rheme' as the point of departure of the message, and its primary function is to locate and orient the clause within its context. The complements of the message are known as the 'theme'. They classify two main types of the 'theme' in functional grammar:

A-Simple/Complex Theme

This type of theme consists of one structural element, nominal group, or prepositional phrase, whereas the complex theme comprises two or more groups or terms, as in:

(26) From house to house, I went my way.
(27) The Walrus and Carpenter were walking close at hand.

B-Thematic Equative Theme

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.70) describe this type of theme as a pseudo-cleft sentence because it sets up the Theme-Rheme parts in the form of an equation, in which all the elements of the clause are arrange into two constituents. They combine together and use the form of the verb (be):

(28) What the duck gave to my aunt was that teapot.
(29) What the thing the duck gave to my aunt was that teapot.

2-The Interpersonal Meaning

The interpersonal type covers two parts: the modal element and the residue. The former comprises 'Mood and Modality'. The latter includes a predicator, complements, and adjunct.

A-Modal Element System

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.111) point out that the 'modal element system' contains two parts which are mood and modality. The structure of mood encompasses the subject plus a finite operator, which is a verbal group:

(30) The duck has given that teapot away.
The structure of the modality system consists of the subject plus a finite operator, which are specific modal verbs such as 'can, could, should, must, will', as in:

(31) He can read English very well.

B-The Residue Part

It is essential to mention the second part of the modal element system, termed the 'Residue' Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.121) classify the residue into three functional components: Predicator, complement, and adjunct, as in:

(32) Sister Susie's sewing shirts for soldiers.

3-The Experiential Meaning

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.168), the transitivity system construes the world of experience into six process types. Each type provides its model for construing a particular domain of expertise:

1-Material clauses: The process of doing-and-happening

Material clause is the process of doing and happening in the transitive or intransitive clauses. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.179) classify two inherent participant roles in this process: the 'Subject' and 'Goal.' They explain a contrast between 'operative'- 'receptive' clauses. The former is the unmarked cases in declarative sentences. By contrast, the latter refers to the phenomenon of fronting and passivation:

(33) The lion caught the tourist. (Active / Operative)
(34) The tourist was caught by the lion. (Passive / Receptive)

2-Mental clauses: Process of sensing

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.197) assert that the mental clause involves one participant role: the 'sensor' and the entity or the phenomenon that the 'sensor' perceives. Notably, there are four sub-types of sensing in mental clauses: perceptive-cognitive-desiderative and emotive:

(35) Mary liked the gift.

3-Relational clauses: The process of being-and-having

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 210) point out that relational clauses serve to characterize and identify. There are three basic types of relations in English: intensive, possessive, and circumstantial. These three types come in two modes of connection: attributive and identifying mode. The fundamental difference between these two modes is that the identifying mood is reversible: Sarah is the leader/ and the leader is Sarah. By contrast, the attributive mode is not reversible, as in: Sarah is wise. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.219) define the attributive mode as "an entity has some class ascribed or attributed to it." The attributive mood contains two terms: the attribute and the carrier:

(36) Today's weather is going to be warm and sunny.
4. Behavioral Process
Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.248) describe this type of process as the process of physiological and psychological behavior like (breathing, coughing, dreaming, and staring). It involves one participant role that is the 'behavior', as in:
(37) You are dreaming.

5. Verbal Process
According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.252), this type of process involves four participant roles:
1- The Sayer: This participant refers to the speaker or writer like I, we, you.
2- The Receiver: This function points out the one to whom the saying is directed: me, your parents.
3- The Verbiage: This function explains the content of the speech or report.
4- The Target: It means the aim of the speech.
(38) John said, 'I am hungry.'

6. Existential Clauses
It refers to something that exists or happens. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p.257) show that those existential clauses have the verb 'be' as a process and introduce the entity or event which is said to exist. It means the 'existent':
(39) There is a man at the door.

The Model of 'Given-New information' of Discourse Analysis of Ellen Prince (1978)
Prince (1978) shows that there are two kinds of information in natural language to convey the objective information: given and new information. Prince (1978) shows three types of 'givenness' information in the sentence:
1- Predictability:

Prince (1978) indicates that an element in a sentence represents old or (predictable information) if it is recoverable from the preceding context; if it is not recoverable, it represents new or (unpredictable information), as in:
(40) John called Mary a Republication, and then she insulted him.

In the example above, the pronouns (she, him) are old information because 'she' refers to Mary in the previous text and (him) refers to John. Therefore, the word 'insulted' is new information because it is not recoverable from the preceding text.
2- Saliency:

Prince (1978) shows that the term 'given' information refers to knowledge the speaker assumes to be in the consciousness of the addressee at the time of the utterance. By contrast, the term 'new' information means what the speaker believes he is introducing into the addressee’s consciousness by what he says, as in:
(41) If I write loosely of a noun as being in the status GIVEN, I mean that the idea which this noun expresses has this status.
In the example above, "the writer is purporting to assume that it is appropriate for the reader to have in mind, by the time he/she reaches the comma, that the writer means something if he writes loosely of a noun as being in the status given." (Prince, 1978, p.230).

3-Shared knowledge:

Prince (1978) defines the term 'given' as information (the speaker) believes that the listener already knows and accepts as 'true,' whereas the word 'new' denotes the information in which the speaker thinks the listener does not yet know:

(42) John hit a boy on the head.
(42 a) A boy was hit on the head by John.

In the example (a) above, the word (A boy) is new information.

The Procedures
The procedures adopted in this study are as follows:
1-Presenting a theoretical survey of SFG theory and the emphatic constructions in English and Arabic along with its definitions, types, and examples.
2- The study follows appropriate methodology and explains the models of analysis which are Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) and Prince (1978).
3-Analyzing the selected data to achieve the study's aims and test its hypotheses.
4- The study reaches the conclusions and makes some recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

Data Analysis
It is important to note that the data analyze over three levels: syntactic, lexical, and discourse levels. Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) modal of 'Systemic Functional Grammar' of syntax analyzes the sentence syntactically and lexically. Otherwise, Prince's (1978) modal of 'Given-New' information for discourse analysis.

English Data
Data (1)
As part of the test, Space X configured Crew Dragon to trigger a launch escape about 1.5 minutes after liftoff. *All major functions were executed*, including separation, engine firings, parachute deployment, and landing. Crew Dragon splashed down at 10:38 a.m. just off the Florida coast in the Atlantic Ocean.

At the syntactic level, the author selects the 'All-Cleft' sentence to convey the meaning of emphasis in the sentence. The subject is 'All major functions' that contains the word 'All' uses for emphasis. Notably, the information after the copula (were) functions as the rhematic part that contains the focus of information. The author wants to emphasize the achievement of all functions in the space.

At the lexical level, the sentence above conveys a specific fact; it belongs to a declarative mood, in which the author adopts the subject followed by one form of the verb (be). Hence, this combination asserted the second part of the sentence.
At the discourse level, the sentence 'All major functions' is 'Given-information'. This type of information can be recoverable from the preceding text. However, the author wants to make the readers know that the employees achieve all functions. In addition, he offers other types of operations besides the basic ones. Hence, the information after the copula 'was' act as 'New information.'

**Data (2)**

*In 2020,* Exploration Ground Systems (EGS) activities will ramp up as launch hardware arrives and teams put systems in place for Artemis 1 and 11 missions.

At the syntactic level, the author selects the fronting of prepositional phrases for emphasis. The fronted prepositional complements (In 2020) occupy the subject position in the sentence. Thus, this fronted information is the 'marked theme,' whereas the remaining part of the sentence represents the rheme. The author wants to emphasize the time in which the (EGS) activities will ramp up.

At the lexical level, the marked theme 'In 2020' occupies the subject position of the sentence, followed by the modal verb 'will' to assert that (EGS) activities will ramp up in the future for Artemis 1 and 11 missions.

At the discourse level, the fronted phrase 'In 2020' is 'new information. The noun phrase (EGS)-activities represents 'given information'. This type of information is mentioned in the previous text.

**Data (3)**

*Taking place on Dec. 14,* the demonstration was intended to validate the lunch teams' capability to perform an EM-1 countdown and respond to problems put into the system for practice.

At the syntactic level, in the above example, the author fronted the verbal phrase 'Taking place on De. 14' to the initial position of the sentence, and this fronted information is the marked theme of the sentence. The rest of the sentence represents the rheme part. The information focus is the first position of the text.

At the lexical level, the example belongs to the material process (the process of doing and happening) in which the goal complements is moved to the initial part of the sentence and occupies the subject position. In contrast, the real subject demotes in the complement position.

At the discourse level, the 'given information' is the reminder of the sentence because it is part of the reader's common knowledge. New information is 'Taking place on Dec. 14.'

**Data (4)**

*There are so many NASA's contributions to society* that people constantly overlook the agency’s impact. I would highly recommend that all NASA employees even to check out the annual "Spinoff" publications to stay abreast of all the beautiful things the agency is doing.
At the syntactic level, in the above example, the author selects the 'Existential-Cleft' sentence for the aim of emphasis. Notably, the word 'There' is regarded as a simple theme of the sentence, which occupies the subject position. The information after the copula 'is' acts as the rheme part. In effect, the focus occurs in the second part of the sentence, and the author wants to emphasize the existence of many of NASA's contributions to society.

At the lexical level, this example depends on the system of transitivity (2004). The above example belongs to the existential process type. The sentence begins with the word 'there,' denoting the existence of something plus the process (are). The author wants to emphasize the presence of a specific 'entity' that reveals NASA’s contributions to society.

At the discourse level, the word 'There' is regarded as 'given information' because this word is part of the readers' consciousness; it stands for the meaning of the existence of something. Therefore, 'new information' is represented by 'so NASA contributions to society that people constantly overlook the agency's impact.'

**Data (5)**

For the emergency training rehearsal, Wilmore is the backup crew member for both the first and second crewed Starliner flights. Although Starliner is designed to land in the desert, *it must also be able to land in the water in an emergency, and its crew must be prepared for all possibilities.*

At the syntactic level, the author uses the 'It-Cleft' sentence to express the meaning of emphasis. The subject 'it' acts as a simple uses to attract reader's attention to something important in the sentence. The complements of the sentence 'must be able to land in the water in an emergency.' The emphasis lies in the last part of the example.

At the lexical level, the author adopts the modal verb 'must' to reveal the necessity of Starliner flights to land in the water in case of an emergency.

At the discourse level, the pronoun 'it' is 'given information' because the author uses the pronoun 'it' as an anaphor marker which refers to the noun 'Starliner' mentioned previously. Therefore, the remainder of the sentence is 'new information.'

**Data (6)**

*Participants can enhance their award* by using one of the existing capabilities of amateur radio on the space station, such as a packet (digital operations) or listening in to an astronaut giving answers to school children during one of the scheduled school contacts.

At the syntactic level, the author wants to emphasize the ability of the participants to show their works. The subject of the sentence 'participants' functions as a simple theme. The remaining part 'can enhance their awards functions as the rheme. In the rhematic detail, the author explains the focus of information by showing the existing abilities that help the participants reinforce, like packet (digital operations).

At the lexical level, the subject 'participants' combined with the modal verb 'can' to convey the meaning of modality in the sentence. The verb 'can' denotes a high degree of ability that emphasizes the second part of the sentence.
At the discourse level, the word 'participants' represents 'given information.' Accordingly, the reader can infer that the word 'participants' means a group of members working in a specific institution. Hence, the remainder of the sentence acts as new information.

Data (7)
Participants can enhance their award by using one of the existing capabilities of amateur radio on the space station, such as a packet (digital operations) or listening in to an astronaut giving answers to school children during one of the scheduled school contacts. *No special activity is planned from the station, and only one activity from the space station is needed to qualify.*

At the syntactic level, the sentence 'No special activity' is the theme, which contains the negative device -"not"- for emphasis. The second part 'is planned from the station-and only one activity from the space is the rheme. The author wants to assert that the station has only one activity is needed to qualify. So, the focus of the information lies in the remainder of the sentence.

At the lexical level, the subject 'No special activity' with a finite operator 'is' in the unmarked case constitutes the declarative mood. The residue part is the rest of the sentence. The author employs the lexical word 'No' for emphasis.

At the discourse level, the 'given information' is 'No special activity is planned from the station.' This information can be recoverable from the previous text; the word 'station' mentions previously. New information is 'only one activity from the space station is needed to qualify.'

Data (8)
*In Sight was developed and built by* Lockheed- Martin Space Systems in Denver, Colorado, and arrived at Vandenberg on Feb. 28 aboard a U.S. Air Force C-17 aircraft. The spacecraft then was transported to the Astrotech facility at the West Coast launch site.

At the syntactic level, the author employs passive voice construction for emphasis. The word 'insight' is the marked theme of the sentence that represents the focus of the information. The author wants to emphasize the word 'insight.' The prepositional part of the sentence functions as the rheme.

At the lexical level, the above example based on the system of transitivity (2004), in particular, the material process. The 'Goal' of the sentence 'Insight' moves onto the subject place, and the 'doer' of the action 'by Lockheed-Martin Space Systems in Denver' becomes in the rheme place.

At the discourse level, the information in the prepositional position 'Lockheed- Martin Space System in Denver' represents 'given information' because it belongs to author-reader shared knowledge. Therefore, the promoted information 'Insight' appears as 'new information.'

Data (9)
"*What we really see now is a much greater emphasis on safety*" said Ferguson. "We’re returning to a full capability ascent abort system to keep astronauts safe all the way through the profile, and that’s something that the shuttle didn’t have."
At the syntactic level, the author uses the cleft sentence for emphasis. The theme of the sentence begins with a 'Wh-word' to attract the reader’s attention to something important in the sentence. The second portion is 'much greater emphasis on safety' functions as the rheme. The author wants to assert that the focus is on 'the astronauts' safety.'

At the lexical level, the sentence based on the system of transitivity (2004). It belongs to the mental process. The theme contains the pronoun 'we' as a 'sensor' and the cognitive verb 'see.' However, the rhematic part represents the entity that the sensor can perceive.

At the discourse level, the given information is the sentence 'What we really see now.' This information exists in the reader’s consciousness. The new information is 'much greater emphasis on safety.'

Data (10)
Exploration Mission-1(EM-1) will put Orion in space without a crew on board and bring it out to a distant retrograde orbit around the Moon. The most important thing NASA will get from the mission is a check of the thermal protection system of the Orion crew module during lunar reentry velocities.

In the example above, the first part of the sentence is 'The most crucial thing NASA' acts as a complex theme. The second part is 'a check of the thermal protection system of the Orion crew module during lunar reentry velocities' acts as the rheme, which contains the focus of information.

At the lexical level, the subject 'the most important thing NASA' is followed by a finite operator 'will' to form the modality part. The author uses the modal verb 'will' as a linguistic choice to assert that NASA will gain a particular benefit from the mission in the future.

At the discourse level, the sentence 'The most important thing NASA will gain from the mission' contains the anaphor noun 'mission.' The word 'mission' exists previously in the text. Accordingly, the reader can predict that the second part of the sentence is 'new information.'

Arabic Data
Data (1)

Transliteration: nuqat al-ietidal heya nuqat taqatue dayirih alestiwa' alsamawii mae dayirih alburuj (aldaayirah alksufiyah) allati tadur haul al shams 'aw masar al shams aldhaahirii haul alard.
Translation: Moderation points are points across the equator with the zodiac (ecliptic), the earth path around the sun, or the sun path around the earth.

At the syntactic level, in the example above, the author selects the pronoun of separation 'heya/' to determine the focus of information. The first part, 'nuqat al-ietidal/' represents the theme, and the information after the dummy pronoun (Heya/) is the rhyme. The author uses this dummy to emphasize the theme’s function in the sentence.
At the lexical level, the theme 'nuqat al-ietidal/ نقاط الإتدال' occupies the subject position is followed by the pronoun 'hyea/ هي' to constitute a declarative mood. In such a mood, the author expresses what is essential in the sentence as a constant fact.

At the discourse level, given information is 'nuqat taqatue dayirih alaistiwa alsamawii mae dayirih alburuj/ نقاط تقاطع دائره الاستواء مع دائره البروج' This type of information can be recoverable from the preceding text. New information is 'nuqat al-ietidal/ نقاط الإتدال'.

**Data (2)**

An علم الفلك هو جزء من علوم الطبيعيه الماديه الذي يهتم بدراسه مسارات (أو فالك) ألجسام السماويه المختلفه مثل الكواكيب والنجوم والمجرات. أما علم الفضاء فباحث في الكون وطريقه تشكيلها وتاريخها ومستقبلها، ولو بشيء من الأشياء التي لا يمكن رؤيتها.

Transliteration: 'anna elm alfalak huwa juzun' mina elum altabieiih almaddiyah alathi yahtamu bidirasat masarat ('aw 'aflak) al'ajsam alsamawiyah almukhtalifah mithl alkawakib wal'aqmar walnujum walmajaraat.'amma elm alfalak' faya drus tarkeeb al'ajsam allati fi alawn watariqt tashkilaha watarikhaha wamustqaqbalaha, alawatan alaa tabieiat alfaddaah' allathi tataharak fihi tilka al'ajsam.

Translation: Astronomy is part of the physical sciences concerned with studying the paths (or orbits) of different celestial bodies such as planets, moons, stars, and galaxies. It explores the composition of bodies in the universe, the way they are formed, their history and future, in addition to the nature of space in which these bodies move.

At the syntactic level, the author uses one type of fronting by using the emphatic particle 'ama/ أما' to proceed the theme for prominence. Accordingly, the first part of the above example is the marked theme, which is 'elm alfaddaah/ علم الفضاء' commented by the rhematic part. The author moved the subject 'elm alfaddaah/ علم الفضاء' obligatorily in front of the verb 'fayadrus/ يدرس' to emphasize its role in the space.

At the lexical level, the example above is analyzed by the system of transitivity (2004), specifically material process type, in which the goal complements the sentence 'elm alfaddaah/ علم الفضاء' moved to the initial position of the sentence and assigned the 'marked' case. In contrast, the actor of the sentence becomes in the rest of the sentence.

At the discourse level, the given information is 'fa-yadrus tarkeeb alajsam allati fi alawn watariqt tashkilaha watarikhaha wamustqaqbalaha, alawatan alaa tabieiat alfaddaah allathi tataharak fihi tilka al'ajsam.' This type of information contains the anaphor noun 'alfaddaah/ الفضاء' which refers back to 'elm alfaddaah/ علم الفضاء.' The new information is 'elm alfaddaah.'

**Data (3)**

Translation: Astronomy is part of the physical sciences concerned with studying the paths (or orbits) of different celestial bodies such as planets, moons, stars, and galaxies. It explores the composition of bodies in the universe, the way they are formed, their history and future, in addition to the nature of space in which these bodies move.

At the syntactic level, the author uses one type of fronting by using the emphatic particle 'ama/ أما' to proceed the theme for prominence. Accordingly, the first part of the above example is the marked theme, which is 'elm alfaddaah/ علم الفضاء' commented by the rhematic part. The author moved the subject 'elm alfaddaah/ علم الفضاء' obligatorily in front of the verb 'fayadrus/ يدرس' to emphasize its role in the space.

At the lexical level, the example above is analyzed by the system of transitivity (2004), specifically material process type, in which the goal complements the sentence 'elm alfaddaah/ علم الفضاء' moved to the initial position of the sentence and assigned the 'marked' case. In contrast, the actor of the sentence becomes in the rest of the sentence.

At the discourse level, the given information is 'fa-yadrus tarkeeb alajsam allati fi alawn watariqt tashkilaha watarikhaha wamustqaqbalaha, alawatan alaa tabieiat alfaddaah allathi tataharak fihi tilka al'ajsam.' This type of information contains the anaphor noun 'alfaddaah/ الفضاء' which refers back to 'elm alfaddaah/ علم الفضاء.' The new information is 'elm alfaddaah.'
Translation: The maximum distance we will be able to observe at present in a universe that is 8 and 13 billion years old. Our high vision limit is 46 billion light-years, which means that our future vision increases by 33%, approximately 16 billion light-years.

At the syntactic level, the author employs the particles ('will'/االسين و) and the lexical word ('able'/قادران) for the sake of emphasis. The thematic part is 'اقصى مسافه' and the rhematic part is the remainder of the clause. Hence, the focus of information occurs in the second part.

At the lexical level, the subject 'اقصى مسافه' combined with the modal expression 'االسين و' to form the first part of modality. By using such modal terms as 'السين و' and the lexical word 'قادران' the author emphasizes the ability of the participants to determine a specific distance in the process of checking.

At the discourse level, the given information is 'اقصى مسافه'. The new information is the remaining part of the example.

**Data (4)**

نُشِر مؤخرا بحث علمي جديد حول المواصفات الميكانيكية الخاصة بتسع حفر على سطح القمر (تitan) وهو أكبر قمر لكوكب زحل وثاني أكبر قمر في المجموعة الشمسية بعد القمر (جانيميد) التابع للمشتري.

Transliteration: nushir mu'akharan bahth eilmi jadid hawl almuasafat almikanikih alkhasuha bitise hafr ealaa sath alqamar (titan) wahu akbar qamar liwakab zahal wathani akbar qamar fii almajmuieih alshamsih baed alqamar (janimid) altaabie lilmushtari.

Translation: A new scientific research has been published recently on the mechanical description of nine craters on the moon 'Titan,' the largest Moon in the solar system after Jupiter's Janimid Moon.

At the syntactic level, the author selects passivation process for emphasis. The first portion of the sentence is 'نُشِر مؤخرا' promoted to the initial position of the sentence and termed as the 'marked theme.' The author fronted this piece of information to emphasize the action of publication. However, the second portion 'بحث علمي جدید' functions the rheme that contains the time adverb 'mu'akharan' as the deputy subject.

At the lexical level, the example above based on the system of transitivity (2004). The above passive voice sentence belongs to the material process type, in which the 'Goal' is fronted into the initial part and receives the action of the verb. The 'Actor' is deleted and replaced by a 'deputy subject.'

At the discourse level, the new information is 'نُشِر,' which is not mentioned before and promoted by the author to direct the reader's attention to the act of publication. The given information is 'بحث علمي.' This type of 'Givenness' is part of the reader's predication.

**Data (5)**

في كل العلوم الطبيعية، والفيزياء منها على وجه الخصوص، يوجد مفهوم مادي وعلمي مهم يسمى (مبدأ القياس المعياري أو الكمي).

Transliteration: fi kaal al-ulumat tabiimih, wal-fizyai hinhna fee jahid, yuqadib mabkhirat fi al-ma'muriy al-ma'anihi yismi (minbaha al-qisayr al-mu'mariy o al-kymi).

Translation: In all natural sciences, especially in physics, there is a scientific and physical concept called (the standard of measurement or quantitative).

At the syntactic level, the author selects passivation process for emphasis. The first portion of the sentence is 'نشر مؤخرا' promoted to the initial position of the sentence and termed as the 'marked theme.' The author fronted this piece of information to emphasize the action of publication. However, the second portion 'بحث علمي جدید' functions the rheme that contains the time adverb 'mu'akharan' as the deputy subject.
Transliteration: fi Kul al-Elum altabieih, walfizia minha ealaa wajh alkhkusus, yujad mafhum madiy wa-eilm muhim yusamaa (mabda alqias almieyarii aw alkami).

Translation: In all natural sciences, and physics, in particular, there is essential physical and scientific concept called (the principle of standard or quantitative measurement).

At the syntactic level, the author fronted the prepositional complements to the initial part for emphasizing it. Hence, this information is the marked theme. The first part 'fi kul al-Elum altabieih, walfizia minha ealaa wajh alkhkusus' contains the semantic emphatic 'Kul/كل' and the phrase 'ealaa wajh al-khkusus/على وجه الخصوص.' However, the rheme part is the rest of the sentence. The focus of information occurs in the initial part of the sentence since the author wants to emphasize that there is an important concept found in all natural sciences, particularly the 'physics.'

At the lexical level, the example above belongs to the material process type, in which the goal complements places at the initial part of the sentence. By contrast, the real subject occurs in the complement. In the above example, the author employs the lexical word 'ealaa wajh alkhkusus/على وجه الخصوص' to give special prominence to physics.

At the discourse level, the given information is 'yujad mafhum madiy wa-eilm muhim yusamaa (mabda alqias almieyarii)/الذي يوجد مفهوم مادي وعلمي مهم يسمى (مبدأ القياس المعياري). This type of information is shared knowledge for both hearers and readers. The new information is 'fi kul al-Elum altabieih, walfizia ealaa wajh alkhkusus/في كل العلوم الطبيعية والفيزياء على وجه الخصوص.'

Data (6)

Transliteration: tam nashr natayij albahth min qibal alealam 'awman' fi mutamar alwilayat almutahidih wakan linatayij albahth sadaa kabir wawasie fi almutamar hayth li'awal marih yatim rasd dharaat min alghubar alati tuhit binujum alaltabue alrayiysi.

Translation: Research results were published by the scientist 'Awman' at the United States conference. They have showed significant echo for the first time. Dust particles surrounding the stars of the main sequence were observed.

At the syntactic level, the author selects passive voice for emphasis. The information 'tam nashr natayij albahth' is the marked theme. The author promoted this piece of information to entice the readers' attention to the action of the publication. The second part of the sentence exemplifies the rheme part, which contains the doer of the action 'the scientist 'Awman.'

At the lexical level, the example above, belongs to the material process. Particularly, the 'receptive sentence' in which the doer of the action places into the prepositional phrase. The 'Goal' occupies the subject position of the sentence emphasis.
At the discourse level, the new information is 'tam nashr natayij albahth' (تم نشر نتائج البحث). This type of 'givenness' information relates to the reader's common knowledge.

**Data (7)**

The sun releases enormous heat energy, and every second it reaches the earth's surface, power of 1360 joules per square meter per second. From simple calculations, taking the distance between the earth and the sun by 150 million kilometers, we will find that sun's surface sends total energy of $19^{10} + 14$, which is 384 billion joules per second.

At the syntactic level, the author employs: verbal and semantic emphasis. The noun phrase 'satah al shams' (سطح الشمس) is the theme which proceeds by the emphatic particle 'anna.' The remaining part of the sentence contains the repetition of the noun 'milyar milyar' (مليار مليار) as a verbal emphasis as well as the semantic emphasis 'Kul.' Hence, the focus of information occurs in the second part of the sentence because the author wants to emphasize the total energy transmitted by the sun.

At the lexical level, the above example relates to the relational process. The first part of the sentence 'stah al shams' (سطح الشمس) occupies the subject position and represents the 'Carrier' part which follows some elements that attributed to it. The verb 'yursil' (يرسل) describes the intensive process and the complements of the sentence function as the 'Attribute' of the 'Carrier.'

At the discourse level, the given information is 'stah al shams' (سطح الشمس) because this part contains the noun 'al shams' which is found in the title of the text 'maelumat mukhtasaruh ean al shams.' The new information is 'yursil taqah kilih miqdaruh 384 milyar milyar jul likuli thanih' (يرسل طاقه كليه مقدارها 384 مليار مليار جول لكل ثانية).

**Data (8)**

The researchers revealed more details about how atmospheric factors influence the evolution of the lunar surface of interest - and perhaps what lies below that surface.
At the syntactic level, the author asserts the ability of the researchers to discover more details about how atmospheric factors influence the evolution of the lunar surface. The simple theme is 'albahithun التباحثون' The emphasis places in complement of the sentence 'tamakanu min alkashf الممكنون من الكشف عن' / 'tamakanu min altafaasil الممكنون من التفاصيل.'

At the lexical level, the subject of the sentence 'albahithun التباحثون' followed by the modal verb 'tamakanu الممكنون' form the first part of the modality framework. The modal verb 'tamakan' refers to a high degree of ability in doing something.

At the discourse level, the given information is the word 'albahithun التباحثون.' This word is part of the authors' /readers' common knowledge. The new information conveys in the remaining of the sentence.

**Data (9)**

 هل تعلم بأن جميع الكواكب تدور حول نفسها من الغرب الى الشرق ما عدا كوكب الزهرة؟ بّذلك تشرق الشمس من الشرق وتغرب من الغرب إلّا في كوكب الزهرة.

Transliteration: Did you know that all planets revolve around themselves from the west to the east except for Venus? Thus, the sun rises from east and sets from west except for Venus.

Transcript: Hal taelam bi'ana jamie alkawakib tadur hawl nafsiha min algharb ala alsharq ma eida kawkab alzahrih? Bithalik tushraq al shams min alsharq wataghib min algharb 'ilaa fi kawkab alzahrih.

At the syntactic level, the author wants exhibits emphatic semantic devices: 'jamie جميع' and 'nafas نفس.' The first part of the sentence 'hal taelam معلوم' is the theme. The emphasis is on the direction of the planets.

At the lexical level, the example above represents the mental process in which the subject of the sentence comprises one of the cognitive verbs 'taelam تعلم' and the author considers the readers as the 'sensor' of the scientific phenomenon, which is the direction and motion of the planets in space.

At the discourse level, the given information is 'hal taelam معلوم' because these words are mentioned in the title of the text 'Hal taelam معلوم.' The new information in the remnant part of the sentence.

**Data (10)**

أن كتلة الشمس هائلة فال وهي ٠٢٠٠٠ في ٠١٠٠٠ في ٠٣٠٠٠، فالشمس لتعتمد في الثانيه الواحده فاليوم ٢٦٦٠ مليارات سنة تصطالم في هذا الحد فعلياً لا. لكن عمر الشمس وعمر النجوم عموماً لا يقال بمقدار ما تفقده من كتلة في الثانيه.

Transliteration: 'an kutlat al shams hayilah fielan wahi 20 fi 10 fi 30, falaw khasirat alshams 4 alaf min kutlatihaw fi althaanih alwaheiduh fahi tastatie 'an tastamir bidhalik limadih 2660 milyar milyar sinuh. laken eumar al shams la yasil ela hadha alhad fielian, lays lan fuqdan alktuhluy sayataghayar bal lan eumar al shams wa-amar alnujum eumuman la tuqas bimiqdar ma taftqidih min kutuluh fi althaanih.
Translation: The sun's mass is enormous, and it is 20 by ten by 30. If the sun loses 4,000 of its mass in one second, it can continue with that for 2660 billion billion years. But the age of the sun does not reach this extent, not because the loss of mass will change, but the sun's age and stars, in general, they don't measured in mass lost per second.

At the syntactic level, the author uses many emphatic particles: 'laken/لكن, lays,/ليس, bal/بل, and al-seen/السين' for emphasizing the stability of the age of the sun. However, the first part of the sentence realized by 'laken eumar al shams/لكن عمر الشمس', functions as the theme. The second part 'la-yasil elu hadhad fielia, lays lan fuqdan alкуtlikh sayataghayar bal lan eumar al shams wa-amar alnujum eumuman la tuqa bimiqdar min kutalih fi althaanihi' functions as the rheme.

At the lexical level, the first portion 'laken eumar al shams/لكن عمر الشمس' occupies the subject position of the sentence followed by the negative particle 'la/لا' and the verb 'yasil/يصل' in present tense. This combination constitutes the declarative mood. The author wants to assert a constant scientific fact by employing the present tense and the negative tool 'la/لا'.

At the discourse level, the given information is 'eumar al shams/عمر الشمس.' This type of information contains the word 'al shams/الشمس'. This word exists in the in the previous text. The new information occurs in the remaining of the example.

Conclusions
1- The data analysis reveals that both languages are similar in adopting the marked processes for emphasis like (passivation, fronting). In English, the subject in the passive voice process demotes to the prepositional position. In Arabic, the subject in the passive sentence is either demotes in the prepositional place or replaces by 'deputy subject.'

2- The phenomenon of fronting employs in both languages. In English, the process of fronting is optional, whereas, in Arabic, it can be used either optionally or obligatory.

3- Modality in English is limited only to verbs like (can, should). Arabic exhibits verbs and particles like ('will'/al-seen/السين 'able'/tamakan/تمكن, and 'should'/yajib/يجب). Moreover, both languages are similar in employing some particles for negation, such as (not) in English and ('but rather'/bal/بل 'but' /laken/لكن and 'not' /laysa/ليس in Arabic.

4- Both languages are similar in using the dummy pronouns for dividing the sentence into two parts for emphasis. The difference lies in the position of the focus of information. In English, the 'it-cleft' sentence emphasizes either the first or the second part of the sentence. In Arabic, the pronoun of separation like ('she'/heya/هي) emphasizes the first part of the sentence.

5- Both languages are similar in recognizing the 'Given New' information in written discourse by recoverability, saliency, and shared knowledge. They have different anaphors to determine whether a specific constituent is previously mentioned or not:
6- In English, the analysis results show that some anaphors exist, such as the pronoun 'it' and nouns like 'mission' and 'station.' In Arabic, the authors employ anaphors like the nouns ('points'/ nuqat/ نقاط, 'the space'/ al-fadhaa, and 'the sun'/ al shams/ الشمس).

About the Authors:
Ruaa J. Al-obaidy received her B.A. degree in English language from the University of Baghdad, College of Languages, Department of English in 2013. She is currently MA student at the same university and college. http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5494-4515

Nawar Hussein Al-Marsumi is an Assistant Professor, holding the Master of Arts degree in English Language and Linguistics obtained from University of Baghdad, College of Education-Ibn Rushd. Since 1999, I have been working at Baghdad University as a teaching member in the Department of English. My major is the English Language and Linguistics and I published several papers in contrastive studies, stylistics and pragmatics. http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3918-5984

References

Arab World English Journal
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Appendix (A): Spaceport Magazine

Text (1)
NASA, Space X successfully complete critical In-Flight Abort Test
January/February 2020 Vol. 7 P. 4
By: Jim Cawley
"As part of the test, Space X configured Crew Dragon to trigger a launch escape about 1.5 minutes after liftoff. All major functions were executed, including separation, engine firings, parachute deployment, and landing. Crew Dragon splashed down at 10:38 a.m. just off the Florida coast in the Atlantic Ocean."

Text (2)
NASA Ring in Busy New Year in Florida to prepare for Artemis missions
January/February 2020 Vol. 7 P. 10
By: Linda Herridge
"In 2020, Exploration Ground Systems (EGS) activities will ramp up as launch hardware arrives and teams put systems in place for Artemis 1 and 11 missions."

Text (3)
Kennedy Launch team prepares for Exploration Mission-1
February 2019 Vol. 6 p. 4
By: Bob Granath
"Taking place on Dec. 14, the demonstration was intended to validate the launch teams capability to perform an EM-1 countdown and respond to problems put into the system for practice."

Text (4)
NASA's Kennedy Space Center Innovator's Launchpad
April 2019 Vol. 6 P. 19
By: Daren Hienne
"There are so many NASA's contributions to society that people constantly overlook the agency’s impact. I would highly recommend for all NASA employees even to check out the annual "Spinoff" publications to stay abreast of all the wonderful things the agency is doing."

Text (5)
Commercial crew rescue training up ramp
June 2019 Vol. 6 P. 4
By: Tori Mcendon
"For the emergency training rehearsal. Wilmore is the backup crew member for both the first and second crewed Starliner flights. Although Starliner is designed to land in the desert, it must also be able to land in the water in an emergency, and its crew must be prepared for all possibilities."

Text (6)
NASA on the Air" events to highlight key space milestone
January 2018 Vol. 5 P. 31
By: Bob Granath
"Participants can enhance their award by using one of the existing capabilities of amateur radio on the space station, such as packet (digital operations) or listening in to an astronaut giving answers to school children during one of the scheduled school contacts."

**Text (7)**

NASA on the Air events to highlight key space milestone
January 2018 Vol. 5 P. 31
By: Bob Granath

"...Participants can enhance their award by using one of the existing capabilities of amateur radio on the space station, such as packet (digital operations) or listening in to an astronaut giving answers to school children during one of the scheduled school contacts. No special activity is planned from the station and only one activity from the space station is needed to qualify."

**Text (8)**

Insight Space Craft prepared for testing
April 2018 Vol. 5 P. 12

"...In Sight was developed and built by Lockheed- Martin Space Systems in Denver, Colorado, and arrived at Vandenberg on Feb. 28 aboard a U.S. Air Force C-17 aircraft. The spacecraft then was transported to the Astrotech facility at the West Coast launch site."

**Text (9)**

NASA assigns first crew to fly commercial Space craft
August Vol. 5 P. 5 2018
By: Madison Tuttee

"..."What we really see now is a much greater emphasis on safety" said Ferguson. "We’re returning to a full capability ascent abort system to keep astronauts safe all the way through the profile, and that’s something that the shuttle didn’t have."

**Text (10)**

Kennedy Space Center accomplishments focus of center director's
April 2019 Vol. 6 P. 11
By: Linda Herridge

"...Exploration Mission-1(EM-1) will put Orion in space without crew on broad and bring it out to a distant retrograde orbit around the Moon. The most important thing NASA will get from the mission is a check of the thermal protection system of the Orion crew module during lunar reentry velocities."

**Appendix (2): Sadeem Bulletin Magazine**

**Text (1)**

"قتهما بمواقيت وأتجاه لا اعتدالين في دار الأرض وعاق بنو يحيى ولد الشروق ولاد للشمس)" 1440

**Text (2)**

"هذا يدل أن الحلول الالترادية مكونة من ثلاث قوى: قوى الأقمار وقوى الرياح وقوى الحرارة. هذه القوى تؤثر في مسار الأقمار والأرضية لأهداف مثل التصالح والتحقيق والتحري. تؤثر هذه القوى على مسار الأقمار ومسار الأرض في القضاء الذي تتحرك فيه الأرض."

Arab World English Journal
www.awej.org
ISSN: 2229-9327
المجلد السادس / نيسان / 2021
د. أحمد عبد الكريم حسن
"أقصى مسافة سنكون قادرين على رصدها في الوقت الحالي في كونه، عمره 8 و13 مليار سنة، حد رؤيتنا هو 46 مليار سنة ضعيفه، أي يزداد حد رؤيتنا المستقبليه نسبه 33%, تقريباً 61 مليار سنة ضعيفه.

المجلد الثاني / تشرين الثاني / 2020
د. أنس عبد الرزاق سلمان
"نُشِّر مُوجَّهاً بحث علمي جديداً حول المواصفات الميكانيكية الخاصة بتسع حفر على سطح القمر (تيتان) وهو أكبر قمر لكوكب زحل والثاني الأكبر قمر في المجموعة الشمسية بعد القمر (جانيميد) التابع للمشتري.

المجلد الرابع / كانون الثاني / 2021
د. أحمد عبد الرزاق
"في كل العلوم الطبيعية، والعلمية فيها، يوجد مفهوم مادي وعلمي مهم يُسمى (مبدأ القياس المعياري أو الكم). القياس كمفهوم عام له صور مختلفة في علم المنطق ولست بصدد شرح القياس المنطقي في هذا المقال.

المجلد الثالث / كانون الأول / 2020
د. أنس سلمان طه
"هل تعلم بأن كل الكواكب تدور حول نفسها من الغرب إلى الشرق، إلا كوكب الزهرة؟ حيث تشرق الشمس من الشرق وتغرب من الغرب في كوكب الزهرة.

المجلد السادس / حزيران / 2021
"لكن عمر الشمس يصل إلى هذا الحد فعلياً، ليس بفقدان الكتلة سيتغير بل من كتلة في الثانية. إلى هذا الحد فعلياً، ليس تفقدهما في الثانية.

المجلد الثاني / تشرين الثاني / 2020
د. أنس عبد الرزاق سلمان
"الباحثون تمكنو من الكشف عن مزيداً من التفاصيل حول كيف يمكن تحريك العوامل الجوية أو (التجويه) تطور سطح القمر لأكبره، ربما ما يقع تحت ذلك السطح.

المجلد الثاني / تشرين الثاني / 2020
د. أنس سلمان طه
"هل تعلم؟"
Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in ELT as a Link between Language Learning and Content Development

Syed Sarwar Hussain
Department of English Language and Translation
College of Languages and Translation
King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Abstract:
Content and Language Integrated Learning signifies studying a core subject (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Engineering and so on) while simultaneously studying a language. It means integrating the two, with each serving the purpose of the other. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is increasingly being used worldwide as it centers not only on content but on content and language both at the same time. There is no language without content and there is no content without language. This quantitative study discusses the use of CLIL in English language teaching (ELT). It dissects how teachers’ training and experience affect content development. A t-test analysis was conducted to analyze the effect of teachers’ training and teaching experiences on the use and impact of Content and Language Integrated Learning. The t-test analysis carried out for this study revealed that there was no significant relationship between teachers’ training programme and the use of CLIL (P<0.05), and teacher’s experience and the impact of CLIL (P<0.05). But the results achieved in this study invariably show that a majority of teachers have found that on-the-job, in-service CLIL teachers training program had hugely and positively affected their teaching performance and the language accomplishments of their English language students. And this was the central goal or purpose for which the present study was conducted. Therefore, this study recommends on-the-job, in-service CLIL training for teachers which will ensure that they remain in touch with the global trends of CLIL in ELT.

Keywords: audio-lingual approach, communicative language teaching, Content and language integrated learning, English language teaching, grammar-translation method, task-based language teaching

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1. Introduction

Teachers’ concepts and strategies for facilitating student learning are generally referred to as teaching approaches by language researchers (Akimenko, 2016). These teaching approaches are developed based on the subject matter to be taught as well as the learner's personality. In Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), the goal of education is double-faced; a language is employed as a means of teaching, and simultaneously, what is being taught is important to language development. CLIL is not essentially a specific approach. It is, rather, a valuable pedagogical tool which is quite wide-ranging and across the board. The ground rule in CLIL is that language is utilized as a learning tool, which helps the learning of content and develops language acquisition at the same time (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2013).

According to Coyle’s (1999) 4C curriculum, several characteristics have been recognized to ensure an effective CLIL class (Klimova, 2012). A curriculum's content is a progression in knowledge, skills, and understanding that is tied to specific aspects of a prescribed curriculum. Communicating effectively while using a new language indicates intercultural communication proficiency. Concept creation (both abstract and concrete), as well as language comprehension, are cognitively evolving skills. Having a thorough command of the language that is being learned or taught is essential when working in the field of English-language training. According to the two primary pillars of linguistics and psychology respectively, the field of English language education falls under the applied linguistics sub-discipline. Since these two fields are so closely related, English Language Teaching (ELT) has been able to build on the contributions of countless linguists and psychologists to create the current state of knowledge that is available to scholars and practitioners in the field. (Yaman, 2019).

Since the early 1900s, the AoA (the starting age for foreign language acquisition) has steadily increased and is now set at six years old by legislation, in part because of the once-held belief that young beginners were superior at implicitly acquiring English Language. On the other hand, instructional language learners do not have access to the same amount and variety of input as learners in a naturalistic language learning environment; this has been empirically demonstrated (Ozfidan and Burlbaw, 2019). Substantial research has reportedly shown that it is easier for younger learners to acquire language compared to adult learners. However, adult learners benefit from explicit language learning tools because of their advanced cognitive abilities (Celaya, Torras, & Pérez-Vidal, 2001; Pilar & Garcia, 2003). Considering all of the research findings, it is reasonable to conclude that earlier exposure is preferable, but only if it is associated with sufficient exposure; more specifically, such exposure must be widely distributed (Serrano & Munoz, 2007). Opportunities should be provided that would enable second language (L2) learners to acquire language in varying contexts. As a complement to traditional ELT learning, CLIL is utilized to assist adult language learners. According to previous studies, many factors are responsible for the successful acquisition of a second language. A number of these are exposure to information, processing of meaning, processing of form, and language production.

A sizeable amount of information is required to aid students’ learning. While it is important to take the volume of information provided into account, providing comprehensible information is even more important. It is necessary to initiate learning circumstances that are relevant to the learners’ requirements. Because the information provided is confined to that provided by the...
textbook and is not used communicatively, it is functionally limiting in nature. Hence, CLIL has been adopted as a method of delivering ample input that is both real and meaningful at the same time, as it relates to the discipline of the learner (history, mathematics, physical education and science). Also, the level of language being taught must relate to the learners’ discipline, this is necessary for adequate communication. Tsvetkova (2016) also argues that intelligible input must be processed for meaning, but only actual and communicative input will be viewed as being essential to the process. As a goal, ELT textbook should not be designed to be only theory-based, it has to be communicative-based. This encourages students to process it for meaning. Learning to process meaning will be more motivational if the topic is interesting in and of itself, such as learning about a historical event or a scientific technique.

Furthermore, students must be encouraged to process linguistic form to integrate it into their existing linguistic system. When a teacher intentionally calls the students' attention to particular formal characteristics of the language, the processing of form is promoted. Because language forms are frequently de-contextualized, it is possible that learners will not feel the need to remain aware and pay attention to such forms consistently (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). But it is more likely that learners in the CLIL context will engage in the form-function analysis if the communication itself motivates them. Since language forms are contextualized in the CLIL methodology, therefore, learners will be stimulated to pay attention to the forms in order to comprehend the course content which essential to their study. However, delivering content does not guarantee language acquisition. This emphasis on content does not generally necessitate much processing and is not based on genuine communication. All of these contribute to de-motivation on the learners’ part. Consequently, the problem of improving learners' oral production can easily be met in CLIL. This can be done by integrating tasks that need learners to engage in a variety of language production in order to attain the effective communicative goal. It is in this way that the learners will be motivated to utilize the language constructively in order to communicate with one another. Moreover, once their flaws have been acknowledged, the students can be made aware of them and get corrective feedback in the context of the classroom (Lyster, 2017). When students acknowledge their flaws, they can be aware of their mistakes and work towards getting corrective feedback in the context of the classroom (Lyster, 2017).

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The issues raised above served as inspiration for this research. The study looked into the implementation of CLIL in English language learning. Hence, this study examined the concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in English Language Teaching.

1.1.1 Research Questions

1. Does teachers’ training program affect the use of CLIL?
2. Does the teacher’s experience have an impact on the use of CLIL?

2. Literature Review

Content and Language Integrated Learning

When the world is becoming more globalized, it is indisputably true that the ability to communicate in different languages – English, being the world’s most widely spoken lingua franca, is at the forefront of educational agendas all over the world. During the early 1990s in
Europe, the acquisition of a second language alongside English was encouraged. Individuals worked hard to develop proficiency in the language they were acquiring while maintaining excellence in their native language. During the Commissioning of the European Communities’ 1995 White Paper: ‘Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society’ (1995), the ‘2 + 1’ formula was presented. Subsequently, it was recommended that citizens should be able to communicate in three languages, inclusive of their native language. With this goal in mind, the European Network of Administrators, Researchers, and Practitioners formed the term ‘Content and Language Integrated Learning’. In CLIL, the learner learns a language, as well as the content. The role of both language and content is important. Content-based instruction (CBI) and the teaching of a content subject in a foreign language (the English as a Medium of Instruction) are distinct from CLIL in that it places a dual emphasis on developing both students’ subject-matter knowledge and their ability to communicate effectively in the foreign language. In order for students to enhance their cognitive, communicative, and intercultural competencies, CLIL’s principles call for exposing them to a variety of rich language input and authentic learning scenarios. Coyle (2007, p. 545) believed that the term ‘CLIL’ implied “an umbrella term adopted by the European Network of Administrators, Researchers and Practitioners (EUROCLIC) in the mid 1990s”. Therefore, the following definition put forward by Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols (2008) is extensively accepted in the field of language teaching with reference to CLIL:

CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language (p. 11). The CLIL strategy, above all, involves using a language that is not a student’s native language as a medium of instruction and learning … Language teachers in CLIL programmes play a unique role. In addition to teaching the standard curriculum, they work to support content teachers by helping students to gain the language needed to manipulate content from other subjects (Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols, 2008, p. 9).

CLIL has the potential of fostering language varieties. This is a useful technique that can influence language learning positively. CLIL may also be identified as a cutting-edge method to learning that is both dynamic and motivating, it has many unique characteristics. There has continually been an attempt to go beyond the limitations of traditional school curricula. This attempt represents a shift away from teaching individual subjects and towards curricular integration.

2.1 English Language Teaching

English language teaching is the process of imparting knowledge of the English language to students whose first language is not English, and it fundamentally requires pedagogical activities associated with effective English language instruction. It is in this respect that it becomes enormously important to choose a particular teaching methodology (Kassem, 2018). Teaching methodology is not a spontaneous process or something that happens naturally out of the context. There has to be a specific curriculum or syllabus in place. It is essentially a well-thought-out strategy in which a teacher prefers to explain or teach relevant material to students so as to make them learn it well. It refers to the certain pedagogies and strategies used for classroom instructions. And in the context of CLIL, it is important to practice and apply what has been taught in the classroom through specific activities. It is, therefore, encouraged that learners work in groups or peers to foster learning, and the teacher is required to design a testing and evaluation method.
2.2 English Language Instruction

A language teaching technique is a method of teaching a language that is founded on systematic rules and procedures, it is an application of viewpoints on how a language should be taught and learned in the most effective way.

The following are the various methods of language instruction that have evolved considerably in recent years:

➢ Grammar Translation Method (GTM)
➢ The Direct Method
➢ The Audio-Lingual Approach
➢ Communicative Language Teaching
➢ TBLT (Task-based learning teaching)

2.2.1 Grammar Translation Method

The grammar-translation method was one of the first methods devised to teach foreign languages. It is a classical approach that was also used in the teaching of Greek and Latin languages. The goal of grammar-translation courses is for students to study grammatical rules and then put those principles into practice by translating phrases between the target language and their native language. Advanced students may be forced to translate entire texts word by word. The aim and purpose of this method is to translate language literally. However, it does not necessarily influence students’ intellectual growth positively.

Characteristics:

➢ Classes are conducted entirely in the students’ native language.
➢ The method focuses on the interpretation of singular phrases and words.
➢ It does not pay much attention to correct pronunciation.
➢ The reading of challenging literature begins as early as possible. The complexities of grammar are explained with great detail.

2.2.2 Direct Method

When the Grammar-Translation technique of teaching failed, the direct way of teaching was devised as a counter-measure. It attempted to immerse the learner in the language using the same method with which the first language was learnt. All instructions are conducted in the target language including the teaching of grammar, and a strong emphasis is placed on speaking and listening skills. Only practical everyday-language is taught throughout the course. The disadvantage of this method is that it tries to teach a second language as the first language was acquired, little realizing that both of these belong to two different worlds.

2.2.3 Audio-Lingual Method

According to the Audio-Lingual technique, language was just a type of behavior that could be learned through the development of appropriate speech patterns (Mart, 2013). In other words, the purpose of this method is to instill in trainees the habit of speaking in their original language (Dendrinos, 1992).
Some researchers also emphasize that foreign language learning is primarily a process of mechanical habit building and that excellent habits are created by giving accurate responses rather than making mistakes (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Habit formation is frequently accomplished through the use of dialogues and pattern drills that students must repeat. Therefore, as (Dueñas Vinuesa, 2002) points out, repetition of an act makes it a habit; hence, more learning occurs. The Audio-Lingual technique is characterized primarily by the following factors:

A conversation is read aloud by the teacher, who acts out the dialogue. The ability to put the subject matter into perspective has always been motivating, and students have a better chance of remembering what they have learned as a result. Students need to acquire the target language in a concrete context that allows them to apply what they have learned to real-life learning situations. Teachers will serve as role models for their students, encouraging and inspiring them to strive to master the target language. The dialogue is repeated by the students so that they can learn to utilize the target language effortlessly and fluently as a result of repeated exposure. In this strategy, students develop a habit of speaking the target language with ease; as a result, the more they repeat, the more they will speak the target language naturally without having to think about what they are about to say.

2.2.4 Communicative Language Teaching Method.

In communicative language teaching (CLT), often known as the communicative approach, interaction is considered the means and end of language learning. Communication-based learning environments allow students to learn and practice the target language through interactions with one another and with their instructors. Other learning strategies include the study of authentic texts (texts written in the target language for purposes other than language learning) and the use of the target language both inside and outside the classroom (Rao, 2019).

2.2.5 Task-Based Language Teaching Method.

Task-based language teaching (TBLT), sometimes known as task-based instruction (TBI), is a type of language learning that emphasizes the use of authentic language to perform meaningful activities in the target language. Some examples of such activities are: going to the doctor, completing an interview, or contacting customer service for assistance. It is examined mostly for task outcome (the completion of real-world tasks) rather than the accuracy of specified language forms. As a result, TBLT is particularly well-suited for improving target language fluency and increasing students’ confidence. TBLT can be regarded as a subset of communicative language teaching as a result of this.

2.3 Teaching Methods

The amount of student learning that occurs is widely considered as the most important factor for determining effective teaching. There is a strong association between students' judgments of the 'amount learned' in the course and their overall ratings of the teacher and the course, which is constant across studies. Those that gain more knowledge give higher ratings to their teachers (Sajjad, 2010). The principles and procedures employed by teachers to facilitate student learning are referred to as teaching methods. These tactics are influenced by a variety of factors, including the subject matter to be taught and the learner's personality. A learning approach should be significant and synonymous with the needs of a learner. Language instruction essentially
entails the subject matter as well as the students’ learning style. In schools today, the current trend is to encourage students to express themselves creatively.

2.4 Varying Forms of Teaching Methods

The various forms of teaching methods can be divided into three major categories, each of which is described below. Teacher-centered methods, learner-centered methods, content-focused methods, and interactive or participative methods are all examples of instructional approaches.

2.4.1 Methods Centered on the Instructor/Teacher

In this context, the teacher assumes the position of a subject matter expert who knows everything about the subject. The teacher is regarded as an expert or an authority figure by the students who are observing him or her. Learners, on the other hand, are assumed to be passive and plentiful consumers of information from their instructors. Expository or lecture methods are examples of such methods because they demand little or no participation on the part of the learners in the learning process. The term closed-ended is applied to refer to this methodology because it requires students to respond with a single isolated answer recalling their knowledge with little insight or information (Çakır & Cengiz, 2016). The term refers to tactics that do not allow students to participate in what they are being taught because of this lack of involvement on their part.

2.4.2 Methods that are Centred on the Learner

The teacher or instructor serves in both capacities: as a teacher, and as a student. The teacher has a dual function as a learner so that his intellectual horizons are broadened rather than narrowed. In addition, the teacher learns new things every day that he or she did not know before he/she began teaching. The teacher becomes a resource rather than an authority. The discussion technique, the discovery or inquiry-oriented approach, and Hill’s model of learning through conversation are all examples of learner-centered methodologies (Rabow et al, 2000).

2.4.3 Methods Centered on Contents

In this category of methods, both the teacher and the students must be able to integrate themselves into the topic being taught. Generally speaking, this indicates that the information and abilities to be imparted are considered sacred or extremely significant. A great deal of focus is placed on the clarity of the writing and the meticulous analysis of the subject. Both the teacher and the students are prohibited from changing or being critical of anything that has to do with the curriculum. The programmed learning approach is an example of a method in which the interests of the teacher and students are supported by the content of the lesson.

2.4.4 Methods for Interactive/Participative Learning

This fourth category incorporates elements of the other three categories without placing undue emphasis on either the student, the topic, or the teacher in the process. In these methods, situational analysis is used to determine the most appropriate topic to learn at a particular time given the situation of learners and the teacher. They necessitate a collaborative understanding of a wide range of topics and issues.
2.4.5 The Role-Play Technique

Teachers use their own life experiences to portray real-world events in role plays. Successful role-plays boost the participants’ self-confidence, provide them with the opportunity to understand or even experience empathy for other people's points of view or positions, and usually conclude with concrete solutions, directions, or recommendations. When it comes to investigating and developing interviewing tactics as well as studying the intricacies and potential conflicts that arise during group meetings, role plays are quite beneficial. As well as serving as good energizers, they assist participants in consolidating many teachings in one environment. They foster content and language-based learning.

CLIL teaching methodology, therefore, involves and evolves the wide range of teaching strategies discussed above combining the language teaching and the non-language course contents in order to motivate the learners and develop their cognitive skills to help them achieve their language skills and specific knowledge simultaneously.

3. Methodology

The research population consists of students and teachers alike that are interested in English Language teaching and learning. The researcher observed English Language teaching and learning in the context of Content and Language Integrated Learning. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select respondents from the chosen school area. The research instrument consisted of a 3-sectioned questionnaire. The questionnaire modeled the scale designed by Galluzzo (1987) for instructional methods. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice questions designed to achieve the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was also peer-reviewed to account for further accuracy.

3.1 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The method used to collect the data was such that the researcher first introduced himself and the task at hand before passing the questionnaire to the respondents. The researcher explained the purpose of the research work in order to acquire credible responses from the respondent. This was done to ensure that the respondents built some level of trust with the administrator of the questionnaire. In return, the respondents provided adequate information while ensuring that their anonymity is maintained. The data collected for this study consisted of naturalistic classroom teachers who are great users of their native language as well as English language. Data was collected in the location over a period of two weeks. During these periods, the researcher also observed both students and teachers. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the demographics of the respondents. A correlative analysis was conducted on various parameters of the study to determine the impact of CLIL on English Language learning. The researcher analyzed the data collected using frequency counts converted to percentages. A correlation analysis was also carried out. The interpretation of these formed the basis for the Discussion of the study. The analysis was conducted on a total of approximately thirty teachers.

4. Results

The data collection method generated useful data. These were analyzed to achieve the objectives of the study. The following responses of respondents were found to be useful for the purpose of the study.
Table 1. **Completion of a Teachers’ Training Programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>86.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above indicated that 26 (86.58%) of the 30 respondents underwent a teachers’ training programme before being certified as a teacher. The remaining 4 (13.32%) had no formal teachers’ training. The result of the study showed that the majority (86.58%) of the teachers had gone through a teachers’ training programme. Rao (2019) noted that in-service training serves an advantage to teachers. This in turn, improves students’ educational performance. Thus, in this setting, whether teachers formally underwent teachers’ training or not, they could be trained in service, although Rao (2019) noted that pre-service training holds tremendous benefits for teachers, and in turn students alike.

Table 2. **Experience of Teachers (Number of Years)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that 6 (19.98%) of the total number of teachers had 0 - 2 years of experience, that is, they have been teaching for less than 2 years. 8 (26.64%) of the teachers have been teaching for 3 - 5 years. 14 (46.60%) of them have been teaching for 5 - 7 years. Only 2 (6.67%) of them are quite experienced, they have been teaching for more than 8 years. Zhang (2008) found a significant correlation between the number of years (experience) teachers have been teaching English Language and student achievement. Students tend to achieve a better understanding of the English Language when their instructor has been teaching for more than 5 years. This positive correlation was also found between the teacher’s level of education and students’ achievement. The higher a teacher’s level of education, the better the student’s chances at successfully mastering English Language (Zhang, 2008).

Table 3. **Elements Included in Formal Training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content of the subject</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>49.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy of the subject</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom practice</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following elements were included in formal training: content of the subject, pedagogy of teaching, and classroom practice. 15 (49.95%) of the teachers noted that the study material mostly covered the content of the subject. 5 (16.65%) of them noted that the study material mostly contained the pedagogy of the subject; while the remaining 10 (33.3%) noted that classroom
practice was the most relevant content in their teacher training programme. Students were found to succeed at learning when the teacher had gone through various learning experiences. The teacher must have an idea of all teaching pedagogies, even though he/she specializes in one or another. Adult English Language learners need a focused set of instructions to help them master English Language. While reading, writing, speaking and listening are important sets of skills, they need to acquire pedagogies and practice frequently in classrooms. The teacher needs to see to this. Only when a certain level of English Language is acquired can a teacher successfully teach content. Of these skills, reading comprehension is particularly important (Burt, Peyton, & Schaetzel, 2017).

The above were the demographics of the population. Further questions were included in the questionnaire in order to acquire further insights to fulfill the research objectives.

Table 4. Medium of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All the students learn in English</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some students learn in their native language</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students learn in English and their native language</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above showed that English Language was the main language of instruction. English Language was the only medium of instruction for 21 (70%) of the students. 9 (30%) of the students learned in English Language as well as their native language. None of the students learned using only the native language.

Table 5. CLIL-Incorporated Teaching Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 (60%) of the teachers learned and use CLIL as a teaching method. 14 (40%) of them do not use the CLIL method of teaching. To determine the relevance of CLIL to English Language teaching, the researcher ran a correlation analysis against another parameter of the study (completion of a teachers’ training programme). It was based on the question whether teachers who passed through a teachers’ training programme felt more inclined to incorporate the CLIL programme in their teaching methods.

Table 6. T-test Analysis for Trained Teachers against Use of CLIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of CLIL-incorporated method</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trained teachers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This means that the result is not significant at $p = 0.05$. There is no significant relationship between teacher’s training programme and incorporating the CLIL method. While teachers may undergo a teachers’ training programme, it does not necessarily mean that they are taught the CLIL method. However, it is possible that teachers can learn this method in-service, on the job. This was the finding of McDougald & Pissarello (2020) when they investigated teachers on the use of the CLIL method. They found that most teachers were not trained on the CLIL method until they started at their teaching jobs. The CLIL method ensures that teachers not only continue to learn language teaching but also learn content development.

Table 7. Impact of CLIL on English Language Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21 (70%) of the teachers believed that CLIL had a huge impact on English Language teaching. 9 (30%) of the teachers believe that CLIL did not affect English Language teaching. According to the number of years, teachers have served, do they believe that CLIL has an impact on the success of English Language teaching? This experience was measured in a number of years.

Table 8. T-test Analysis for Teacher Experience against Impact of CLIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience (Number of years)</th>
<th>Impact of CLIL on successful teaching</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T-value = -1.42857
P-value = 0.1132
p-value is not significant at $p = 0.05$. 
5. Discussion

This result shows that the experience of teachers (number of years teachers have been teaching) does not necessarily mean that they believe it has an impact on the successful teaching of English Language. CLIL is an innovative approach to language teaching. It is hoped that deficiencies in language teaching for content purposes can be overcome using this method. When teachers are rooted in this method, they will be able to respond to ELT issues in new ways. Pre- and in-service teachers will benefit from this method. It, however, does not necessarily mean that one of the two (pre- and in-service teachers) will be more successful at teaching through CLIL, as shown by the result of this t-test. Still, this study maintains that CLIL is an important tool in ELT teaching (Banegas, 2012).

Most teachers might have used the CLIL method without being aware of its approach. Content are used to illustrate lexical or grammatical issues. Using oversimplified English serves as a disadvantage to the CLIL method. According to this methodology the content is there for the sake of the language and vice versa. Language learning is considered at the core of the curriculum. As revealed by the objectives of this study, future teachers need an integrated education to properly function in the language and content teaching profession. It is fruitful to invest in CLIL programme for teachers’ training.

This analysis further revealed that there is a significant and consistent relationship between CLIL and ELT. This in line with the findings of Oluwatimilehin and Owoyele (2012), who stated that the degree of successful teaching and learning depends on the amount of time the teacher is actively engaged in constructing the content of the lesson. Also, Awang & Sinnadurai (2011) reported a significant correlation between CLIL and academic achievement ELT.

Hence, the first step in CLIL is, training the teacher. CLIL is increasingly being taken up by the Ministries of Education around the world. It is an innovative approach in teaching modern languages. It is a motivating method for teaching subject topics. It is a useful contribution to the internationalization of multilingualism. Content teachers are mostly monolingual, hence, they may not understand the importance of becoming bilingual. Educational ministries need to put more emphasis on the importance of CLIL. They need to understand its benefits as well as supervise a sufficiently competent workforce. Here, the number of years spent in language teaching is not the most important factor, although teaching experience is important, it is not positively correlated with CLIL benefits according to the findings of this study. However, it has been observed that in-service training for CLIL serves tremendous purposes (Hillyard, 2011).

A growing trend in the bilingual education is the CLIL method. CLIL teaching approach belongs to the field of language learning for specific purposes. It is promoted as an educational umbrella word containing several techniques that can be used in multiple curriculum models. The program models employed in CLIL practices might vary significantly depending on the environment. CLIL can be also used to teach all or some of the school topics (for example, bilingual/plurilingual education programs such as full or partial immersion programs). Some lesson sequences in some school courses can be taught using CLIL. The goal of tandem teaching is to achieve a balance between topic and language by working together. Modern educational perspectives, research on second language acquisition, and current approaches to language
instruction have all impacted its design. A closer examination of CLIL reveals the influence of the early 1980s post-modernist movement on language education. Language education approaches that were built on prescriptive procedures and unchanging sets of principles and independence of context have been challenged by the ‘post-method’ mentality. The postmodern (relativist) views emphasize contextual factors and local specificities of knowledge (political, historical, or cultural).

6. Conclusion

The study was carried out to examine the effectiveness and importance of the CLIL approach in ELT. The research investigated the link between language learning and content development. If academic failure is to be forestalled and standards improved, it is undeniable that institutions, where English Language is taught, would provide relevant content structure that stimulate academic environments. Reliable content and language integrated learning classes not only depend on active learners but also on enthusiastic teachers to facilitate English learning among students. In order to improve the performance of teachers in English Language classroom, there is need to give proper training to teachers to develop themselves in a better way. Implementing CLIL in teaching methods will consequently improve English language teaching. With a deep knowledge of the role of CLIL, along with its implementation, teachers and students alike can be sure that successful learning and education will take place.

About the Author:
Syed Sarwar Hussain is Associate Professor at the Department of English Language & Translation, College of Languages and Translation, King Saud University, Riyadh. He has been teaching English for the past forty-two years, and has published several research papers in various international journals. He has authored eight books that include books on literary criticism and translations of Urdu short stories and novels. ORCid ID http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9973-5477

References


Teachers’ Beliefs about Grammar Teaching within a Context of Omani Secondary Schools

Said AlAbri
Ministry of Education, Oman

Chahrazed Mirza
Department of Foreign Languages
University of Nizwa, Oman
Corresponding author: chahrazed@unizwa.edu.om

Fouzi Bellalem
Community College, Qatar

Mohamed Forouzani
University of Nizwa, Oman

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Abstract
The present qualitative case study investigated the beliefs and practices of six English language teachers in secondary schools in Oman about grammar instruction. To improve EFL education in Omani schools, the study sought to determine whether teachers’ beliefs and their grammar teaching practices were congruent. The study collected the data through classroom observations and interviews, and analysed the data using content analysis and Grounded theory to analyze the data. The findings showed that even though most teachers acknowledged the benefits of inductive grammar instruction, they favored deductive grammar instruction. Teachers attributed their classroom decisions to various factors such as students’ language proficiency, time constraints, and curriculum overload. In addition, the findings showed that teachers’ learning experiences shaped their decision-making and instructional practices. The lack of professional development training was another crucial factor that influenced their beliefs and grammar teaching practices. The study concluded that teachers in Oman required more individualized training sessions that could foster alternative beliefs and practices in favor of inductive grammar instruction.

Keywords: Deductive and Inductive grammar teaching, grammar practices, Omani secondary schools, secondary school teachers’ beliefs

Introduction
As part of the educational reforms in English language instruction, the government of Oman implemented a new educational system known as "Basic Education" (Al-Issa & Al-Belushi, 2012; Al-Jadidi, 2009). The English Language Curriculum drew on constructivism as a learning theory. The emphasis of the textbook "English For Me" emphasized inductive grammar instruction to help students develop their critical thinking skills and actively engage in the process of knowledge construction.

Within the principles of these reforms, EFL school teachers were encouraged to implement the inductive approach to teach grammar. Nationwide, in-service training programs (INSETs) introduced teachers to the new curriculum and emphasized the importance of implementing the inductive approach. Despite the in-service training programs, Al-Issa & Al-Belushi (2012), Al-Jadidi (2009), Al-Siyabi (2009), and Al-Issa (2005) reported that teachers were not adapting well to the requirements of the new curriculum and favored the deductive approach over the inductive approach.

We know little about the motivations behind teachers’ classroom decisions. The present study hence aimed to investigate teachers' beliefs to determine how they affected their instructional practices. Various studies showed that beliefs governed teachers’ instructional decisions (Borg, 2011; Mirza, 2010, Phipps & Borg, 2009; Bellalem, 2008; Gallo & Renandya, 2001; Woods, 1996; Richards; Johnson, 1994; Pajares, 1992). Borg (2022), Bellalem (2015), and Basturkmen (2012), argued that teachers' beliefs influenced teachers’ decision making. Current literature also indicated that more research was required about the relationship between beliefs and instructional practices because studies were inconclusive due to the abstract nature of the construct (Borg, 2022). Consequently, there was a need for more studies to increase our understanding of teachers’ beliefs to enhance their teaching practices and decision-making.

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between teachers’ beliefs about deductive and inductive grammar approaches and their instructional decisions. The study raised the following research questions:

1. How do teachers teach grammar in their classrooms?
2. What are teachers’ beliefs about grammar teaching?

Literature Review
Grammar instruction has always been problematic and debatable. Batstone and Ellis (2009), Ur (1999), and Hudson (1997) claimed that teaching grammatical rules helped students learn languages more effectively. The current debate, however, was over which approach of grammar instruction was more effective. Larsen-Freeman (2015) argued that the scholarly consensus was that no single approach has been accepted.

Deductive reasoning informed deductive grammar instruction, which emphasized direct and explicit instruction of grammar rules. (Farwis et al., 2021; Larsen-Freeman, 2015; Widodo, 2006; Brown, 2000). Inductive reasoning informed inductive grammar instruction, which focused on developing students’ cognition and understanding and emphasized indirect and implicit instruction of grammar rules (Larsen-Freeman, 2015; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Ellis, 2010;
Harmer, 2007; Richards & Renandya, 2002; Fosnot & Perry, 1996). In inductive grammar instruction, students are exposed to contextual language input and encouraging to learn through the process of discovery, inference, and critical reflection about the grammar rules (Scott, 2013; Widodo, 2006).

A considerable body of literature documented an ongoing debate about which approach could be more appropriate to the language classroom. There were fervent defenders on both sides of the spectrum. Hall (2011) and Hinkel & Fotos (2001) pointed out that inductive grammar instruction was salient in building students’ autonomy. They further argued that it helped students build their cognitive skills by allowing them to examine the language exposed to them to construct the grammar rules underpinning the target language. Larsen-Freeman (2003) contended that deductive grammar instruction could be more appropriate for teaching beginners, but the inductive approach could be more appropriate for teaching advanced students more advanced or complex grammar rules. Larsen-Freeman (2003) noted that grammar instruction depended on two main components: the students and the target grammar items.

Brown (2000) noted that EFL teachers could utilize whatever approach they liked, depending on their students’ cognitive abilities, learning styles, and the target grammatical structures. Furthermore, the interrelationship between teachers’ beliefs and grammar instruction was widely researched (Azad, 2013; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Thu, 2009; Farrell & Lim, 2005). The literature generally argued that there often existed a mismatch between teachers’ beliefs and pedagogical practices. Hassan (2013) stated that teachers’ beliefs and instructional practices were not congruent. He argued that teacher’s past learning experiences had an impact on their instructional decisions, which in turn influenced their beliefs in their classrooms.

Azad (2013) examined teachers’ attitudes towards grammar instruction and concluded that, while they had positive attitudes towards the inductive grammar approach, they favored the deductive approach to teach grammar. Phipps & Borg (2009) also looked at the attitudes of three experienced Turkish teachers and reported that their beliefs and grammar instructional practices were not congruent. Farrell and Lim (2005) reported similar results.

However, the topic is under-researched in Omani contexts, so we have limited information regarding grammar instruction practices and beliefs of Omani secondary school teachers. Al-Siyabi (2009) examined teachers’ beliefs about grammar instruction and reported that their beliefs were not in line with their classroom practices. The study revealed that teachers adopted the deductive approach to teach grammar, despite their positive beliefs about the inductive approach.

Methods
The current interpretive exploratory case study was concerned with the meanings that individuals developed as a result of their social interactions (Creswell, 2012; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). According to Bryman (2015), Wellington (2015), Paltridge & Starfield (2007), qualitative case studies allow researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of teachers’ decisions and actions. Various studies used qualitative case studies to examine teachers’ beliefs and instructional decisions (Bellalem, 2014; Kumaravadivelu, 2006).
Participants

The study sample involved six teachers from Omani secondary schools in the AY 2019-2020. The research used purposive sampling to recruit teachers to participate in the study. Table 1 provided a summary of the research participants’ information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Pseudonyms</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Place of Graduation</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aisha (T1)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>Ajman University, UAE</td>
<td>BA in Edu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatima (T2)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>Rustaq College, Oman</td>
<td>BA in Edu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawthor (T3)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>Sultan Qaboos University, Oman</td>
<td>BA in Edu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdullah (T4)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>University of Leeds, UK</td>
<td>BA in Edu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohamed (T5)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>Nizwa College, Oman</td>
<td>BA in Edu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omar (T6)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>Nizwa College, Oman</td>
<td>BA in Edu.</td>
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Research Instruments

The study used cross-sectional observations and semi-structured interviews as tools to collect data. The selection of these data collection methods was consistent with the interpretive paradigm of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2014; Li, 2013; Seidman, 2013; Yin, 2009; Cohen et al., 2007; Woods, 1996). The study used two semi-structured interviews. Pre-observation semi-structured interviews answered Research Question 1 about teachers’ instructional decisions. Post-observation semi-structured interviews answered Research Question 2 about their beliefs and the factors that influenced their pedagogical practices. Interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed for analysis. Classroom observations also answered Research Question 1 about teachers’ instructional practices. Grammar classes lasted around 45 minutes each. The second round of interviews (post-observation interviews) was conducted immediately following classroom observations to invite teachers to reflect on their grammar classes.

Research Procedures

The research took place over six-weeks. Drawing on Farrell and Lim’s (2005) framework, a checklist was developed to report on the instructional practices of teachers. We assigned Y when each criterion occurred, L when there was a limited incidence, and X when each criterion did not occur (see Table 2 below for a summary of the observation data). Semi-structured interviews were conducted immediately following classroom observations to shed light on teachers’ beliefs about grammar instruction and the factors that influenced their instructional decisions and practices. The study adopted content analysis and grounded theory to analyze the data (Dawadi, 2020; Wellington, 2015; Charmaz, 2014).

Findings

Deductive grammar instruction was prevalent across the observation checklist of teachers’ classroom activities.
Table 2. Classroom observations

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T1</th>
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<th>T3</th>
<th>T4</th>
<th>T5</th>
<th>T6</th>
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<td><strong>Deductive Grammar Teaching</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Lesson was teacher-centred</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>in giving instructions,</td>
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<td>providing explanation,</td>
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<td>and eliciting responses</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Teacher presented rules</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>explicitly as &quot;form + use +</td>
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<td>example&quot;</td>
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<td>3. Teacher used drills to</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>consolidate grammar item</td>
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<td>4. Lesson was mainly</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>traditional with explicit</td>
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<td>teaching of grammar rules</td>
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<td>5. There was noticeable use of</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>grammar terminology by teacher</td>
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<td>and students</td>
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<td>6. Teacher corrected all</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>grammar errors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inductive Grammar Teaching</strong></td>
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<td>7. Lesson was communicative</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>throughout</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Teacher presented language</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>examples and instructed</td>
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<td>students to discover the rules</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Students practised the</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>rules in authentic contexts</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Grammar concepts were</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>integrated into speaking and</td>
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<td>writing skills</td>
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<td><strong>KEY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Y: Observed</td>
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<td>L: Limited occurrence</td>
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<tr>
<td>X: Not observed</td>
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</table>

Except for a few rare cases in Item 6, when T1 and T3 did not consistently correct their students’ language problems, all teachers’ practices matched the deductive requirements, as shown in Table 2. Except for T3 who was able to persuade her students to exercise the rules in authentic scenarios and incorporated the grammar principles into their speaking and writing skills, there were no inductive occurrences. Interviews revealed that all of the teachers had positive beliefs about the role of grammar instruction in their classrooms. Teachers argued that grammar was essential to language learning because it helped their students become more proficient in the target language. When asked about the grammar strategy they employed in their classrooms and the reasons for their choices, all teachers agreed that the inductive approach was practical. Teachers, however, found it challenging to implement, as it required extensive preparation and the use of additional materials, which were not accessible, and preferred the deductive approach, as evidenced by their classroom observations. They further argued that the inductive approach did not fit their students’ level of proficiency as students found it challenging to infer the grammar rules and could not perform the tasks assigned to them. They also believed that it was not possible to cover the syllabus within the scheduled time if they were to adopt an inductive strategy in their classrooms. Fatima (T2), for instance, believed that inductive grammar teaching was:

(…) it is better than the direct method of teaching grammar, but our students may struggle to comprehend the various grammar concepts, and they may not always be able to complete
the assigned tasks. There is also a lack of materials, which could be problematic when employing the inductive method. [T2]

All teachers believed that deductive grammar instruction was more appropriate for their classes as it was easy to implement, saved the class time, and fit better their students’ proficiency levels. Teachers also added that deductive grammar instruction helped students prepare well for their tests. Teachers asserted that their students preferred the deductive approach. T4 stated that deductive grammar instruction was more beneficial, as shown in the following excerpt:

I believe that the deductive method is more effective for teaching grammar to our students because it allows them to comprehend the rules and thus better prepares them for exams. It would be better for them if they knew the grammar rules directly. [T4]

Interviews revealed that teachers’ past learning background influenced their decisions to use the deductive instruction strategies in their classrooms. Teachers argued, reflecting on their past experiences as students, that the deductive approach allowed them to understand the grammar rules better. T3, for instance, noted that she relied on her own learning experience as a school student to manage any barriers her current students faced while learning grammar, as shown in the following excerpt:

I believe that my learning experience has assisted me in deciding how to instruct grammar. It enabled me to help my students avoid the challenges I encountered as a student. [T3]

The interviews also revealed that most teachers had not participated in any training programs and hence believed they could choose the appropriate approach. Aisha (T1), for instance, claimed that:

We attended training workshops as needed, but there was no instruction on inductive and deductive grammar instruction. It is up to us to determine which approach is best for our students, but I believe we need workshops on the topic because it is so crucial. [T1]

We may conclude that teachers believed that they were not required to use the inductive approach and hence could choose between deductive and inductive approaches.

Discussion

The present study sought to investigate whether teachers’ grammar instructional practices were congruent with their beliefs. Findings showed that teachers tended to use deductive grammar instruction strategies. Findings also indicated that although the teachers acknowledged the advantages of inductive grammar teaching, all of them implemented deductive grammar strategies in their classrooms. The findings correlated with many other studies. Phipps & Borg (2009) concluded that teachers’ beliefs and instructional practices were not congruent. Lee (2008), Al-Siyabi (2009), and Thu (2009) reported that teachers were in favor of explicit grammar instruction although they portrayed a stance in favor of implicit teaching. Maqbali et al. (2019), Uysal & Bardakci (2014), and Farrell & Lim (2005) in their study of teachers’ practices found that, although teachers had positive beliefs about inductive grammar instruction, they used the deductive approach because of time constraints. Similar results were also reported by Andrews (2003) who
noted that the majority of teachers preferred the deductive approach, although they showed positive attitudes towards the inductive approach.

Teachers attributed their preferences for the deductive approach to several external factors like students’ language proficiency and needs, time constraints, the textbook, and the curriculum overload. Farrell & Lim (2005) found that teachers’ beliefs were not always in line with their classroom practices because time constraints. In another study, Phipps and Borg (2009) found that students’ needs and classroom time management were the main factors that influenced teachers’ beliefs and their classroom practices. Maqbali et al. (2019) and Al-Siyabi (2009) also found that teachers preferred the deductive approach because it was direct and required less time for preparation and instruction.

Research indicated that many contextual factors tended to influence teachers’ beliefs and instructional decisions. Maqbali et al. (2019), Alghanmi & Shukri (2016), Rokhni (2009), and Borg (2003), pointed out that students’ language proficiency, motivation, attitudes towards the language, students’ needs and learning styles, the context surrounding the classroom, and teachers’ professional development were key factors which influenced teachers’ beliefs and practices. Johnson (1994) noted that teachers’ instructional decisions were influenced by students’ language level of proficiency. Chia (2003) also found that time constraint was a central factor that made teachers use deductive grammar strategies in their classrooms. Maqbali et al. (2019) and Azad (2013) reported that teachers believed that deductive grammar teaching improved their students comprehension of grammar rules.

The findings also revealed that the teachers’ learning experiences influenced their classroom decisions. Gilakjani & Sabouri (2017) reported that teachers’ learning experiences shaped their beliefs about language learning and education in general. Tantani (2012) and Hassan (2013) found that teachers’ beliefs were shaped by their learning experiences, which in turn were reflected in their actual classroom practices. Within the same realm of thought, Lee (2008) noted that teachers’ learning experiences influenced their beliefs.

Findings revealed that lack of training influenced teachers’ instructional decisions. Several studies reported that teacher training programs potentially influenced teachers’ beliefs and instructional decisions (Borg, 2019; Bellalem, 2014; Ellis, 2010; Pajares, 1992). Richards, Gallo & Renandya (2001) argued that teachers’ understanding of grammar instruction informed their practices. Al-Issa & Al-Belushi (2012) noted that being familiar and well trained were the two elements that teachers often needed to make informed decisions in their classrooms. Alghanmi & Shukri (2016) asserted that professional development training and influenced teachers’ beliefs and instructional decisions.

**Conclusion**

The study attempted to learn more about teachers’ grammar instructional practices to check whether these were in line with their beliefs. Findings of the present study showed that, although teachers displayed positive beliefs about the inductive approach, they implemented the deductive approach to teach grammar in their classrooms. Teachers asserted that critical factors influenced their instructional decisions, such as their students’ levels of proficiency and needs, time
constraints, and curriculum overload. Furthermore, findings showed that teachers’ past learning experiences as well as lack of training influenced their beliefs and instructional decisions.

**Implications of the Study**

Research indicated that unsuccessful educational reforms resulted from teachers’ negative beliefs about the innovations. The present study also recommended, therefore, that before introducing new curricula, there was a need for professional development programs to involve teachers actively in the change process. It was recommended that training programs and reflective practices would play a role in reshaping teachers’ negative beliefs about the inductive approach.

**About the authors**

**Said Juma Al Abri** is a Regional Supervisor of English Language at the Ministry of Education, Oman. I have been working in the field of Education for almost 21 years. His research interests include: English Language teaching methodologies ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9997-1023

**Chahrazed Mirza** is an assistant Professor of Education and Educational Technology. Currently, she is the Head of the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Nizwa, Oman. Her research interests include: Online Education, Synchronous and Asynchronous language teaching environments, Multimodality, Socio-constructivism.

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6070-7145

**Fouzi Bellalem** is an Assistant Professor of TESOL & Applied Linguistics. He holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics from King’s College London. He has previously taught Applied Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, TESOL, EAP and ESP in the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. Currently he is Assistant Professor of TESOL at the Community College of Qatar. His research interests include: language policy and planning, language teachers’ beliefs and cognition, and the teaching of English for academic purposes in the MENA region.

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8577-4923

Mohammad Forouzani is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics. He earned BA and MA in English Literature and a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics. He has published three poetry collections titled *Inside out* (2017, Olympia Publishers, UK), *Out Inside* (2019, Austin Macauley, UK), and *A Louvre of Verse* (2020, Beckham Publishing House, US) as well as individual poems in 18 different literary journals and magazines.

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0311-5503

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Issues with Communicative Language Teaching Implementation in Saudi Arabia
Concerning the Government Policy, Teachers, and Students: Two Decades of Research

Ahmed O. Alharbi
School of Education, University of Glasgow
Glasgow, United Kingdom
Email: alharbiahmedo@gmail.com

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Abstract
This paper focuses on the most significant empirical studies on the topic of challenges facing the communicative language teaching approach in Saudi Arabia. The communicative language teaching method has been used for more than two decades in Saudi Arabia and research conducted during this period offers some insight into the main challenges of the implementation. The main goal of this paper is to synthesize findings from research studies conducted in the past and by doing so, suggest the possible avenues for tackling these challenges. Four broad categories of challenges have been adopted from Li’s (1998) comprehensive framework in an attempt to structure the challenges under meaningful labels. This, in turn, enabled us to categorize the challenges according to their source which helped our understanding of how to resolve them. The findings suggest that the most frequently observed policy-related challenges are the current exam system, overcrowded classes, no AV equipment, and low quality of in-house training programs for teachers. Teacher-related challenges mostly relate to conflicting ideas about CLT, low confidence in these methods, preference for the traditional learning model, focus on developing skills that feature in the exams, and deficiencies in teachers’ English. Student-related challenges are found to be their low-level proficiency, passive learning style, lack of motivation to learn the target language, and fear of their marks being negatively affected if they are paired with weaker peers during communicative activities. This paper concludes that these challenges are all interconnected, and a systematic approach is essential in trying to tackle these with the government intervention being a potential first step.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), CLT in Saudi Arabia, CLT-related challenges, language policies in Saudi Arabia, policy-related challenges, student-related challenges, teacher-related challenges

Introduction

In today's global context, it is recognized that the English language has become the language of the world, and many countries have adapted their education policies to reflect the ever-growing need for the English language. Saudi Arabia introduced a new policy regarding the way the English language is taught in schools in the early 2000s as it became increasingly clear that the English language was to play an essential role in various fields of the Saudi Arabian economy (Alharbi, 2020). This new policy favours a so-called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach whereby the focus is moved away from developing students’ grammar accuracy and skills. Instead, the emphasis is placed on developing students’ communicative skills. This communicative approach is based on the notion that learning language successfully comes from having to communicate real meaning, therefore, when learners are engaged in real communication, they are inclined to utilize their natural strategies for language acquisition, and this enables them to learn the language. For this reason, learners are encouraged to use the target language in a variety of contexts and learn language functions (Al Asmari, 2015). Such an approach is student-centred and aims to improve listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills, while at the same time enhancing students’ understanding of other cultures and helping them advance the target language for everyday use (Alharbi, 2020).

On the other hand, the implementation of the CLT in Saudi Arabia cannot be described as particularly successful and a number of studies that have been conducted throughout the last twenty years on the topic corroborate that notion. In such studies, researchers set out to investigate the numerous challenges of CLT implementation, but no study to date has tried to synthesize findings from these studies in a way that would enable to get a complete overview of the challenges and organize them in categories in such way that it enables to see the causal relationship among them. This paper will try to fill this gap and in doing so, explore the ways in which these challenges could be tackled.

Literature Review

The following section will firstly provide an overview of the relevant literature regarding the CLT, and secondly, it will explore the challenges of CLT implementation in Saudi Arabia. The latter will be achieved by exploring the studies of Abahussain (2016), Al Asmari (2015), Almohideb (2019), Batawi (2006) and Farooq (2015).

The main objective of the CLT approach to language learning is using communicative language teaching to develop communicative competence (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), which can be defined as the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning (Savignon, 1997). Therefore, the goal of CLT is to enable learners to communicate in the target language and this is attainable only if language learners acquire knowledge about the language and the ability to use that language (Alamri, 2018). The success of language learning depends on how well learners have developed their communicative skills or competence and how well they can apply this knowledge of a language with sufficient proficiency to the process of communication (Al Asmari, 2015).
The basic principles of CLT are, firstly, a classroom that is learner-oriented instead of teacher-oriented. Secondly, the classes should include opportunities to develop a broad repository of activities. Thirdly, it includes teachers taking on multiple roles; and lastly, it means that teachers should make use of authentic materials (Mey, 1998). Learner-oriented classrooms mean a move from a teacher-centred curriculum toward a student-centred curriculum. Regarding the content of the curriculum, new strategies and techniques have been adopted that allow students to use the language purposefully and functionally in the classroom (Alharbi, 2020), while communicative-based activities support the natural growth of language ability (Farooq, 2015). The new curriculum also reflects the students’ need for more space to use language, which should, in turn, help students develop their language competency.

Due to moving from a teacher-centred to a student-centred curriculum, the role of the teachers has also shifted, but the importance of teachers has largely remained unchanged in CLT. In other words, although the focus has shifted to students, teachers’ role remains of the utmost importance in a classroom (Al Asmari, 2015). According to the CLT, teachers should be considered role models for accurate pronunciation and writing and they should provide support to learners in producing utterances that are free of errors and, ultimately, mistakes (Richards, 2006). However, teachers should also help develop an environment in which students are comfortable with group or pair work, instead of depending on the teacher as the sole language model (Richards, 2006). Such an environment supports students’ learning autonomy and makes their teacher a facilitator, guide and co-learner (Al Asmari, 2015), whilst increasing students’ responsibility by giving them more control of the learning process.

In a CLT approach, learning materials are very important and, consequently, it is important that the textbooks that are being utilized in the classrooms conform to the CLT approach. The Saudi Arabian education system is very centralized and mostly based on teaching from the textbook (Ministry of Education, 2002), where the textbook can be viewed as the core of any ELT program and it plays an important role in teaching the language since it offers suggestions on the pedagogy, lesson content, and the manner of teaching (Alharbi, 2020). A study by Alharbi (2020) examines the level of conformity between the CLT approach and a textbook used in Saudi Arabia. The findings suggest that the textbook used in secondary education in Saudi Arabia may restrict the main goals of CLT due to its relatively controlling nature. The findings from the same study also advocate that other factors are inhibiting the CLT approach in Saudi Arabia; in particular, the limited teaching time and high dependency on textbooks that are not organized in a way that supports CLT. The study further puts forward the idea that a broader approach might be needed to improve English teaching in Saudi Arabia as simply a change in the textbook may not have the desired impact in an approach that favours communicative activities over textbook use. Lastly, a suggestion is made to remove the less important content from the textbooks and, in this way, give space to teachers to increase the opportunities for students to use the language in a more meaningful way (Alharbi, 2020).

Batawi (2006) was one of the first to investigate the challenges of CLT in the context of Saudi Arabia and the findings from this study have influenced numerous scholars who have decided to take a similar undertaking. Batawi conducted a study that included giving a
questionnaire to one hundred female teachers (N=100), followed by a round of interviews (N=12). The questionnaire results revealed that the challenges these teachers faced were due to their deficiencies in the English language, fear of “losing face”, and a lack of sufficient knowledge of CLT. The questionnaire results also showed what the teachers thought were issues among students and these were first and foremost related to their low proficiency levels, which hindered their communicative development. It further highlighted students’ passive learning style, which involved listening to explanations from teachers. Another set of obstacles was identified relating to the textbooks that diverge from the communicative approach, overcrowded classes that make CLT implementation impossible, and grammar-based examinations which, in turn, force teachers to focus on grammar. The interviews, however, revealed that Saudi teachers tended to use both traditional and CLT methods of teaching with a marginal preference for the traditional approach. They also showed that teachers spend around 40% of their teaching time on teaching grammar and other skills, such as reading and writing, at the expense of speaking and listening since these skills constitute the majority of students' final grades. Most of the teachers also indicated their preference for teacher-centred classes for several reasons, some of which related to compatibility with students' passive learning style and ability to maintain discipline among students.

Al Asmari (2015) conducted an exploratory study on a large sample of English language teachers (N=100), adopting a questionnaire to uncover the challenges they are facing in creating a CLT environment. The first set of challenges seemed to be related to teachers, and it was suggested that the major contributors in this category were teachers' misconceptions about CLT focusing exclusively on teaching oral skills and no grammar, and their perception that CLT was challenging because CLT norms require "an unrealistically superhuman teacher" (Al Asmari, 2015, p. 979). It was also found that teachers lacked the time needed to develop communicative activities and opportunities for professional training despite the in-house continuous professional development programs. Other challenges revolved around language students, with some of the factors being the lack of motivation among students to learn the target language, their passive style of learning, resistance to participating in communicative activities, low confidence and preparedness in the classroom, and low-level proficiency. Lastly, there were challenges related to education policy and the educational system, where the biggest issues identified by teachers were overcrowded classes, classrooms with no audio-visual equipment, lack of materials for communicative activities, and an existing examination system that was unsuited to CLT. Also, the need for specific teaching materials, lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments, and incompatibility of western educational assumptions with the local context were established as CLT-related challenges hindering the successful implementation of CLT in Saudi Arabia.

Farooq (2015) distributed a questionnaire to a group of EFL teachers (N=100) to probe teachers' perceptions and practices regarding CLT and the impact of this on the communicative competency of students (N=10). Some of the key issues identified in the teacher perceptions were the lack of understanding of the basic principles of CLT and conflicting ideas of what the CLT approach entails. More issues were discovered concerning educational policies like large classes, lack of audio-visual aids, and lack of resources to develop communicative activities. It was also suggested that large classes inhibit teachers from carrying out CLT activities and the current
classroom structure is not supportive of pair or group work, which is essential in any CLT-oriented classroom. Another important challenge was identified as the lack of any need to use the target language in daily communication by students. During the observations, however, additional problems were detected. These ranged from students' low-level proficiency, chairs that couldn't be moved around and teachers providing explanations in the native language, to students' tendency to speak in the native language if a chance presented itself, and no attempts by teachers to use communicative activities.

Abaussain (2016) focused on exploring the challenges faced by Saudi English teachers in their teaching practice that stop them from fully implementing CLT and a communicative approach in their classrooms. To do so, questionnaires were distributed among state school English language teachers (N=45) and interviews were conducted with English language teachers, educational supervisors, and university lecturers (N=21) to probe the reasons for failing to successfully implement all aspects of CLT. The first of the various reasons was the teachers' teaching method, which was in line with traditional teaching instead of CLT, in which the dominant role in the classroom is that of the teacher, while students appear to have a peripheral role. As a direct consequence, opportunities for interactions between students were minimized, discreet skills with emphasis on grammar and translation were taught, the focus was placed on the final product of teaching instead of focusing on the process of teaching and learning, and instead of promoting cooperative learning, competitive learning was encouraged. The study suggests that the reasons for the abovementioned shortcomings in teaching conceal two broad factors: the institutional and situational factors like the contents of in-service training programs, examination purposes and classroom structure, and the socio-cultural factors such as the traditional role of teachers in Saudi Arabia, the behaviourist view of education, and the secondary status of English in the Saudi community due to the perception of "English as a threat" (Abahussain, 2016, p. 249) to the culture and identity of the country.

A study by Almohideb (2019) set out to investigate university teachers and students' perceptions of CLT approaches in teaching and learning English. In an attempt to identify the key reasons for the unsuccessful implementation of the CLT-oriented teaching approach in a university setting, the study also looked at perceived challenges for Saudi English teachers and students through interviews with language teachers (N=5), student questionnaires (N=100), textbook analyses, and classroom observations (N=12). This study found that teachers did use the CLT approach in their classroom, albeit a modified version known as the "post method approach". In such an approach, teachers adjust the way of teaching based on the needs of the students and the teaching context, instead of strictly adhering to a teaching method. Thus, teachers believed they were unable to teach communicatively in their classrooms, but classroom observations showed that they were utilizing a communicative approach in their classrooms. Secondly, teachers believed that they were unable to incorporate all the required skills into their teaching practice because they lacked the confidence to do so and because of their limited time, while the observations showed quite the opposite – teachers were successful in integrating the skills needed for developing students' meaningful language use, despite their opposing beliefs. The study findings further suggest that teachers' perceptions of obstacles in adopting CLT were to do with unified exams and
large classes, while students perceived difficulties in working together (collaborating) as the main obstacle because of their fear that pairing with a peer with weaker language skills would negatively affect their grades. Another key finding of the study was that the current examination system is "at odds with the purpose of teaching and learning English as a foreign language" (Almohideb, 2019, p. 173), which, as a result, makes teachers less likely to concentrate on the skills and knowledge that can be used in real-life situations, and more likely to focus on learning skills that are essential in the exams (Ahmad & Rao, 2012).

Methods

The following section will firstly provide an overview of Li's (1998) comprehensive framework for challenges regarding CLT implementation. This framework will then be used against the findings of the studies conducted in Saudi Arabia which we listed above, to see how this can help in organizing the challenges into meaningful categories and identifying key underlying issues with CLT implementation in Saudi Arabia. The framework enables us to organize diverse issues into four broad categories of challenges in relation to their nature: (1) teacher-related challenges; (2) student-related challenges; (3) policy-related challenges; and (4) CLT-related challenges. The paragraphs below provide a detailed description of each of the categories.

Teacher-related Challenges

Li (1998) conducted an exploratory study to detect key issues with the CLT approach in South Korean schools and several main issues are put forward in this work in relation to the challenges teachers face in a CLT classroom. These are identified as follows: deficiencies in spoken English; deficiencies in strategic and sociolinguistic competence in English; shortage of training in CLT; very limited opportunities for retraining in CLT; and little time and expertise for developing communicative materials. Even though the teachers participating in the study thought their grammar, reading and writing skills were of a high level, they also believed that their abilities in English speaking and listening were not sufficient to successfully conduct communicative classes.

Another major obstacle to the successful application of CLT lay with teachers' deficiencies in strategic and sociolinguistic competence. Many teachers acknowledged that adopting the CLT approach may put them in a vulnerable position where they might not know answers to questions related to the sociolinguistic aspect of English, which, in turn, would make them lose the respect of their students. The lack of proper training or retraining opportunities in CLT also led to a "fragmented understanding" of CLT (Batawi, 2006, p. 27). Due to this, teachers are not confident in their CLT skills, which makes it extremely difficult and unlikely that they will adopt a communicative approach. Another key problem was teachers' misconceptions about CLT. Li (1998) found that “most classroom teachers do not fully understand the principles of CLT in practice” (Li, 1998, p. 688) and that many teachers believe CLT concentrates solely on fluency, while accuracy should be overlooked. This belief made them feel that CLT contradicts their personal beliefs about language learning. Lastly, teachers in Li’s study pointed out that the
textbooks they have at their disposal are not adjusted to CLT and therefore they need to develop these activities themselves, but with their limited time and resources, this is often impossible.

**Student-related Challenges**

Another set of challenges was said to stem from students, and these are labelled as student-related challenges. Firstly, the study found that many students lacked the motivation to work on their communicative competence and they cared much more about their grammar competence than their communicative skills. Secondly, students were found to show significant resistance to the shift from the teacher-oriented classroom to the student-oriented classroom because they have become accustomed to the traditional classroom structure in which their role is much more passive and “the teacher is expected to give them information directly” while they take notes (Li, 1998, p. 691).

**Policy-related Challenges**

The third set of obstacles, according to Li, is related to difficulties regarding the educational system or policy-related challenges. One of the main issues detected in this category was class size. Many teachers stressed that these classes are too big and as such, it becomes extremely difficult to apply CLT activities, mostly because communicative activities and the close monitoring they require result in large classes becoming very noisy and difficult to manage. It has been noted that error-correcting strategies are negatively affected if the classroom is inordinately large as teachers have a hard time moving around to guide and monitor groups. The second issue relating to the educational system is said to emerge from the exam design since this reflects the traditional teaching and is designed to test the four skills – reading, writing, listening, and speaking, with a particular focus on grammar accuracy and, therefore, teachers are forced to spend considerable class time on teaching grammar.

**Challenges related to the Communicative Language Teaching method**

The last set of challenges is associated with the very nature of CLT and the manner CLT has been implemented around the world. Li (1998) puts forward the idea that there is a qualitative difference between teaching EFL and ESL and puts forward the idea that CLT is not compatible with the EFL context because the transfer of CLT to an EFL context inevitably creates conflicts with the “social, cultural, and physical conditions of the recipient countries” (Batawi, 2006, p. 29). The source of this conflict does not, however, stem from the methodology itself, but from the educational policies that govern how CLT is implemented and the fact that language teachers tend to adopt rather than adapt CLT (Batawi, 2006).

**Findings**

This section will report on the findings of the paper. In other words, it will list the findings derived from organizing the five studies and their findings into the three categories: (1) policy-related challenges, (2) teacher-related challenges, and (3) student-related challenges, while CLT-related challenges were excluded from the analysis but will come into play in the discussion section of the paper. This was done in hope of shedding more light on these challenges and finding possible routes for improvement.
From the four studies that were explored, policy-related challenges were extracted and these include all the challenges that can be tackled by the Ministry of Education in various direct or indirect ways, and although they directly affect teachers' work, they cannot be directly addressed by the teachers, but instead, the concrete actions by the government are required. The most frequently mentioned issue was the discrepancy between the CLT aims and the existing exam system since CLT is focused on developing communicative skills that can be utilized in real life, while the current exams are testing students' grammar accuracy. Another important factor was overcrowded classes that made the implementation of communicative activities impossible since the teachers couldn't maintain the quality of teaching and take advantage of pair or group work. Classrooms with no audio-visual equipment and with chairs fixed to the floor were also mentioned as these represented physical obstacles to the successful implementation of CLT. Another key issue detected was low-quality in-house development programs for teachers, as well as textbooks that were not necessarily adjusted to the CLT approach. This, combined with large classes and limited time to develop their communicative activities, often puts teachers in a helpless position in which they are expected to deliver communicative activities, but are not provided with suitable textbooks or necessary training to develop these themselves. Further, even if the problem of their training is removed, the problem of their workload remains.

Teacher-related challenges seen in the four studies are obstacles that arise from the teachers themselves and therefore, the responsibility of resolving them is mainly in their hands. These were largely ascribed to a lack of understanding, and frequently to conflicting ideas about basic CLT principles, although this is closely related to insufficient and poor-quality training programs offered to the teachers. Another variation of this problem is labelled as teachers' misconceptions about CLT, mainly their confusion about the focus of the communicative approach and how the effect that approach has on students' grammar and oral skills. A paucity of confidence in the teaching methods they are usually utilizing in the classroom was also closely related to the same issue of non-existent or low-quality training and development programs. It was further noted that teachers' approaches were often more in line with the traditional teaching where the teacher has a dominant role and students take a passive role. Another obstacle was recognized in the teachers' attempts to switch to their native language, especially in cases where providing detailed explanations was necessary, as well as placing the focus on developing discreet skills and promoting competitive instead of cooperative learning. Deficiencies in their English language proficiency were also noted as a challenge, and although this was perhaps more of an individual issue, the support of the system is crucial nonetheless. The fear of losing the respect of their students was another limiting factor, partly related to other abovementioned challenges, and partly to the role of the teacher and how this role is perceived by the students and wider society.

Student-related challenges were numerous and one of the most frequently mentioned was low-level proficiency. It is important to note, however, that some studies that found this to be an issue were conducted with cohorts that started learning English in their seventh grade. The latest educational reform that was introduced in 2021 lowered this age and students now start learning English in their first grade, which could mean that if the same studies were conducted among students of the same age in a few years' time, this may not be atop the list of challenges anymore.
Another challenge was students' passive learning style and resistance to communicative activities because of their fear of less proficient peers negatively affecting their grades. Further important factors were low confidence and low motivation for learning the language, and the absence of a real need to use the language outside the classroom. Of course, these factors are not isolated, but instead, they work together so that a student with lower proficiency will have little or no self-confidence and therefore will not want to participate in communicative activities and will fear for their grades. Further, since there is no need for the target language in their daily communication, they will not be motivated to learn the language or change their circumstance. Indeed, their passive learning style will rob them of the feeling of responsibility for their progress and hinder their ability to see potential in themselves because of their dependence on the teacher as the only source of knowledge.

Discussion

When looking at the findings, it becomes apparent that the challenges of CLT implementation in Saudi Arabia recorded through empirical research in the past two decades were numerous. The challenges related to the current education policies are something that could be tackled by the Ministry of Education where they could work together with schools or school representatives to ensure smooth two-way communication.

Further implementation of policies that would limit the number of pupils per class would enable teachers to fully utilize all communicative teaching methods without sacrificing the quality of teaching. Moreover, adjustments to the current exam system should be made so that what is being tested in these exams is aligned with the skills that are being developed as a part of the CLT approach. This, for instance, could entail language use in a meaningful context instead of testing isolated grammar accuracy. Another obstacle that could be tackled by the government is the chairs that could not be moved around in many classrooms, and this meant that teachers could not adopt the prescribed classroom dynamic in which students are encouraged to work together and learn from each other, rather than each working for themselves. This, together with ensuring proper audio-visual equipment in every classroom, is something that the government could tackle with a heavier investing cycle in education as this is (almost) purely a matter of financial nature. Another issue that the government should be able to help with is making sure that there are plenty of in-house training opportunities for existing teachers as well as ensuring the high quality of these programs. Better quality of the training programs would also lead to a better understanding of the CLT approaches and methods by the teachers. These training programs should also place particular stress on explaining the difference in their role in the traditional classroom versus the CLT classroom and equip them with skills needed to maintain students’ active role when they show tendencies to be passive in the classroom. Furthermore, it would be useful if these programs were designed in such a way that enabled teachers to improve their English proficiency and therefore, get rid of their fear of losing face. Improved English proficiency and confidence in their English would also minimize the need for teachers to switch to their native language when explaining something of particular complexity. Given the timeline of this study, students’ low proficiency will most likely be less of an issue in the coming years owing to the latest reforms related to the age of starting learning English. Students’ passive learning style can be counteracted with earlier
mentioned teachers’ readiness to adapt their teaching style to the needs of the classroom while their fear of negative influence from their peers could be avoided if they knew that the exams will test them in skills that are communicative in nature and not purely grammar-oriented. Lastly, the need for the English language outside the classroom should become apparent to students largely by itself if the global market continues to move in the same direction it has been moving in the past two decades.

As mentioned before, the studies that were conducted in the past twenty years offer valuable insight into the issues of CLT implementation in Saudi Arabia, and this paper tried to synthesize them in a way that helps to see the causal relationship among these challenges. It also provided some suggestions on how to tackle these stating that the starting point could be in pursuing the government to implement the necessary changes.

**Conclusion**

It is important to note that the issues put forward by this paper are not limited to the Saudi Arabian context. As can be seen in the first part of the paper, similar problems were noted in South Korea where the government also tried to implement CLT. This partly supports Batawi’s (2006) notion that the challenges of CLT most probably do not stem from the CLT methodology itself, but rather from the educational policies that govern how CLT is implemented and the fact that language teachers tend to adopt rather than adapt (Li, 1998) CLT. This paper tried to put forward the idea that it is (mostly) the government that can help teachers in their attempts to successfully implement the CLT instead of copying what is prescribed by the CTL as they require support in both direct (in-house training opportunities) and indirect (heavier financing) way. This is easily identified when the challenges of CLT implementation in Saudi Arabia are organized in the way used in this paper.

Moreover, although this paper has looked at the challenges to CLT in Saudi Arabia by using Li’s (1998) thorough framework and analysing each set of challenges separately, it is important to stress that these factors never appear in isolation. In reality, it was found that they often reinforce each other, and what directly causes one set of issues will often indirectly cause another. These connections are often not apparent, and therefore this paper has attempted to use a systematic approach to analyze these challenges to uncover any hidden causal interaction between them. As was seen, many policy-related challenges have had a causal effect on teacher-related issues, while these have had the same effect on student-related challenges. When looking at these findings, a cyclical pattern seems to emerge that reinforces the notion that only with a systematic approach can we hope to successfully and permanently tackle these issues.

**About the Author:**

Ahmed Alharbi was born in Saudi Arabia in 1984. He received his bachelor’s degree from University of Hail in 2010 in the major in teaching English. The master’s degree was received in 2014 from the University of New England in Australia in the major of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. Currently, he is studying PhD in Glasgow university in the United Kingdom in major related to Communicative Language Teaching implementation in Saudi Arabia.
The experience of teaching English was three years from 2015 to 2018 in two universities in Saudi Arabia.

References


Appendices
Table 1: Key findings of the studies to date

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<td>- overcrowded classes</td>
<td>- insufficient time for developing CLT materials</td>
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<td>- unsuitability of CLT in the existing exam system</td>
<td>- lack of materials for communicative activities</td>
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<td>- non-availability of audio-visual aids</td>
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<td>- lack of assessment instruments to assess communicative competency</td>
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<td>- classroom structure that does not encourage group or pair work (fixed chairs)</td>
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<td>- unsuitable examination system</td>
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<td>- grammar-based exams that force teachers to teach what is tested in the exams</td>
<td>- lack of sufficient knowledge of CLT principles</td>
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<td>- low language proficiency of the students</td>
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<td>- passive style of learning</td>
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<td>- accustomed to traditional teaching style</td>
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<tr>
<td>Almohideb (2019)</td>
<td>- topics in textbooks do not reflect students’ interests</td>
<td>- mismatch between teachers’ perceptions of their teaching style and their actual teaching style</td>
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<td>- requirements to stick to the prescribed textbook</td>
<td>- students are reluctant to participate in group or pair activities due to fear of being pulled down by their less proficient peers</td>
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<td>- intensive workload for students</td>
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<td>- time constraints that force teachers to avoid the interactive method (related to large classes)</td>
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<td>- washback effect due to exam system</td>
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<td>- lack of time</td>
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<td>- teaching load</td>
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<td>Abahussain (2016)</td>
<td>- low-quality in-service training programme for teachers</td>
<td>- preference for traditional methods (grammar-translation method and audio-lingual method) over CLT methods</td>
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<td>- classroom structure</td>
<td>- reluctance to try the CLT approach</td>
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<td>- focus on exam performance</td>
<td>- misconceptions about CLT</td>
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<td>- avoidance of oral skills teaching</td>
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<td>- gaps in educational psychology and EFL pedagogic content</td>
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<td>- teachers employ traditional teaching methods, which lead to competitive learning</td>
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<td>- the traditional view of education</td>
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<td>- the need for specific materials for teaching</td>
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<td>- non-suitability of western educational assumptions in the local context</td>
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<td>- lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments</td>
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The Positive Effect of Translation on Improving Reading Comprehension among Female Arabic Learners of English as Foreign Language

Amal Alaboud
Department of Foreign Languages, College of Arts
Taif University, Saudi Arabia
Email: asaboud@tu.edu.sa

Abstract
Translation has been one of the most commonly used strategies in learning an additional language. Although there is not a consensus on the usefulness of translation as a language learning strategy, the relevant literature indicated that it could contribute to the learning process when used purposefully and meaningfully. The present study aimed to explore the role of translation in supporting the language learning process by adopting an experimental design to reveal whether engaging in translation practice could improve participants’ skills in reading comprehension. In this scope, 30 female students at Taif University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were randomly assigned to the experimental group and received an intervention by translating reading passages before carrying out comprehension tasks. On the other hand, the 28 female students in the control group practiced reading comprehension without completing a translation task before the comprehension activities. An independent samples t-test was used to measure the extent to which the two groups differed from each other in terms of their reading comprehension skills before and after the intervention. The results of the independent samples t-tests demonstrated that the experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group at the end of the intervention, although there was not a statistically significant difference between the two groups at the outset. The results suggested that translation could be an effective instructional strategy in improving learners' skills in reading comprehension in an EFL setting.

Keywords: Comprehension, reading, teaching English as a Foreign Language, translation, Arabic learners of English

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The extent to which learners should be allowed to use or benefit from their knowledge of the first language has been debated for decades (Flege, Bohn & Jang, 1997; Keck, 2006; Sparks & Ganschow, 1993; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003; Wach & Monroy, 2020; Wang & Wen, 2002). In some circles, the use of the native language has turned into a taboo and its use in the classroom, no matter what the purpose is, was labelled as one of the worst things a learner of another language could do (Sali, 2014). This view supported the notion that both the teacher and learners in the classroom are supposed to use the target language for both instructional and communicational purposes. A contrary perspective argued that even though the use of the first language in a language teaching classroom may not offer benefits superior than those offered by the communicative use of the target language, the first language could still offer considerable benefits when used in cooperation with the target language through a meaningful and purposeful approach (Joyce, 2018).

Auerbach (1993) argued that the sole use of the target language in the classroom was related to ideological and historical conceptions that were not evidence based. It was also argued that there was no scientific evidence indicating that the use of the native language when learning an additional language leads to detrimental effects on the learning process (Shin, Dixon & Choi, 2020). On the contrary, many studies have found positive effects of the use of the first language on the language learning process when used purposefully and meaningfully (Ma, 2019; Marton & MacIntyre, 2020; Pavón-Vázquez & Ramos-Ordóñez, 2019; Tsagari & Giannikas, 2020). Nevertheless, this does not mean the teaching of a target language should be based entirely on the first language. Especially the third circle countries (Kachru, 1990), where exposure to English as the most commonly learnt foreign language is limited to the classroom context and students have only few opportunities to practice the target language in their daily lives, the use of the target language in the classroom offers the exposure opportunities learners need to learn. In this process, the use of the first language should aim to reinforce the learning process by facilitating the relevant processes students are involved in (Ma, 2019).

In this context, the present study aims to understand the role of translation across native language and target language in supporting the foreign language learning process. In more detail, this study will explore whether the use of the first language through translating reading passages from the target language (English) into the native language (Arabic) before carrying out reading comprehension tasks resulted in a statistically significant performance difference between two groups of female learners learning English as a foreign language. By achieving this objective, the present study can contribute to the international literature on translation and language learning by demonstrating the extent of support translation offers in the language learning process. Thus, the research question that guided this study was as follows:

1. Does translating reading comprehension passages into learners' native language prior to working on comprehension tasks lead to significant differences in reading comprehension among female learners at the same proficiency level?

The remainder of this paper will present a review of the relevant literature, detail the research methods employed to collect and analyse the data needed to answer the research question, present the results that emerged from the statistical analysis of the data collected, discuss the results in
light of the relevant literature, and finally, conclude with a subjective insight on the research subject and future directions for research on translation and language learning.

**Literature Review**

For long years, the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) has embraced teaching approaches and methods that focused on the study of four language skills (speaking, writing, listening, and reading) together (Burns & Siegel, 2018; Hinkel, 2006; Selinker & Tom/in, 1986). That being the case, reading has received greater interest from both scholars and learners due to several reasons (Mason & Krashen, 1997; Proctor, August, Carlo & Snow, 2005; Van Staden, 2011). The increased focus on reading also required a more intensive inquiry into how learners could read passages in a foreign language to arrive at higher levels in language proficiency. In this context, translation emerged as an instructional approach that aimed to enhance language learners' academic performance in reading and help them clear strong links between their first language and the native language (Malmkjær, 2010).

The initial practice of translation in language classrooms relied heavily on the translation of literary texts into and from the first language in order to improve the knowledge of vocabulary and grammar (Richards, Richards, Rodgers & Coaut, 2001). Similarly, the focus of translation during the learning process was on memorizing target structures – vocabulary in particular – and make comparisons between the grammatical structure of the first language and the target language. In this sense, learners without an advanced level of knowledge were required to translate literary texts at a professional level. This practice proved to be not as useful as the scholars of the era had expected it to be, was difficult for learners to progress through, and made the learning process a lot more challenging and demanding than it normally should be. Richards et al. (2001) also argued that the certain practices regarding the use of translation in language classrooms that did not have a firm pedagogical foundation led to a hesitation into the use of the first language for language learning purposes, and hence, many approaches to language teaching as well as the techniques and methods developed for language teaching purposes almost exclusively ignored the role the first language might play in the learning of an additional language.

In this context, translation has been a highly debated practice within language learning and teaching circles (Carreres & Noriega-Sánchez, 2011; Garcia & Pena, 2011; Malmkjær, 2010; Widdowson, 2014). Nonetheless, although it has appeared as an unfavourable technique for language readers, it has also been found to be positively contributing to students in learning a language. Pym, Malmkjær, and Gutiérrez-Colon (2013) conducted a large-scale mixed-methods study to understand how the countries in the European Union approached translation in their language teaching policies and practices by comparing the results to those in three non-member countries in different continents (Australia, China, and the USA). Based on the results of a survey administered to 963 scholars and teachers across the European Union and interviews conducted with 101 respondents, they found that most teachers living in European countries do not favour translation as a learning and teaching technique as it hinders communicative activities in the language classroom. Most institutions also demand to work with teachers that act like a native speaker of the target language, which means all notions of the native language are usually overlooked in the learning of the target language. However, the study revealed this preference was not backed by evidence:
We have found no strong empirical evidence that communicative uses of translation in the L2 classroom have a detrimental effect on language learning, whereas there is empirical evidence that translation can enhance the learning of an L2, particularly writing skills in both L1 and L2 (Pym, Malmkjær & Gutierrez-Colon., 2013, p. 5).

In other words, the results presented evidence that translation does not hinder communicative activities in the classroom and does not lead to negative consequences in the learning process.

Other studies also revealed that translation might result in positive gains in learning to read in an additional language. To understand the role of translation activities in improving reading comprehension, Lee (2013) conducted a study with English major and non-English major students. Both groups started the experiment by reading a passage in the target language (English). They translated the passage into their native language (Chinese), and finally, they took a reading comprehension test of five multiple choice questions, three of which were directly related to the paragraphs they translated, whereas the other two concerned other paragraphs. The results revealed that the participants had a higher score in questions that were related to the paragraphs they had translated. More specifically, the mean score on these three questions was 86.4 for English major students and 88.9 for non-English major students. However, on the other two questions that they had not translated into their native language, the mean score was 35.3 for English major students and 44.4 for non-English major students. They argued that because translation required a thorough and extensive comprehension of the passage, the students had higher comprehension scores on the sections they translated.

In a similar study with 70 first-year university students, Sakurai (2015) found that whether students translated a text before reading it led to significant changes in their amount of reading, in their overall proficiency level (as determined by post-tests), and their speed in reading. He argued that reading without translating could be challenging for learners who are used to translating in their earlier experiences as students. In another study investigating the effect of extensive reading and translation on the grammar knowledge of adolescent EFL learners, Lee, Schallert, and Kim (2015) administered a grammar test to two groups of adolescent EFL learners in South Korea, one of whom had studied extensive reading and the other translation for two academic terms. The results revealed that students with extensive reading and translation backgrounds did not have statistically significantly different performance levels from the pre-test to the post-test. The authors argued that translation was as effective as extensive reading as a technique to improve reading skills. They also found that students practicing extensive reading showed a decrease in their attitude towards reading, whereas those conducting translation activities experienced an increase in their attitude at all levels.

Studies mentioned so far indicated that students can improve their reading skills utilizing the power of translation. Moreover, the relevant literature also shows that engaging in intensive and extensive reading skills also support students' translation skills, which, in turn, further reinforces their reading skills. For example, Sriwantaneeyakul (2018) carried out a mixed methods study to reveal the relationship between translation ability and students' critical reading skills by testing the translations made by students with superior critical reading skills and those with lower critical reading skills. The study revealed a statistically significant difference between accuracy of
translation made by the two groups. Also, it was found that students with superior critical reading skills produced translation outputs that were more accurate. The author concluded that because translation requires comprehensive knowledge of the native and target language, those who were better in critical reading were also better in translation.

Recent studies also revealed that translation practice could improve language skills in various domains. In a study that aimed to explore the perceptions of ESP learners about translation activities as language learning devices, Olivia (2018) found that most students held highly positive attitudes towards engaging in translation practice in the learning process. The results revealed that students reported considerable gains in terms of overall proficiency, grammar, and vocabulary. In a similar vein, Skopeckova (2018) argued that employing the Functional Approach could make translation activities beneficial for the foreign language classroom. She suggested that translation could help learners experience and question the structural function of the target language and hence increase their awareness of how the target language forms work when constructing real messages for communicative purposes:

Translation activities might be easily integrated into the foreign language classroom, when learners practise textual changes and are asked to transform texts and sentences employing a new grammatical phenomenon or in a more advanced context with respect to the change of the [target text] function. Students might thus discuss which transformations are necessary to comply with the new function and which [source text] elements need to be adapted and how (Skopeckova, 2008, p. 15).

Furthermore, it was also found that machine translation could play a significant role in improving language learners’ skills. Pointing out that most teachers are still concerned about the quality and effectiveness of students’ using machine translation tools (e.g., Google Translate), Lee (2021) carried out a meta-analysis study on how effective those tools could be in foreign language education by reviewing relevant studies published between 2000 and 2019. The results indicated that there was an increasing number of studies exploring the link between translation and language learning in recent years and that the majority of the studies indicated highly positive impact of using machine translation for language learning purposes, especially in writing activities. Finally, Pintado-Gutierrez (2018) argued that the link between translation and language learning will never disappear and that all stakeholders should actively look for strategies through which this link can be utilized to create more positive effects on the language learning process. She also suggested that because the focus on a single language is neither realistic nor sustainable, “it is necessary to capture the change in the landscape of translation within the classroom and beyond” (Pintado-Gutierrez, 2018, p. 235).

These studies demonstrated that, despite maintaining its status as one of the most controversial techniques in the history of teaching and learning languages, translation could serve as a useful activity provided that it is used purposefully and meaningfully. Moreover, in the current context of increased focus on concepts such as translanguaging (Baynham & Lee, 2019), multiculturalism (Stahuljak, 2004), and the rise of the non-native speaker as a legitimate owner of the target language (Kramsch & Lam, 1999), translation serves as a valuable tool that can help unite the social aspect with which native and target languages are associated with (Berman, 1992).
The present study addresses the negative attitudes towards translation that have led to a misconception suggesting that teaching a foreign language through translation teaching technique that is not only useless but also causes negative consequences in learners' improving their language skills. Nevertheless, this review of literature pointed out that these conceptions are not backed by research and that more empirical research is needed to reveal how translation can be used to boost the learning experiences of EFL learners and enhance their relevant skills. In this regard, this aimed to explore the impact of practicing reading comprehension by translating passages on improving EFL learners' skills in reading.

Methods

This study adopted an experimental design by administering a pre-test before the intervention and a post-test after the intervention. A pre-test-posttest control group design is characterized by a measurement of two sample groups that are at a similar level as indicated by a pre-test administered before the outset of an interventional period during which one of the groups is exposed to the focus of the intervention whereas the other group continues their day-to-day operations without being exposed to the intervention (Dugard & Todman, 1995). At the end, the two groups who were at a similar level at the outset are tested again after the intervention to see if the intervention created a statistically significant difference between the two groups at the end of the research process (Marsden & Torgerson, 2012).

In this context, the present study utilized a pretest-posttest control group design with two sample groups who were at the same level at the outset of the study as revealed by a reading comprehension test. Considering the research aim, which focuses on understanding the effect of translation practices in improving students’ reading comprehension scores, this design was chosen to reveal whether an interventional process that involved the experimental group practicing reading by translating passages into their first language would lead to a statistically significant difference between the two groups at the end of the process in terms of their academic performance in terms of reading comprehension in the target language.

Participants

The participants of the study were 58 learners of English as a Foreign Language studying at Taif University in Saudi Arabia in the 2020-2021 academic year. The learners were all females and first-year students in the English language program of the Department of Foreign Languages at the university. The missions of the department where the participants study include improving learners' English language skills in written and oral communication, providing opportunities for learners to acquire critical thinking and analytical skills necessary to explore the various aspects of the English language, providing learners with the knowledge and experienced required to translate literary texts across languages, improving learners' relevant skills in using English for their day-to-day affairs, and equipping learners with English language skills sufficient to make them act as independent users in their personal and professional affairs.

The experimental group and the control group were located in two different classes at the same grade level, and both classes taught by the researcher throughout the research process. Within the intervention program, whereas the learners in the experimental group (n=30) were asked to read a passage in the target language and translate it into their first language before starting to work
on reading comprehension activities, those in the control group (n=28) followed the traditional approach at the school by working on reading comprehension activities right after reading a passage in the target language. In this context, the present study adopted the convenience sampling approach as the learners were located in classes taught by the author and "they [were] 'convenient' sources of data for researchers" (Lavrakas, 2008, p. 149).

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

The data for the present study were collected in two stages. The pre-test examination, which was administered in early November 2020 to reveal whether there was a statistically significant difference between the reading comprehension performances of the two groups at the outset of the study, included 10 questions that aimed to assess the extent to which the participants were able to comprehend the passage adopted from a textbook published by a famous publishing house serving in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Languages for decades.

The post-test examination was administered in late December 2020, approximately 8 weeks after the administration of the pre-test to reveal whether the intervention led to a statistically significant difference between the reading comprehension performances of the two groups. Both groups received a reading comprehension test that included 20 questions that aimed to assess the skills of participants in comprehending a passage adopted from another textbook published by the same publishing house. The content in both textbooks were in accordance with the proficiency levels of the learners at the outset of the present study (B1+).

Data Analysis

The analysis of data collected through comprehensions tests were analyzed in several stages. First, the responses of learners to the reading comprehension tests that were administered as the pre-test and post-test were collected from the in-house learning management system. The final scores of participants on both tests were calculated on a Microsoft Excel sheet before moving them into an IBM SPSS document for subsequent analysis. The analysis of data involved the use of descriptive statistics on IBM SPSS to reveal the minimum and maximum scores, the mean score, and the standard deviation in each group on both administrations. Also, an independent samples t-test was administered on IBM SPSS to compare the results of the experimental and control group on the pre-test and the post-test.

Results

A reading comprehension task was administered to the experimental and control groups to measure the learners' reading skills before the intervention. Table One presents the results of this pre-test.

Table 1. The results of the initial reading comprehension test (Pre-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Learners</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>Maximum Score</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The experimental group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The control group</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>91.79</td>
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An independent samples t-test showed that the little difference between the mean scores in both groups was not statistically significant at the p<0.05 level (t(56)= -.873; p = .386). This result indicated that the control group, who did not receive the intervention, and the experimental group, who received the intervention by practicing reading through translation, were not at a statistically significantly different level in terms of reading comprehension at the outset of the intervention.

During the intervention, the experimental group translated the reading passages from the target language into their native language before starting with the comprehension and vocabulary tasks, whereas those in the control group followed the standard curriculum. The intervention lasted during 16 contact hours in 8 weeks. After the intervention, another reading comprehension test was administered to both groups as the post-test (Table Two) to assess whether the intervention led to a statistically significant difference.

### Table 2. The results of the final reading comprehension test (Post-test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Learners</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>Maximum Score</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The experimental group</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>82.17</td>
<td>16.541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The control group</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>70.89</td>
<td>15.873</td>
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</table>

An independent samples t-test showed that the difference between the mean scores in both groups was statistically significant at the p<0.05 level (t(56)= 2.645; p = .011). This result revealed that the experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group after the intervention, although there was not a statistically significant difference between the two groups before. In other words, this result demonstrates that the intervention, which was implemented as learners studied reading passages in the target language by translating them into their native languages, led to a statistically significant difference between the groups.

**Discussion**

Adopting an experimental design, the present study aimed to explore whether practicing reading by translating texts in the target language was an effective instructional strategy. The results revealed that the experimental group, who performed at a similar level to the control group at the outset of the study, outperformed the control group at a statistically significant level after receiving the intervention.

The results demonstrated that before the intervention process, in which the learners in the experimental group were asked to complete a translation exercise before carrying out the relevant reading comprehension exercises, the control group had a higher mean score on the initial reading comprehension test although the difference between the scores of the two groups was not statistically significant. However, after the intervention process, the experimental group achieved a mean score that was statistically significantly higher than that of the control group on the final reading comprehension test. This result showed that the translation practices that the learners in the experimental group were involved in supported their reading skills and strengthened their skills in comprehending reading passages in the target language.
In this context, this result supports the current strand of research on the effects of translation as an instructional strategy on improved learning outcomes in the learning of English as a foreign language. To illustrate, the present study supported the arguments in Pym et al. (2013) which opposed the notion that practicing language skills through activities that involve translation has a detrimental effect on the language learning process. This study further revealed that by engaging in translation activities in reading classes, the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group (which had a higher mean score on the pre-test even though the difference was not statistically significant) after being exposed to the intervention for eight weeks in sixteen classes. Furthermore, this study was in line with the results of Sakurai (2015), Lee, Schallert, and Kim (2015), Sriwantaneeyakul (2018) who had suggested that translation could offer a boost in the performance levels of EFL learners in reading comprehension. Also, the results were in parallel with Lee (2013), who had found that the learners in the experimental group who had practiced translation in their reading classes outperformed the control group both in translation tasks and tasks that inquired other aspects of reading comprehension.

This study supports the current evidence suggesting that the first language can be a valuable instrument in learning a foreign language. The reason why translation should be approached as a useful tool in the learning of an additional language relates to the nature of translation as an in-class activity. Learners who translate a text written in the target language into their first language oftentimes need to revisit their knowledge of two languages through a comparative and contrastive perspective (Neubert, 2000). This process provides them with a rich insight into how the two languages are similar and different in their structure (Skopeckova, 2018). Also, translation offers an opportunity to work on both input and output, both of which are crucial constructs in language learning processes due to their role in supporting and reinforcing learning.

In addition, it should be noted that the use of translation for language learning purposes should be built upon meaningful and purposeful foundations. Therefore, as Pintado-Gutierrez (2018) suggested, it is important that students understand why they are carrying out translation tasks in the classroom and how their language learning journeys can benefit from such tasks. Also, the tasks students are responsible for should be designed so that learners will be required to consciously utilize their knowledge and skills in the target language to complete the translation task rather then perceive the process as being automatic. Finally, authentic translation tasks that involve translating reading passages across native and target languages serve is comprehensible input at varying levels. In other words, as authentic texts, such materials include a wide range of variability in terms of vocabulary and target mechanics. Dealing with such materials, students have a valuable opportunity understand what vocabulary they know and what grammatical structures they can identify and comprehend. However, bearing in mind a realization of this kind might not be readily available to all learners, teachers should take the necessary measures for equipping learners with the ability of reflection necessary to realize the gap in their knowledge of the target language.

The present study was intended as a first step to understanding and appreciating the value of translation in learning English as a foreign language. It attempts to provide evidence against the negative connotations of translation in language learning that resulted mostly from its association with techniques and methods of language teaching that focus on meaningless drills and rote
memorization of vocabulary items as well as grammatical structures. Nevertheless, when utilized purposefully and meaningfully, translation can emerge as a useful classroom strategy to support language learning, especially in foreign language contexts where the distribution of comprehensible and communicative input is limited to the language learning classroom and learners have little opportunity to being exposed to the target language outside of the school.

Finally, this study had a number of limitations. The primary limitation was that it was not possible to collect additional data on learners' perceptions of working on translation to improve their language skills. The plan at the outset of the study was to administer a survey to the sample group to find out what they liked about the translation practice, how they related the translation practice to their development in reading, and their relevant perceptions within the process. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden closures it brought, administering the survey was not possible. Also, this limitation posed as a barrier to collecting information on participants' demographic characteristics (age, previous translation experience, years of studying English, etc.) and establishing the relationship between their demographic characteristics and their results on the pre-test and the post-test. The last limitation concerned the duration of the intervention period. The time available to investigate the research problem presented in this study was constrained due to the emergence of COVID-19 as a global threat. The intervention had to be stopped after eight weeks due to the school closures that resulted from the pandemic.

**Conclusion**

Conducted with an aim to reveal whether studying reading through translation was an effective strategy in improving comprehension skills in a teaching English as a foreign language context, the present study found that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on a comprehension test after practicing translation activities in reading classes taught over sixteen contact hours for 8 weeks. The primary strength of this study is that it investigated an area of teaching that has been overlooked and ignored for an extended period of time. Translation has long been declared persona non grata in many language teaching contexts, but the present study revealed the valuable role of translation in providing exposure to learners in foreign language learning settings where exposure to the target language is possible almost exclusively within the language classroom. In this regard, this study posits that by presenting a rich amount of input and giving learners an opportunity to convert it into output, translation can be a valuable tool in language learning provided that it is utilized meaningfully, purposefully, and in cooperation with other learning and teaching tools that aim to improve diverse domains of linguistic and conversational competence. In this sense, it is important that further research be carried out in various contexts to reveal the effect of translation on improving language skills, including reading. Considering the limitations in the present study, further research should look into how translation supports the language learning processes in different contexts and at various levels (preschool, K-12, higher education). It is also possible that studies adopting mixed methods designs can offer richer insights regarding the use of translation as a tool for language learning and teaching by integrating quantitative results of proficiency and competence tests with in-depts accounts of learning and teaching experiences of learners and teachers. Finally, further research that covers a wider sample group is needed to understand how translation contributes to the learning of students with diverse personal and professional backgrounds.
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About the Author:
Dr. Amal Alaboud is an assistant professor of Translation Studies in the Foreign Languages Department at Taif University, Saudi Arabia. She received her MA from Salford University and her PhD in Translation Studies from SUNY at Binghamton. Her main research areas are discourse analysis and translation theory. ORCID ID https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3307-4175

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Code-switching Versus Target-language-only for Saudi EFL Students

Mazeegha A. Al Tale'

Department of English
Faculty of Languages and Translation
King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Faten Abdullrahman AlQahtani

Department of English
Faculty of Languages and Translation
King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia
Corresponding Author: faali@kku.edu.sa

Abstract:

Selecting the medium of instruction to teach the target language in EFL classrooms has been controversial for several years. This study explores the impact of code-switching versus target-language-only teaching strategies on beginner students' learning and affective sustenance of EFL reading comprehension based on their perceptions. It also explores whether there are significant differences between the participants' perceptions of these two teaching strategies' possible impact on their learning and affective sustenance. Moreover, it examines whether they prefer their teachers to use code-switching or target-language-only instruction in the classroom and the reasons for their preferences. A questionnaire and follow-up interviews were used to collect the data from 52 female Saudi college participants. The results indicate that the participants had positive perceptions about the impact of CS on their learning and affective sustenance in the EFL reading classes as opposed to negative perceptions about TL-only instruction. The results also show significant differences between their perceptions of TL-only instruction and code-switching, indicating that they prefer code-switching to TL-only instruction in their EFL reading classes. The study recommends that code-switching is used as a facilitating instructional strategy for EFL beginners to give them affective support and make the input more comprehensible.

Keywords: affective sustenance, code-switching, EFL instruction, reading comprehension, Saudi EFL students, target-language-only

Introduction

Learning a foreign language in a classroom setting occurs through a communication/interaction process between non-native speakers and the teacher who teaches them a foreign language. During this communication process, the learners may reach different proficiency levels of the Target Language (TL). To solve the potential problem of a low level of English language proficiency, teachers may code-switch to the learners’ native language to help them understand the meaning and structures of the target language to save time and lead to more effective learning (Cook, 2001).

This shift is called Code-Switching (CS); it alternates between the native and target languages. As Maftoon and Amjadiparvar (2018) indicate, this alternation is considered predetermined result of mastering different language varieties and has always been seen in multilingual communities. However, whether or not the students’ native language should be used to teach a foreign language has been controversial for several years.

Some applied linguists advocate the use of Target-Language-only (TL-only) instruction in EFL classrooms. Inspired by Krashen’s (1982) comprehensible input hypothesis that calls for the exposure of EFL learners to comprehensible TL input, linguists consider this strategy optimal for ensuring the EFL/ESL learners’ acquisition of the foreign/second language (Hall & Cook, 2012). They emphasise that it offers more exposure to the target language, primarily when the TL is taught in the First Language (L1) contexts and facilitates learning for beginners. However, the TL-only instruction ignores the scientific fact that a previously learned language is present in the learners’ minds, even when the focus is on the TL (Kroll, Dussias, Bogulski, & Valdes-Kroff, 2012).

Researchers who have advocated alternating use of the first and target languages indicate that the teachers perform various useful functions in the classroom that facilitate language learning (e.g. Collier & Thomas, 2017). Language instructors who favour bilingual instruction through CS believe it is a valuable and effective tool that fosters beginner-level learning. For example, some researchers argued in favour of CS over monolingual instruction for the sake of course-content clarity, indicating that students are more attentive and less confused when teachers instruct them through CS (e.g. Al-Enezi, 2018). Others have developed instructional approaches in this regard, such as translanguaging, multilingual teaching, and plurilingual education (e.g. Piccardo, 2013).

Reading comprehension plays a critical role in the acquisition and learning of any foreign language, and it is considered the scaffolding for the remaining language skills. It helps language learners to construct, contextualise, and comprehend any received information in the target language. EFL teachers tend to employ different instructional strategies to teach reading and facilitate reading comprehension in language classrooms. One of the critical factors that directly affect reading comprehension is the number of known words in a reading text. When all the words in a text are unknown to the reader, comprehension cannot take place. In the case of EFL learners, the CS strategy discussed above might be useful in this regard, especially for beginners. EFL learning is also affected by emotional factors (Mehmood, 2018; Rahim & Chun, 2017). This study examines how female EFL college reading comprehension beginners perceive the effects of CS versus TL-only instruction on their learning and affective sustenance in the classroom. It also aims
at examining their preferences for CS or TL-only instruction used by their teachers and the reasons behind their preferences.

**Literature Review**

Researchers are increasingly interested in understanding the perceptions of teachers and learners regarding CS versus TL-only instruction. For the Saudi K-12 stage, Al-Nofaie's (2010) study showed the positive attitudes of both teachers and students toward using Arabic, students' L1, as a clarification tool in English classes. Although the teachers preferred using the native language for specific functions, they were reluctant to use it or allow students to use it. Also, Al-Shammari (2011) examined the purpose of L1 use at two technical colleges in Saudi Arabia. It also examined Saudi teachers' and students' attitudes toward the L1 role in the EFL classroom. The results showed that L1 is used for clarification purposes. The study concluded that L1 judicious use in EFL classrooms is beneficial for language learning processes, increasing learners' comprehension of new vocabulary and complex concepts. Gulzar and Al-Asmari (2014) investigated students' and teachers' awareness of CS dynamics at Saudi Taif University English Language Center. They found that although both Saudi EFL teachers and students share similar, relatively positive attitudes toward the use of CS, they have different views on the effectiveness of different functions of CS. Furthermore, they also have considerable differences in their awareness of CS and the idiosyncratic customs of CS in Saudi EFL university classrooms.

Additionally, Al-Mohaiimeed and Almurshed (2018) investigated Saudi EFL female preparatory-year college students' attitudes and perceptions toward L1 use in English classrooms. The results show that while beginner students hold positive perceptions of CS in English classes, advanced students have a negative attitude toward it. Al-Enezi (2018) also examined Saudi Arabian medical students' attitudes toward CS to Arabic in their classrooms. The results of the study revealed positive attitudes toward CS over TL-only instruction. Although most of them are aware of the benefits of using TL-Only instruction, they viewed CS as more preferred for understanding the course content. Moreover, they contended the idea that CS might lead to confusion in the classroom and showed increased respect for teachers who use CS. The study called EFL teaching and learning leaders to incorporate CS positives in EFL classrooms.

One year later, Mahdi and Al-Malki (2019) examined Saudi EFL learners' attitudes toward using in EFL classrooms. They also explored CS functions for teachers. The results showed negative perceptions about CS. However, the results revealed that the teachers used CS to aid low-level learners and streamline various language activities. Maguddayao and Rosario (2019) also examined the views of 41 students and five teachers on CS in ESL classrooms in the Philippines. The results revealed that teachers preferred it since it helps them in classroom management, curriculum access, and building interpersonal relations with the students. The students also had positive attitudes toward CS, considering it an effective teaching strategy to simplify complex concepts and enhance interaction. Moreover, Narayan (2019) examined the role of CS to L1(Fiji Hindi) in Fijian ESL classes and whether it enhances classroom interaction. The results revealed that CS is a promising strategy for language learning. The study called for enlightening ESL teachers about the benefits of CS.

Aoyama (2020) recently investigated Japanese high school students' use of CS to L1 during their communicative ESL activities and their attitudes toward such use. He used a survey and
classroom observation. The results revealed that all the participants partially used CS during communicative activities. The results also showed they used it for five speech functions (adding information, providing feedback, asking for help, giving equivalences, and explaining using metalanguage). The study called EFL Japanese high school teachers to benefit from CS in their classrooms to accompany communicative teaching strategies. More recently, Tubayqi and Al Tale' (2021) examined the attitudes of Saudi female EFL beginners at Jazan University and their two teachers toward CS to Arabic in EFL grammar classes and the reasons for using and avoiding CS. The study also presented some of the CS functions in EFL grammar classes. The study revealed that despite having positive attitudes toward MT in EFL classes, students and teachers are also aware of the adverse effects of its overuse. In addition, the results revealed that teachers and students use MT to perform a variety of tasks in the classroom that facilitate teaching and learning.

Rationale and Research Questions

As seen in the literature above, although several studies have explored the attitudes and perceptions of learners about CS in Arab and non-Arab EFL classes, most of them have concentrated on the attitudes of teachers and students toward CS and its functions. This study adds to the previous literature by deeply investigating the impact of both CS versus TL-only instruction on female reading comprehension beginners’ learning and affective sustenance in the classroom. It compares their perceptions of the impact of CS versus TL-only instruction on their learning and affective sustenance in the classroom, attempting to present useful insights about the impact of CS versus TL-only instruction on learning and psychological states of reading comprehension beginners.

Thus, based on the concepts of CS and TL-only instruction, the researchers’ teaching experiences, and the related literature, this study addresses Saudi EFL learners’ perceptions of the impact of CS versus TL-only instruction on their learning of reading and their affective sustenance in the classroom.

The specific research questions are as follows:

1 What are the perceptions of female Saudi EFL reading comprehension beginners at King Khalid University about the impact of CS versus TL-only instruction on their learning and their affective sustenance in their reading comprehension course?

2 What are the differences between beginners’ perceptions of CS versus TL-only instruction in their learning and affective sustenance in their reading comprehension course?

3 What are the beginners’ preferences of CS versus TL-only instruction in their reading classes and why?

Method

This study adopts a mixed-method research design to give an in-depth report of the participants' perceptions of CS versus TL-only instruction as teaching strategies and their effect on learning and affective sustenance in the classroom.
Participants

The context of this study was a female Saudi university campus during the first semester of 2019–2020. Data were collected from 52 female Saudi EFL Level One reading comprehension students. Access to male students was not possible since they were taught by male teachers on a separate campus because of cultural constraints. The participants (aged between 18 and 20) were students in the English department, which offers a bachelor’s degree in the English Language. They constitute a convenient sample since they were taught by one of the researchers during that semester. They were studying listening, speaking, reading comprehension, and writing English language skills. The researchers chose this specific level because they were novices at studying reading comprehension Level One. The prescribed book was the Well Read 1 Student Book: Skills and Strategies for Reading Student Guide series (Pasternak & Wrangell, 2007). Some of their teachers were bilingual, and others were native speakers of English who did not speak Arabic.

Research Instruments

The researchers used two main tools to collect the data. The first tool was a questionnaire (see Appendix A). The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part obtained the participants’ demographic information while the second consisted of 11 items arranged in a Likert scale ranging from one (‘most unlike this’) to nine (‘most like this’). This Likert scale has a mean score of 0.89 with an equal interval length of a low score of 1.67–3.63; an average score of 3.67–6.33; and a high score of 6.33–9. (see Table one).

Table 1. Likert scale levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Interval length</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[1.00]</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>Low (L)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[1.89]</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[2.78]</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[3.67]</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>Moderate (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[4.56]</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[5.44]</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[6.33]</td>
<td>7.22</td>
<td>High (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[7.22]</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>[8.11]</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the questionnaire, interviews with ten students were conducted to obtain an in-depth understanding of whether their teacher should use CS or TL-only in teaching (see Appendix B). The students were chosen from two classes taught by the same researcher. The researcher is bilingual and spent four weeks teaching one of the classes using CS and the other using TL-only. A consent form was given to students (See Appendix C).

Research Procedures

The researchers gave the questionnaire to three colleagues from the same department— one associate professor and two assistant professors. One of the researchers distributed the questionnaire during the stage of the course. It was written both in Arabic and in English to ensure that participants did not face difficulty in understanding the items. The respondents had 15 minutes
to fill in the questionnaires in class. The researchers also invited the students for any clarification. In the same context, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with ten participants to get a more accurate account of the students' perceptions. Each interview lasted between five and 10 minutes. Then, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences programme, version 23, was used to conduct descriptive statistics of the questionnaire responses and inferential statistics comparison tests (a paired t-test) to compare the participants’ perceptions of the two instructional strategies. The researchers also used Microsoft Excel to draw the figures of the obtained results.

**Results**

**CS versus TL-only Instruction and Learners’ Learning**

The results show that while the participants perceived CS as a strategy helping them to understand the course, learn difficult concepts and new vocabulary, and learn reading skills more effectively, they do not consider TL-only instruction as being equally effective (Table two).

Table 2. *Mean scores of learners’ perceptions of CS versus TL-only impact on learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M (Level)</td>
<td>M (Level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the course</td>
<td>7.02 (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning difficult concepts</td>
<td>6.56 (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning new vocabulary</td>
<td>6.62 (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning reading skills more effectively</td>
<td>5.63 (M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. (L)=low level of preference; (M)=moderate level of preference; (H)=high level of preference.

The participants considered CS to be effective and TL-only to be ineffective, as shown in Table 2. The paired-samples t-test shows a significant difference between perceptions (t = 6.8, p = .000 = 51). They view CS as an effective way to clarify difficult concepts. The paired-samples t-test indicates a significant difference between the two perceptions (t = 4.6, p = .000 = 51).

In addition, while they believed CS to have a positive effect on learning new vocabulary, their opinion of TL-only instruction as having the same effect was low. The paired-samples t-test indicates that there is a significant difference between the two perceptions (t = 4.6, p = .000 = 51). Furthermore, while they perceived that CS had a positive impact on learning reading skills, they perceived that TL-only instruction had an equally positive effect. A paired-sample t-test, however, shows that there is a significant difference between the two perceptions (t = 1.8, p = .085 = 51).

**Code-switching and Learners’ Affective Sustenance**

The results show that the participants considered CS a strategy that gave them confidence, support, enjoyment, satisfaction, and comfort. It made them less stressed during lectures. Table three shows these results.

Table 3. *Mean scores of learners’ perceptions of CS versus TL-only impact on learners’ affective sustenance during lectures*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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As shown in Table 3, the students perceived CS as having a positive impact on their confidence than TL-only does. The paired-samples t-test indicates that there is a significant difference between the two perceptions (t = 7.9, p = .000 = 51). The participants also perceived CS as positively supporting them in the classroom, while TL-only instruction was not as effective. The paired-samples t-test demonstrates that the difference between the two perceptions is significant (t = 4.1, p = .000 = 51).

Additionally, students had a medium level of perception that CS positively impacted their enjoyment during lectures, and a medium level of perception of the same impact of TL-only instruction on that feeling of enjoyment. The paired-samples t-test shows that the difference between the two perceptions is significant (t = 3.3, p = .002 = 51). Moreover, they had a high level of perception of CS having a positive impact on their satisfaction during lectures, whereas their perception of the TL-only instruction having the same impact was at a medium level. The paired-sample t-test demonstrates that there is a significant difference between the two perceptions (t = 3.9, p = .000 = 51).

They perceived CS as positively affecting their comfort during lectures. According to the paired-samples t-test, the difference between the two perceptions is significant (t = 5.0, p = .000 = 51). Their perception of the impact of CS on their feeling of being less stressed was high, but their perception of the impact of TL-only instruction was low. In the paired-samples t-test, the difference between the two perceptions is significant (t = 6.5, p = .000 = 51).

Moreover, while their perception of CS as positively impacting their feeling of being less lost was high, their perception of the TL-only instruction as equally useful was low. The paired-samples t-test shows that the difference between the two perceptions is significant (t = 6.1, p = .000 = 51).

Table 3. Affective Sustenance Comparison between Code-switching (CS) and Target-language-only (TL) in Saudi EFL Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affective Sustenance</th>
<th>CS</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>7.1 (H)</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>6.4 (H)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>6.1 (M)</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>6.3 (H)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>6.8 (H)</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less stress</td>
<td>7.0 (H)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling less lost</td>
<td>6.9 (H)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: (L)=low level of preference; (M)=moderate level of preference; H) =high level of preference

Interviews

Ten of the participants underwent interviews. Five of them were from the CS class and five were from the TL-only class. The first interview question was whether they would prefer the teacher to code-switch or teach them through TL-only instruction. The second question was to give reasons for their preferences.
Most of the interviewees reported that their teachers should use the CS strategy in reading classes. Only a few of them reported that they should use TL-only instruction. The following table shows this result.

Table 4. Mean scores of the responses to the interview questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>With CS</th>
<th></th>
<th>With TL-only</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS class</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TL-only class</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table four above, most of the students (eight per cent) favoured being taught through CS, while only a few (20 per cent) felt they needed to be taught only in the target language. Those interviewees who preferred CS think that it is a helpful strategy since they are beginners and do not have adequate language competency to comprehend the target language easily. They also reported that CS makes their language learning process smoother, with fewer psychological barriers. They added that a reading comprehension course needs the teacher's CS since it depends on comprehension. As beginners, it takes time to comprehend any received information in the target language, especially unfamiliar words. One of the interviewed students had studied the same course before with a teacher who did not code-switch. She reported that it was easier for her to understand the course with code-switching.

The few interviewees (20 per cent) who reported that they prefer TL-only instruction think that it is essential to be taught only in the target language as language learners. When the teacher speaks only in the TL, they think that she will give the learners an excellent opportunity to listen to and learn the TL and provide learners with the necessity of learning the language. They added that using TL will help them learn it faster and start thinking in that language. The interviewees added that it is their responsibility as language learners to translate and learn the TL. They believe that the teacher should use only the TL in the classroom, considering her to be a source for that language.

Discussion

Regarding the first part of the first research question about the perceptions of the participants about the impact of CS versus TL-only instruction on their learning, the results revealed that generally, most participants believe that CS in class makes it easy for them to understand the course and learn difficult concepts and new vocabulary. These findings support Al-Shammari's (2011) conclusion that college beginners see CS as helpful in understanding new vocabulary and difficult concepts. They are similar to the previous studies that consider CS a beneficial tool in accelerating learners' language learning process, particularly for beginners, to whom most of the skills are new (Aoyama;2020; Maguddayao & Rosario, 2019; Mahdi & Al-Malki, 2019; Narayan, 2019; Modupeola, 2013).
As for the second part of the first research question about the perceptions of the participants about the impact of CS versus TL-only instruction on their affective sustenance in their reading comprehension course, most respondents see CS as a strategy that gives them more confidence and support in EFL language classrooms. CS helps them enjoy the lecture and makes them satisfied, comfortable, less stressed, and feel less lost during the lecture. This finding supports Aoyama's claim (2020), which was in favor of CS to support the adoption of varying communicative teaching strategies. As a result, students can have ample opportunities to be engaged with communicative activities and produce the target language confidently.

Regarding the third research question about the beginners' preferences of CS versus TL-only instruction in their reading classes the reasons for their preferences, most participants prefer their teacher's CS over TL-only instruction to teach them reading skills. They reported that they are beginners and need the input to be more comprehensible to them. This finding goes with those findings of previous literature reporting positive attitudes toward CS to the learners’ native language in EFL classrooms (Tubayqi & Al Tale, 2021; Maguddayao & Rosario, 2019). This reasoning supports Krashen's (1982) comprehensible input hypothesis, in which he states that the TL input should be only one level above the learners’ current level (+1) to be comprehensible to them. They also think that CS makes their language learning process more accessible with fewer psychological barriers, supporting Meyer's (2008) conclusion that ‘the primary role of the students' L1 in the language classroom is lowering affective filters’ (p. 147). It is natural and rational that using the mother tongue in a new learning environment gives positive affective support to beginners.

**Conclusion**

As seen in the above sections, EFL reading comprehension beginners' perceptions of CS as a teaching strategy is immensely positive compared with their perceptions of the TL-only instruction, which is highly negative. These findings indicate their need, as beginners, for a CS strategy to give them affective support in the classroom and help them understand the target language's new vocabulary and difficult concepts. Such findings will contribute to the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) and be of use for language institutions decision makers who may consider adopting new regulations and policies in favour of CS as a clarification tool for language instruction.

**Implications, Limitations, and Recommendations**

The findings of the study have practical implications for teaching EFL/ESL reading comprehension. Based on these results, EFL teachers might code-switch to EFL beginners' native language to create a more encouraging learning environment and make the input that students receive more understandable so that they can internalize it quickly. However, teachers should remind the beginner students that this strategy is just to help them understand the new vocabulary and difficult concepts. They must concentrate on the target language, using the teachers' CS only to understand the target language. This study also recommends that EFL teachers be aware of their students' perceptions of CS and code-switch when appropriate. The present study has some limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the study was conducted on two beginner classes of a reading comprehension course. To support or reject the study's findings, researchers can further investigate the students' perceptions of CS versus TL-only as an
instructional strategy for teaching listening, writing, and speaking skills to beginners. The second limitation is that the study dealt with only female beginners. To complement the findings of this study, researchers can research male Saudi EFL students. A third limitation is obtaining the perceptions of students only. Thus, further researchers can also study both students and teachers' perceptions of CS versus TL-only instruction in Saudi EFL beginner classrooms. A fourth limitation is that the study was conducted on EFL beginners only. Further researchers can compare between beginners’ and advanced learners’ perceptions of CS versus TL-only instruction. With more research on CS versus TL-only instruction for teaching beginners, some theoretical conclusions about CS and EFL teaching will arise.

About the Authors:
Mazeegha Ahmed Al-Tale’ is an associate professor of Applied Linguistics at King Khalid University (KKU), Saudi Arabia. Throughout her career, she has taught graduate and postgraduate English language courses, face-to-face and online. In addition, she has published articles in Saudi, Arabic, and international journals. Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), digital foreign learning, and critical discourse analysis are her research interests. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6355-8816

Faten Abdullrahman Alqahtani is a lecturer in the department of English at King Khalid University. She received an MA in Applied Linguistics from the University of South Florida. She is currently studying for her Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics at KKU. Expertise and interests include English as a foreign language (EFL), teaching and learning, curriculum and instruction, language testing, and error analysis. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0054-182X

References


Appendices

Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire
Dear learners,
This questionnaire is designed to obtain information about your perceptions of the teachers’ CS versus TL-only instruction in reading comprehension class. There are no correct or incorrect answers. The received responses will be highly confidential and used only for research purposes. Answer all questions as accurately as possible.

Code-switching refers to the alternate use of the first language and the target language. In your case, to code-switch from English to Arabic. TL-only instruction refers to using only the English language in the classroom.

Part 1: Demographic information (Required):
Name and ID ……………………… Age: ……… Level: …………………

Part 2: Answer the following questions by simply giving a tick where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic encourages me gives and me more confidence to participate in class.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) gives me more confidence to participate in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most like this ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ Most like this</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class makes it easy for me to learn difficult concepts.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) makes it easy for me to learn difficult concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most like this ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ Most like this</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class makes it easy for me to understand the course.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class makes it easy for me to understand the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most like this ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ Most like this</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class helps me understand new vocabulary.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class helps me understand new vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most like this ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ ___________ Most like this</td>
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<td>1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class is supportive to me.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class is supportive to me.</td>
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<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class helps me enjoy the lecture.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class helps me enjoy the lecture.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class makes me feel satisfied during the lecture.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class makes me feel satisfied during the lecture.</td>
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<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class makes me feel comfortable during the lecture.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class makes me feel comfortable during the lecture.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class helps me feel less stressed.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class helps me feel less stressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class makes me feel less lost during the lesson.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class makes me feel less lost during the lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My teacher's code-switching to Arabic in class makes me learn reading skills more effectively.</td>
<td>My teacher's using only the target language (English) in class makes me learn reading skills more effectively.</td>
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<td>Most like this ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Most like this</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Interview guide
1. In Reading Comprehension classes, do you think your teacher should code-switch to Arabic? Why?
2. Should your teacher use only the target language to teach you Reading Comprehension? Why?

Appendix C: Consent Form for interviewees

Dear participants,
Please complete and sign the form below if you are ready to participate. In addition, please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

I am aware that my participation in this interview is voluntary, and I may withdraw at any time without facing any negative consequences. Further, if I do not want to answer any question, I may leave it.  

I understand that any responses that I provide are strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not appear on any of the research materials, and I will not be identified in any reports resulting from the research.  

I consent to the recording of this interview. It is understood that the audio recording of this interview will only be used for analysis and that extracts from the interview, from which I will not be personally identified, may be used in any conference presentation, report, or journal article developed through the research. I understand that no other use of the recording will be made without my written consent, and that no one outside of the research team will be allowed to view the original recording.  

I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes, such as publications related to this study after it has been completed.

I agree to participate in this interview.

Name of participant Date Signature

Principal Investigator Date Signature
Blended Learning and Flipped Classroom’s Application during Post Pandemic

Asma Rahmani
Department of Media, Communication and Library Sciences
Faculty of Social and Human Sciences
Batna-1 University, Algeria
Corresponding Author: asma.rahmani@univ-batna.dz

Khadidja Samira Zitouni
Department of English language and literature
Faculty of Letter and Foreign Languages
Barika University Center, Algeria

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Abstract:
The adoption of online learning is continuously growing in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era in the Algerian context. In this account, teachers and academicians tend to change and adjust their teaching pedagogies to fit this type of learning to ensure a high quality of education. Two crucial pedagogical approaches are blended learning and flipped classrooms, which depend on online and face-to-face learning processes. The actual research implements this approach in different subjects taught in a limited four face-to-face courses during the post-pandemic period. The central aim of this paper is to investigate the extent of efficacy of blended learning in combination with the flipped classroom in Algerian foreign language classes. The hypothesis set is that blended learning combined with the flipped online classroom assists learners to a great extent in their learning. To gain empirical data, grids of observation were used by the researchers. The sample of this research consists of 165 learners who belong to different educational levels at both Batna-1 University and Barika’s University Center, Algeria. One of the significant findings of this investigation reveals that blended learning and flipped classrooms efficiently promote a high quality of learning among learners. Likewise, the results indicate that the embedment of this teaching approach reinforces learners’ adoption of online learning.

Keywords: Blended learning, online learning, Flipped classrooms, COVID-19 pandemic

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Introduction

The spread of the recent COVID-19 pandemic affects higher education methodologies and impacts and modifies higher educational institutions’ methods, models, approaches, and even resources worldwide. In over 200 countries, on March 12, 2020, the provisional suspension of face-to-face teaching was announced to limit the spread of this deadly virus (UNESCO, 2020). On the other hand, universities and institutions must pursue and finish their academic year’s agenda. Official correspondence from the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific research ordered its sector to shift toward online learning and provide the learners with courses on the official universities’ websites or some recommended educational platforms and set the end of March 2020 as a deadline for teachers to display their online courses. As a primary step, teachers provided learners with PDF forms of courses to ensure that learners have access to these courses considering the internet-related problems and lack of computer factors. After that, teachers assisted learners’ in online learning by offering a range of synchronous and asynchronous educational choices. For instance, teachers used Facebook educational groups and pages, Skype, Zoom, Big Blue Bottom, or other video-conferencing sessions, Google Classrooms, Moodle classes, and other educational online tools.

In September 2020, as the country’s declared infected cases were noticeably decreased, the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific’s guidelines permitted the optional integration of some face-to-face revision sessions for some subjects and their final summative assessments. Consequently, this was interpreted as the official integration of blended learning in its sections.

As the blended learning form proves its efficacy, it was adopted in the academic year 2020-2021. Some teachers shifted towards the flipped classroom approach to gain more benefits and invest in the limited allotted face-to-face sessions, as only four sessions divided into four weeks are allowed for each group/subject.

In this account, teachers dedicated the online learning to the theoretical teaching based on the Expositive Approach and exploited the face-to-face session for practice activities. This is a form of the flipped classroom. In this respect, one research question is asked: to what extent the combination of blended learning and flipped classroom in Algerian foreign language classes is efficient. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Combining blended learning and flipped classroom approaches assists learners considerably in their learning.

Investigating the efficacy of this type of class is set as the main aim of the in-hand research. However, a sum of objectives is targeted, including:

1. Unveiling the effect of this type of class in developing learners’ self-centred learning.
2. Revealing the impact of this learning on peer instructions.
3. Examining learners’ engagement in learning using this combination.
Literature Review

**Flipped Classroom**

Flipped teaching provides more in-depth learning of content. King (1993) argues that this teaching methodology is, by excellence, an educational methodology that exchanges the timing and location dedicated for both theoretical teaching and practical activity of the traditional educational model. Also, Fidalgo; Sein; and Garcia (2019) believe that flipped classroom is an active educational methodology from a constructivist educational methodology, view while Kilpatric (1918) notes that flipped classroom is associated with Project-Based to cognitive constructivism (Piaget, 1967). Furthermore, from cognitive constructivism considerations, the flipped classroom is a problem-based and thinking-based type of learning (Barrows, 1996; Swartz & Parks, 1994). Additionally, the Flipped Classroom is linked to Cooperative Learning and Collaborative Learning (Johnson; Johnson & Smith, 1991; Cohen, 1994).

To Horn and Staker (2014), the flipped classroom is a form of Blended Learning. It is worth mentioning that Blended Learning is an educational methodology that combines and connects face-to-face teaching with distance learning (Pascual, 2003; Bonk & Graham, 2006). More importantly, Bergmann, Overmyer, and Wilie (2011) argue that flipped classroom is an approach that transfers learning responsibility from the teacher to the student. Likewise, the flipped classroom is an active, student-centred approach created to increase the quality of learning through more practice. Sams and Bergmann (2014) note that the flipped classroom means “what is done at school done at home, homework done at home completed in class” (p.35). In other words, learners are invited to read and prepare the theoretical part of courses and prepare any possible questions or inquiries to be discussed once in class. Besides, teachers schedule supporting activities to reinforce learners’ understanding of the courses. An approach that transfers learning responsibility from the teacher to the student (Bergmann, et al., 2011).

Additionally, flipped learning is argued to be: pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter (Yarbro, Arfstrom, McKnight & McKnight, 2014, p. 5).

To the same researchers, the meaning of flipped learning is broadly summarized in its acronym FLIP:

**F: Flexible Environment:** Flexibility in terms of assessment, selecting the suitable time to learn.
**L: Learning Culture Shift:** this reflects the teacher’s role change from being the source of information to guiding students’ learning.
**I: Intentional Content:** This indicates teachers’ knowledge about the actual teaching content provided to learners and deciding about what should be delivered online or in face-to-face sessions.
**P: Professional Educators:** In this context, teachers are supposed to be creative when designing face-to-face interaction activities and encourage learner-centred learning to construct new knowledge and understanding among learners.

These are the commonalities between the different types of flipped classrooms.
Technology and Types of the flipped classroom

The application of this type of learning permits teachers to use any possible sources that assist them in explaining their subjects effectively. They are not limited to explanatory videos. However, many teachers prefer to utilize their personal created videos besides providing some PDFs, Websites, or even recorded sounds. In this account, Tucker (2012) maintains that teachers can use some lecture videos from some internet sites Khan Academy, YouTube, or Ted.

On the other hand, several types of flipped classrooms exist. Bergmann and Sams (2012) note that “...there is no single way to flip your classroom there is no such thing as the flipped classroom” (p. 37). In this spectrum, the teacher can select the type they believe fulfils learners’ educational needs and preferences of and adapt eventually to the surrounding social, educational, and even health circumstances.

Traditional flip: this type depends on assigning learners lecture videos to be watched at home to gain prior knowledge about the subject. Supporting activities are provided once they are in class.

In-class flip: it is similar to the traditional flip-type; however, it insists that lecture videos should be completed at home and the supporting activities. Learners of this type are not supposed to know about the subject before coming to the class as the introductory lecture and information are delivered at home.

Virtual Flipped Classroom: This indicates that both the lectures- videos, and the supporting activities are held in the virtual context.

On the other hand, the combination of traditional flip classrooms and online learning classes creates a new and effective blended learning model that improves the learning quality through relevant courses (Valiathan, 2002).

Characteristics of Quality of Learning Using the Flipped Classroom

Several characteristics of learning can be covered during the flipped classroom with its different types. Leszczyński et al. (2018) stress that flipped classrooms effectively support the traditional way of learning. Johnson (2013) noted that learners significantly accept this type's self-paced nature of learning. In this context, learners select their timing, place, and even the amount of their learning. This could highly ameliorate their learning. Additionally, researchers like Abuhmaid and Mohammad (2020) found that exposing learners to the course’s content before the face-to-face classes reorients their learning and permits them to focus on the most significant axes of courses.

Using this type of blended learning allows learners to control their learning and permits them to use e-learning technology as a new tool to learn (Bridge et al., 2009). Furthermore, Gustilo, Lapinid, Barrot, Gabinete, Magno, and Osman (2015) report that the flipped classroom improved learners’ achievement. The flipped Classroom is based on what is called peer-assisted learning. Mazur (1997) noted that depending on peer feedback enables learners to understand the content of their courses better.
Blended Learning

Researchers and educationalists provide a myriad of definitions for blended learning. In this spectrum, Driscoll (2002) suggested that blended learning can result of combining, for instance, some pedagogical approaches, modes of web-based technology, or instructional technologies.

The most common definition of blended learning was provided by Graham (2006), who stated that blended learning is “Blended learning systems combine face-to-face instruction with computer-mediated instruction” (p. 5). In the same context, Garrison and Kanuka (2004) noted that blended learning is “the thoughtful integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences” (p. 96). What could be concluded is that blended learning reflects the use and adoption of two learning environments: virtual and in-person contexts.

Research Methodology and Tools

The current case study is qualitative descriptive-analytical research. An observation grid was designed to collect the needed data in this spectrum. This of this data gathering tool was used during the whole academic year 2020-2021 in both face-to-face, and online sessions. Learners have only four face-to-face sessions each semester and the rest of the learning sessions are done online. It is worth mentioning that before meeting learners in the in-person form of learning, learners were provided with the learning material in advance through online educational platforms.

Data Gathering Tool

The observation grid used in the current investigation encompasses 11 criteria. These criteria are evaluated according to a specific rating scale. The rating scale consists of a three-point Likert scale ranging from Absent, fairly present, or present. The observation grid did not include any demographical details (gender and age) as this information does not relate to the main aim of this study or directly impact the results. The observation grid targets:

- Learners’ online interaction (before the face-to-face session)
- Learners’ face-to-face interaction
- Learners’ online interaction (after the face-to-face session)
- Learners’ self-paced learning
- Using more online learning activity type
- Providing feedback (online context)
- Providing feedback (face-to-face context)
- Reflecting critical thinking (online context)
- Reflecting critical thinking (Face-to-face context)
- Solving Activities (online context)
- Solving Activities (Face-to-face context)

To check the validity of this data-gathering tool, the observation grid was sent to other teachers to provide us with the necessary feedback. Additionally, depending on Cronbach’s alpha psychometric test, we checked the reliability of the observation grid. The observation grid is assigned to 10 learners who do not belong to our sample. The obtained results are gathered, coded, and treated using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) Version.20. The obtained alpha
The coefficient of reliability proves the reliability of the observation grid as it was equal to .853, which reflects a high internal consistency.

**Population and Sample**

The population of this study consisted of first- and second-year learners at the department of English at Batna-2 University besides first-year and master one learners from the department of foreign language at Barika University- Center. The sample selection was based on purposive selection as we should target subjects taught using blended learning form during the academic year 2020-2021. Also, being their teacher was another critical factor when selecting these groups to gain more reliable results and eliminate any possible extraneous variable that may affect the research process. The subject taught were: Written expression, phonetics, grammar, and research methodology.

In this respect, the sample consists of 165 learners. The following chart provides more details about the sample’s study composition.

**Table 1: Population and Sample number**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Sample Total Number</th>
<th>165</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batna-2 University</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st year learners (Written Expression)</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd year learners (Phonetics)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barika University Center</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st year learners (Grammar)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master 1 (research methodology)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Findings**

The obtained data were analyzed using descriptive analyses of SPSS to calculate the frequencies of the learners’ responses and the mode. The sum of the results was gathered and tabulated in table Two.

**Table Two: Observation grid’s results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The observed criteria</th>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>Fairly present</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners’ online interaction (before the face-to-face session)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners’ face-to-face interaction</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners’ online interaction (after the face-to-face session)</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners’ Self-paced learning during online Learning</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Results

The results demonstrate that learners’ online interaction (before the face-to-face session) and their online interaction (after the face-to-face session) demonstrate that the mode of these criteria was equal to one and three, respectively. This indicates that the lion’s share of learners’ interaction in the first case was absent while in the second case increased where more than half of learners’ interaction was noted.

Learners’ face-to-face interaction in the four in-person session mode was equal to two, which refers to a fairly present interaction. A minority of learners (13%) were constantly absent during classes, while (24%) were always interacting permanently. Mainly, learners hesitate to interact in this situation due to some psychological factors that forbid it. For instance, fear of judgment or anxiety can be regarded as these psychological factors. This was consolidated when we compared their online interaction before the in-person sessions.

After the in-person sessions, learners get to know each other. What was noticed during these sessions is that some psychological factors are decreased. In this respect, learners feel less stressed when they answer, accept others’ feedback, feel more comfortable asking and answering questions, and ask for clarifications from teachers and peers.

Also, the results prove that learners’ online interactions after the in-person sessions increased. Learners were motivated to interact as they knew other learners.

Learners’ self-paced learning mode was equal to three. This indicates that learners in this type of learning were selecting the courses’ content and doing the related activities according to their preferences. Also, this was noticed particularly when they were solving their assignment online and during the in-person activities.

The results indicate that learners were varying the online learning material they were using in the online learning as the mode of this criteria was equal to three (76%).

Comparing the feedback criteria, learners were providing feedback in both online, and in-person sessions as the mode of both criteria were equal to three. However, the provided online feedback (81%) was much higher than the in-person sessions (55%).

The results denote that learners’ creative thinking criteria mode in online and in-person sessions was equal to three. Learners show more skills in analyzing and discussing in the online...
learning sessions. Finally, the recorded mode of learners solving activities and assignments was equal to three in both online and in-person settings.

However, due to time constraints, learners tend to solve more activities in an online context than in an in-person class.

**Discussion**

The analysis of the first tree criterion unveiled that learners’ interaction was gradually increased. This can be explained by the fact that: first, in-person sessions assisted learners in knowing their learning environment, their teachers, and the other learners. However, the online sessions prove that this interaction was highly improved as the learning environment is more flexible in selecting the timing of learning and interacting. Also, the learners’ interaction clearly proves what Yarbro, Arfstrom, McKnight, and McKnight (2014) named the Learning Culture Shift. The teachers’ role was to provide the necessary guidance and support for their interaction.

Learners’ high interaction in online and in-person settings is related to the content selected by their teachers. The Flipped Classroom’s intentionally content selected by teachers for each session boosted learners’ integration in the courses, raised their interaction, and improved their learning quality which was later consolidated by their obtained grades in both formal and informal exams. Additionally, the variation of learning sources in online learning and activities in both online and in-person learning proved teachers’ professionalism that positively raised learners’ autonomous learning and their motivation to provide peer feedback. All this consolidated the meaning of flipped classrooms provided by Yarbro, Arfstrom, McKnight, and McKnight (2014).

Findings of Learners’ increase in the provision of feedback in both in-person and online sessions align with Johnson, Johnson, and Smiths’s (1991) and Cohen’s (1994) findings which states that flipped classroom support the collaborative form of learning. Furthermore, Mazur (1997) states that Flipped Classroom is a type of learning based on peer-assisted learning. Data collected from the current research confirm this finding as learners demonstrate a high level of exchanging feedback in both contexts.

Also, the finding of this paper, namely learners’ use of various online activities and selecting their learning pace, confirms Bridge et al.’s (2009) findings that note that such a learning environment is an opportunity to control the learning and use electronic learning as a new learning tool.

Ultimately, all the findings assist us in noting that the combination of traditional flipped classrooms and online learning classes is an efficient, practical, and encouraging learning environment that generates more autonomous learning and makes the learning journey more beneficial. This aligns with Valiathan’s (2002) findings.

**Conclusion**

In the light of what was discussed, the hypothesis set for this research paper that states that blended learning and flipped classroom assist learners to a great extent in their learning are accepted as the adoption of flipped classroom succeeded improving learners’ learning skills.
Additionally, the flipped classroom is an environment where learners can experience a blending of direct instruction with constructivist learning. Also, the flipped classroom is a tool that highly assists learners in integrating into online learning and thus engages them to be responsible for their learning. In this respect, learners will be more autonomous learners and reach better educational outcomes. Moreover, blended learning assists learners in overcoming certain psychological factors that hinder their appropriate learning and enriching their learning experience.

Therefore, based on the evidence and results provided, it is recommended to organize a systematic training programme for teachers to enhance their knowledge and competency in blended learning and flipped classrooms. Besides, it would be desirable to emphasize the development of learners’ autonomy and self-independence to fit the needs of the new world. Finally, it is preferable to afford a platform for teachers to exchange their experiences, methods and techniques concerning online teaching in general and blended learning and flipped classrooms in particular.

About the author
Asma RAHMANI is an assistant professor at the department of Media, Communication, and Library Sciences, Batna-1 University Algeria. Ph.D. holder in TEFL. She is an active member in Psychology of Road User Laboratory. Her area of interest is TEFL and Applied Linguistics.

Dr. Khadidja Samira ZITOUNI, a Ph.D. holder in Applied Linguistics. She is an assistant professor at Barika’s University Center. She was a member in AELT. She is an active member in the Psychology of Road’s User Laboratory. Her area of interest is Applied Linguistics and TEFL.

References


Johnson, G. B. (2013). *Student perceptions of the flipped classroom*, University of British Columbia.


## Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The student number</th>
<th>The observed criteria</th>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>Fairly present</th>
<th>Present</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learners’ online interaction (before the face-to-face session)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learners’ face-to-face interaction (before the online session)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learners’ online interaction (after the face-to-face session)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learners’ face-to-face interaction (before the online session)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-paced learning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using more online learning tools</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing feedback online</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing feedback face-to-face</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Analyzing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reflecting critical thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solving activities online</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solving activities in class</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Political Discourse Analysis: Analyzing Building Tasks in Trump's Speech in Saudi Arabia

Aied Alenizi
Department of English
College of Education, Majmaah University,
Saudi Arabia

Atef Odeh AbuSa’aleek
Department of English, College of Education, Majmaah University, 1
Saudi Arabia
Corresponding Author: a.odeh@mu.edu.sa

Abstract
This study aimed to investigate how the tasks of significance and identities are built in President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia to find how President Trump employs language to perform these two building tasks. President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia was analyzed qualitatively according to Gee's (2011) building tasks model. It has been found that President Trump enacts and builds the significance task by carefully selecting lexical items, cooperative patterns, lexical choice, and compliments. Furthermore, President Trump enacts particular identities and attributes specific identities to others in his speech, such as political, social, and cooperative identities. The analysis shows that President Trump shifts between the identities such as President of the U.S., a representative of the American People, a fighter and defender of American citizens and the world's safety and security, a businessman, a well-educated and knowledgeable person. This study recommends that future research investigate other political speeches delivered by President Trump based on any of the seven-building tasks of language that did not cover in this study.

Keywords: political discourse, building tasks, identities, significance, Trump's speech

Introduction

Language is used to build things in the world and to participate in world-building. It's like if you could create a building merely by speaking words. While we cannot construct a building with words alone, we may construct things in the world with words that achieve activities and enact identities (Gee, 2011). The relationships between language, politics, and power can be investigated using Critical Discourse Analysis. It introduces a novel approach to analyzing public addresses. As a result, it is worthwhile to pay closer attention to analyzing political speeches (Wang, 2010). Political leaders always aim to attract their audiences and influence their people by employing different linguistic forms, accepting their thoughts more easily. Therefore, they may include their ideologies and reflect what interests their audiences in their speeches which creates trust in the minds of the recipients. Consequently, their ideologies can be accepted as implemented in their discourse (Al-Zawahreh, 2019: 10). Critical discourse analysis focuses on the idea that language is a fundamental part of social life, dialectically intertwined with other aspects of social life, and social analysis and research should always consider language (Fairclough, 2004). According to Van Dijk (2001), critical discourse analysis focuses on the ways discourse structures deal with the interrelationships between language and power, ideology and dominance in society. Thus, addressing such discourse produced by politicians, such as President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia, occurs within the domain of critical discourse analysis.

The study of the seven-building task is essential because it exposes how language is utilized in the political discourse to build certain functions and influence public opinion. Like any other discourse genre, political discourses have their distinct linguistic structures, and a study of the specific nature of such a structure is a significant academic endeavor. Accordingly, this study extracts some descriptive and interpretive elements of President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia. Political leaders pay extra attention to their speeches at the national or worldwide levels as they address people from various political, cultural, and social backgrounds. President Trump, like many other political leaders, has given several well-known speeches.

Generally, this study attempts to determine how language is employed in President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia to know how the significance and identities are built-in President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia based on Gee's (2011) seven-building tasks model. More specifically, this research aims to achieve the following aims.

1. To find out how is President Trump can highlight the significance of certain ideas/things in his political speech.
2. To illustrate the identity or identities that President Trump enacts in his speech and identities attributed to others.

Questions of the study
The purpose of this study is to find answers to the following questions.

1. How does the President Trump's language employ to make specific ideas/things sound significant?
2. What identities are enacted in Trump's speech? And what identities are attributed to others?
Literature Review

We create or construct things in the world via language. So when we speak or write, we frequently create or build seven things or seven aspects of "reality." Gee (2011) calls them the "seven building tasks" of language: significance, identities, practices, relationships, politics, connections, sign systems, and knowledge. Hence this study is aimed to examine how language is employed in President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia in terms of the two-building tasks, namely, significant, identity according to Gee's (2011) model.

Gee (2011:211) defines significance as one of the seven-building tasks as "Using language to make things significant or important in various ways or to lower their significance or importance." Furthermore, Gee (2011:207) defines identity as "how we recognize and act out different social roles or different social positions in society." Finally, discourse analysis is a relatively new area of linguistics that has been broadly characterized as an investigation of language in use and is primarily concerned with extra-sentential levels (Brown & Yule, 1983). Discourse analysis analyzes the patterns that people's utterances follow when they communicate in different domains of social life, such as medical discourse and political discourse (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). According to (Gee 2011, p. 204), Critical Discourse Analysis refers to "any form of discourse analysis that seeks to engage with politics. Critical discourse analysis deals with whose "interests" are represented, helped, or harmed as people speak and write." In addition, Critical discourse analysis is based on a critical theory of language, which views language as a social practice (Janks 1997, p. 329).

Van Dijk (1997, p.12) states that political discourse is identified by "its actors or authors, viz., politicians." He added that the vast majority of political discourse research focuses on the text and speech of professional leaders or political parties. Political discourse is primarily argumentative discourse and primarily involves practical argumentation for or against lines of action in response to political problems (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, p.242).

Building tasks investigated in previous studies in a variety of disciplines as well as political discourse such as presidential speeches. Furthermore, previous studies on discourse analysis have focused on several approaches towards critical political discourse analysis see (Al-Haq & Al-Sleibi, 2015, Al Zawahreh, 2019, Hamood, 2019, Horváth, 2009, Riesner, 2016, Sarfo & Krampa, 2013). Other previous studies investigated Gee's (2011) model (Ruane and Lee 2016) in the discussion board interaction in an online peer-mentoring site. For example, Strunc and King (2017) applied Gee's (2011) seven building tasks to analyze Texas government standards, and Wijayanti (2016) applied Gee's (2011) seven building tasks and Systemic Functional Grammar to the interaction between the King and the Therapist. Horváth (2009) critically analyzed President Obama's public speaking persuasive strategies and the covert ideology that he enshrined in his inauguration speech based on Fairclough's critical discourse analysis approach. The results identified Obama's ideological structure as being present in the speech. In addition to placing Obama's speech in the context of President George W. Bush's outgoing administration. Sarfo and Krampa (2013) conducted a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of Bush and Obama's speeches on terrorism based on van Dijk's concept of (CDA). The findings show that by carefully choosing emotionally charged words and expressions, both presidents projected terrorism negatively while
projecting anti-terrorism positively. In addition, Bush and Obama's speeches were replete with references to power as control, mind control, and context control.

Al-Haq & Al-Sleibi (2015) conducted a political critical discourse analysis to figure out King Abdullah II's main linguistic strategies in his speeches. The findings indicated that King Abdullah uses four persuasive strategies: creativity, reference, intertextuality, and circumlocution. Furthermore, these strategies are competently employed to deliver his messages.

Riesner (2016) analyzed a 6-million word corpus of speeches that Obama held between January 2009 and January 2016, published by the White House. The researcher embraced the theory that the speaker purposefully formed identity and strategically used it to achieve his communicative objectives. Riesner looks at what kinds of identities Obama creates, as well as tracing the use of two major discursive identities in the ACA debate using a set of seven epistemic verbs. The findings showed that President Obama repeatedly constructs the identities of father and teacher to persuade his audience. Al Zawahreh (2019) applied Gee's (2011) model to analyze the different speeches of Mandela. How the tasks of significance, identities, relationships, and connections are built in some of Nelson Mandela's speeches and how Mandela employs language to perform these four tasks or functions. The findings indicated that Mandela relies heavily on lexical choice, contextualized meanings, comparisons, and compliments, in building the significance task. Furthermore, Mandela enacts political and social identities in his speeches; sometimes, he switches from one identity to another. Moreover, Mandela builds social, global, and political relationships with others.

Additionally, Hamood (2019) analyzes the political discourse of U.S. President Donald Trump concerning the transfer of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and The political discourse is analyzed critically according to van Dijk's thematic theory. The findings indicated that Donald Trump's decision was based on individualism and how president Donald Trump was so contradictory in his speech, especially to the Palestinian side, and how his decision reflected his domestic political considerations on a fair and practical approach to foreign policy.

Ruane and Lee (2016) conducted CDA to investigate Gee's (2011) model, four-building tasks: significance, identities, practices, and relationships in the discussion board interaction in an online peer-mentoring site among preservice teachers in the education program. The findings indicated that the online discussion facilitates valuable communication and professional interactions among the preservice teachers. Strunc and King (2017) conducted CDA, applied Gee's (2011) seven building tasks (significance, identities, practices, relationships, politics, connections, and signs, systems, and knowledge) to analyze Texas government standards. The findings of CDA's indicated a set of learning standards that was heavily biased.

Wijayanti (2016) conducted discourse analysis in Tom Hooper's The King's Speech applied Gee's (2011) seven building tasks and Systemic Functional Grammar on the interaction between the King and the Therapist. The findings reveal the significance of language in overcoming someone's speech disorder. Thus, none of those mentioned above studies analyzed the seven-building tasks in President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, previous studies on discourse analysis have focused on several approaches towards critical discourse analysis.
Therefore, based on the previous related literature review, the present study analyzes the two types of Gee's (2011) building tasks in President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia.

Method
This section presents the method of analyzing the political speech of President Trump in Saudi Arabia according to Gee's (2011) model in terms of the two-building tasks, namely, significant, and identity. It includes samples, data collection, and methods of analysis.

Sample and Data collection
The analysis sample consists of all the political speeches of U.S. President Donald Trump, delivered in Saudi Arabia on May 21, 2017. He outlined his vision for U.S. and Muslim relations in front of Muslim leaders. Table 1 shows that Trump's speech includes 3425 words that constitute 190 sentences and 89 paragraphs.

Table 1. Statistic of Trump's speech

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical items</th>
<th>Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words</td>
<td>3425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Method of Analysis
Gee's (2011) framework, which he refers to as the "seven building tasks of language," is beneficial for researching how individuals use language (p. 32). The present study adopts the qualitative approach to analyze the political speech of U.S. President Donald Trump in Saudi Arabia. Studies looking at political speeches in general (Al Zawahreh, 2019) and presidential speeches in particular (Al-Haq & Al-Sleibi, 2015, Horváth, 2009, Sarfo & Krampa, 2013) have demonstrated the utility of qualitative approaches. Thus, qualitative analysis is a suitable approach to analyzing the political discourse. Therefore, the present study adopts Gee's (2011) model of building tasks to analyze the political speech of President Trump in Saudi Arabia in terms of the two-building tasks, namely, significance and identity. The way an individual uses language to assign greater or lesser importance to specific ideas or things is called significance (Gee, 2011). The concept of identity is that an individual will use language to enact or ascribe one's identity to someone else (Gee, 2011).

Findings and discussion
This section presents the analysis findings of the building tasks, namely, the significance and identity obtained from President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia. The findings are presented based on the two research questions.

How is President Trump's language employed to make specific ideas/things sound significant?
The speech of Donald Trump makes certain things significant. In the beginning, Trump highlights the significance of the Summit as shown in "I want to thank King Salman for his extraordinary words, and the magnificent Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting today's summit." Then, Trump uses words to show the significance of the summit "Here at this summit we will discuss many interests we share together.", He highlighted the significance as shown in "With God's help, this
summit will mark the beginning of the end for those who practice terror and spread its vile creed" and in, "Our vision is one of peace, security, and prosperity in this region, and in the world." Finally, he adds, "Our goal is a coalition of nations," and "providing our children a hopeful future." The second significant theme that Trump highlighted is the "Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology." First, he highlighted the significance of this center by announcing its location in Saudi Arabia as shown in, "located right here, in this central part of the Islamic World." Then he states the role of this center which is "stamping out extremism." Furthermore, Trump highlighted the importance of signing an agreement to prevent the financing of terrorism "I am proud to announce that the nations here today will be signing an agreement to prevent the financing of terrorism."

Finally, Trump highlights the significance of Arab countries and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia KSA in particular. Trump's speech is full of words of appreciation and respect to KSA as shown in "I want to thank King Salman for his extraordinary words, and the magnificent Kingdom of Saudi," "the splendor of your country," "the kindness of your citizens," and "the incredible hospitality. He adds that KSA serves as custodian of the two holiest sites as in, "Saudi Arabia is home to the holiest sites in one of the world's great faiths." Furthermore, President Trump uses sublime elevated words to highlight the importance of Saudi Arabia, such as "Saudi Arabia's Vision for 2030 is an important and encouraging statement of tolerance, respect, empowering women, and economic development." Moreover, he adds, "Hajj," "In addition to ancient wonders, this country is also home to modern ones," "soaring achievements in architecture," and "the path to peace begins right here, on this ancient soil, in this sacred land."

A notable finding in President Trump's speech discourse construction in Saudi Arabia is the keyword analysis. It showed that the top ten keywords in the whole speech (see Figure 1, Table 2) mostly referred to typical political issues/reasons to deliver the speech in Saudi Arabia. Figure 1 shows the overall word cloud of Trump's speech, where we can see how President Trump uses certain words frequently for his vision of peace, security, and prosperity in this region and the world. This finding is to be expected in political discourse, particularly speeches delivered by presidents or government elites.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the frequent political keyword clouds in President Trump's speech are shown in Table 2 and their frequency.
Table 2. *Frequent political keyword clouds in President Trump's speech*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Nations</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>New, Region</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Great, world, America, terror</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Security, Saudi, Muslim,</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>United, Today, future, Middle</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia, Leaders, God, East, countries, citizens</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>American, Muslim, terrorism, terrorists, Iran</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Ideology, History, center</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What identities are enacted in Trump's speech? And what identities are attributed to others?**

The speech analysis reveals that Trump enacts particular identities and attributes specific identities to others. The identities that President Trump enacts in his speech were as the following. First, President Trump enacts the role of President of the U.S. Second, President Trump enacts the identity of a stereotype fighter and defender of American citizens and the world's safety and security. Third, President Trump enacts the identity of a businessman who signs many historic agreements with Saudi Arabia, strengthening previous partnerships and building new partnerships with Islamic Worlds. Finally, President Trump enacts the identity of a well-educated and knowledgeable person who knows a lot about Islam and the History and cultures of the Middle East countries.

Firstly, Trump enacts the identity of President of the U.S. in which he wants to form closer bonds of friendship with the Arab countries. As in, "I stand before you as a representative of the American People, to deliver a message of friendship" This identity was supported by various words used by Tramp as in, "strengthen America's oldest friendships," "build new partnerships," and "cooperation and trust." Furthermore, he talks about the most profound partnership between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. As shown in "Working alongside another beloved leader American President Franklin Roosevelt, King Abdulaziz began the enduring partnership between our two countries" and "today, we begin a new chapter that will bring lasting benefits to our citizens." Further, President Trump delivers a message to the leaders and citizens of every country who gathered at this Summit since he says, "I want you to know that the United States is eager to form closer bonds of friendship, security, culture, and commerce."

Secondly, Trump enacts the identity of a stereotype fighter and defender of American citizens and the world's safety and security. He commits himself to protect the American people as the defender of the American people as in "our first priority is always the safety and security of our citizens." Furthermore, he pledges to fight against terrorism, extremism and defeat the forces of terrorism as in, "to conquer extremism and vanquish the forces of terrorism." He adds, as in, "Above all, America seeks peace -not war." He named this battle as in, "This is a battle between Good and Evil." He asks Arab countries to join the U.S. in this Battle "I ask you to join me, to join together, to work together, and to FIGHT together— BECAUSE UNITED, WE WILL NOT
FAIL." He was careful in choosing the lexical items such as "join me," "to join together," "to work together," "to FIGHT together," "unified and determined," "to destroy the terror," and "threatens the world" to make his speech more powerful and effective.

Third, President Trump enacts the identity of a businessman who signs many historic agreements with Saudi Arabia, strengthening previous partnerships and building new partnerships with Islamic Worlds. As shown in "we have created almost a million new jobs, added over 3 trillion dollars of new value". Further, Trump states that "yesterday, we signed historic agreements with the Kingdom that will invest almost $400 billion in our two countries and create many thousands of jobs in America and Saudi Arabia." "This landmark agreement includes the announcement of a $110 billion Saudi-funded defense purchase," "we are here to offer partnership." Furthermore, he adds, "The Middle East is rich with natural beauty, vibrant cultures, and massive amounts of historic treasures," and "It should increasingly become one of the great global centers of commerce and opportunity."

Finally, President Trump enacts the identity of a well-educated and knowledgeable person who knows a lot about Islam and the History and cultures of the Middle East countries, as shown in the following excerpts. "You also hosted me in the treasured home of King Abdulaziz, the founder of the Kingdom who united your great people." Furthermore, Trump knows that Saudi Arabia is the heart of the Muslim world. He uses a language that gives a valuable perspective of Islam. as shown in "I chose to make my first foreign visit a trip to the heart of the Muslim world, to the nation that serves as custodian of the two holiest sites in the Islamic Faith." He shows that he a knowledgeable person who knows about Islam as shown in "Saudi Arabia is home to the holiest sites in one of the world's great faiths." He further adds, "Each year, millions of Muslims come from around the world to Saudi Arabia to take part in the Hajj."

Moreover, Trump acknowledges the potential of this region by talking about Egypt, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, and Iraq, as shown in the following excerpts. "Egypt was a thriving center of learning and achievement thousands of years" "The wonders of Giza, Luxor, and Alexandria" "All over the world, people dream of walking through the ruins of Petra in Jordan." "Iraq was the cradle of civilization and is a land of natural beauty." And" the United Arab Emirates has reached incredible heights with glass and steel." "The entire region is at the center of the key shipping lanes of the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, and the Straits of Hormuz."

**Identities attributed to others in Trump's speech**

Firstly, President Trump attributes a specific identity to others as in "Muslim-majority countries," "the nations of the Middle East," "Religious leaders," "political leaders" explicitly to take their responsibility to counter-terrorism and to be with him in this battle against the terrorism, "combating radicalization," and "combating extremist ideology." President Trump uses expressive words and expressions to make his speech effective, as in "If we do not act against this organized terror, then we know what will happen. Terrorism's devastation of life will continue to spread". Further, he adds, "If we do not stand in uniform condemnation of this killing then not only will we be judged by our people, not only will we be judged by history, but God will judge us." Additionally, President Trump made it clear that the U.S. is not going to defeat terrorism on behalf of Muslim nations as he states "more than 95 percent of the victims of terrorism are themselves
Muslim." He also made an explicit declaration that "Muslim-majority countries must take the lead in combating radicalization." He used the word "must" to show the obligation as in "Religious leaders must make this absolutely clear: Barbarism will deliver you no glory - piety to evil will bring you no dignity. If you choose the path of terror, your life will be empty, your life will be brief, and YOUR SOUL WILL BE CONDEMNED" and in "Political leaders must speak out to affirm the same idea: heroes don't kill innocents; they save them."

 Secondly, President Trump attributes a specific identity to Iran as the responsible regime for instability in the region, ISIS, and Hezbollah as a terrorist organization as shown in the following excerpts. "the government that gives terrorists all three—safe harbor, financial backing, and the social standing needed for recruitment." "I am speaking, of course, of Iran." He further adds that Iran funds the terrorists in Lebanon, Yemen, and Iraq, as shown in "From Lebanon to Iraq to Yemen, Iran funds, arms, and trains terrorists, militias, and other extremist groups that spread destruction and chaos across the region. For decades, Iran has fueled the fires of sectarian conflict and terror." Additionally, Tramp clearly states Iran has stoked sectarian strife and violence in the Middle East. As shown in the following excerpts, "It is a government that speaks openly of mass murder" and "Iran's most tragic and destabilizing interventions have been in Syria."

 Further, he made an explicit declaration that Hezbollah and ISIS are terrorist organizations. Therefore, we must take action to combat radicalization. Tramp used the word "must" to show the obligation as "We must also strip them of their access to funds," "We must cut off the financial channels that let ISIS sell oil," and "designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organization." Finally, Tramp states that responsible nations must work together to end the humanitarian disaster in Syria, defeat ISIS, and restore regional security.

### Conclusion
Gee (2011) states that there are tools of inquiry used to analyze the seven "building tasks" that we use language to enact in the world. According to Gee (2011), inquiry tools are employed to analyze the seven "building tasks" that we use language to enact in the world. The tools of inquiry are social languages, discourses, conversations, and intertextuality.

This investigation adequately validated the conceptual framework that language can develop an ideology between the speaker and the audience. This study further supported that political discourses are generally characterized by carefully selected linguistic expressions by speakers especially presidents or government elites to achieve a specific aim or objective and to have a specific kind of impact on listeners. The importance of the study is embedded in its findings, which may give insightful remarks into the nature of the political discourse and Gee's (2011) seven building tasks. Moreover, this study can be a good reference for discourse analysts who use Gee's (2011) model of analyzing the seven-building tasks in various genres of discourses.

The current study shows how to find how Trump employs language to perform these two building tasks. Furthermore, the findings show that Trump enacts the significance of specific themes in his speech by using various functions linguistically, such as careful selecting of sublime words and lexical choice. Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia shows that Trump is found to enact specific identities, and He attributes a specific identity to others, including political, social, and
cooperative identities. However, the present study is limited to use Gee's model of building tasks to analyze the political discourse of President Trump's speech. Therefore, future research is recommended to apply this building task model in other academic discourse and literary genres.

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About the Authors
Dr. Aied Alenizi is an associate professor of linguistics. Department of English, College of Education, Majmaah University, Al-Majmaah, 11952, Saudi Arabia. His major research interests include second language acquisition/studies, English language learning, discourse analysis and pragmatics. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9875-4668

Dr. Atef Odeh AbuSa’aleek is an Assistant professor of Applied Linguistics, Department of English, College of Education, Majmaah University, Al-Majmaah, 11952, Saudi Arabia. His research interests are Applied Linguistics, Internet Linguistics, CALL, EFL writing, electronic discourse and electronic feedback. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4727-2455

References


Creative Teaching Methods in the Formation of Language and Speech Competencies: Experience Working with Arab Students

Olesia O. Tieliezhkina1 Corresponding Author: Email: o_tele_o@ukr.net
Olena O. Dolhopol1, Tetiana V. Herasymchuk2, Alla A. Berestova3, Margarita V. Goltvenytska4

1Department of Language Training, Pedagogy and Psychology, Faculty for work with foreign students, O. M. Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv, Kharkiv, Ukraine

2Department of Philosophy and Pedagogy of Vocational Training, Faculty of Transport Systems, Kharkiv National Automobile and Highway University, Kharkiv, Ukraine

3Department of Fundamental and Language Training, Faculty for foreign citizens' education, National University of Pharmacy, Kharkiv, Ukraine

4Department of Pedagogy, Ukrainian and Foreign Philology, Faculty of Environmental Design, Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts, Kharkiv, Ukraine

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Abstract
The article raises the topical issue of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language to Arab students. Representatives of the Arab world have specific features in behavior, attitude to the organization of the educational process associated with cultural traditions, and upbringing. The Ukrainian system of higher education offers high-quality training. Among scientists, teachers, and methodologists, discussions are underway to choose the most effective methods of teaching international students the Ukrainian language. The study of creative methods of teaching Arabic students Ukrainian as a foreign language is very important, as it has not yet been the subject of a separate scientific study, and has not been covered in a separate article. The goal of our article is to outline the most effective methods of forming language and speech competencies for Arab students. The goal involves completing tasks: 1) to define language and speech competence; 2) to identify the effective use of language learning creative methods (classroom and distance education); 3) to check the effectiveness of the use of creative teaching methods in the formation of language and speech competencies of Arab students in listening, reading, speaking, and writing. According to the authors of the article, creative methods are methods that meet the psychological, age, and mental characteristics of Arab students. We concluded that the active use of creative methods in the educational process gives positive results informed language and speech competencies, due to which international students have the opportunity to study and communicate in Ukrainian-speaking environment. We consider such results to prove.

Keywords: creative teaching methods, language competence, learning a foreign language, speech competence, teaching Arab students

Introduction

Ukraine is interesting for foreign graduates with internationally recognized scientific achievements, effective teaching methods, and higher education institutions that provide quality education in 27 areas of training. Compared to other European countries, Ukrainian higher education institutions offer much lower tuition fees. According to the Ukrainian State Center for International Education (International students, 2020), in 2020, 76,548 international students studied in Ukraine. About 90% of them mastered professions, the rest learned language (6.45%), received postgraduate education (2.25%), took post graduate and Doctoral courses - 1.27%, surveyed in academic mobility programs - 0.01%. The most popular Ukrainian education is in the following countries of the Arab world: Morocco (2nd place out of 10; 8832 people, that is 11.54% of the total number of international students), Egypt (8th place out of 10; 3048 students, it is 3.98%), a small part of foreign applicants for higher education are representatives of Qatar, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria. Therefore, more than 15% of the representatives the Arab world in Ukraine receive higher education. We are interested in attracting even more applicants for higher education from the East to Ukrainian educational services.

A more effective organization of teaching the Ukrainian language as a foreign teacher take into account the national and psychological characteristics of the representatives of this region. We understand that the guiding principle of working with this group of students should be national-oriented learning.

Ukrainian is the language of state communication, which functions in all spheres of public life: in institutions, organizations, including higher education institutions. Since the years of Ukraine’s independence, the problem of learning the state language and improving language and speech competencies are solved at the state level. Instructors who teach Ukrainian as a foreign language are constantly looking for the most effective forms of language learning. Currently, in the higher school in Ukraine, in the training of specialists, the priority is the competence approach based on the interactive construction of practically oriented educational classes. Methodists focus on the study of the logical and grammatical system of the Ukrainian language, and the implementation of this task will allow forming a sufficient level of language and speech competence for future professionals.

The formation and development of general competencies involves all educational standards of training. "General competencies include language and speech competencies" (Educational program, 2018). Every future specialist must know the state language at a level that allows him to communicate with representatives of other professional groups of different levels to inform professionals and non-professionals with information and experience in professional activities.

We understand that ensuring the formation of these competencies for international students is possible only with the introduction of creative methods in the educational process. Creative methods will strengthen the educational and cognitive activity of students, provide further self-development, form the ability to act creatively in unusual situations, work in a coordinated team.

Creating a creative learning environment by the teacher using didactic language games, exercises with creative tasks, non-standard ways of organizing educational activities involves...
dialogue between teacher and students, varying communicative activities in academic and situational randomness moving away from stereotypical perceptions of reality, avoiding standards and stereotyped thinking. Syllabuses, textbooks, manuals, and didactic materials on the Ukrainian language as a foreign language create by the needs of foreign graduates, and their age, gender, and national characteristics. Creative teaching methods help the teachers to organize enjoyable learning both in the classroom and remotely. The study of creative methods of teaching Arabic students Ukrainian as a foreign language is very important, as it has not yet been the subject of a separate scientific study and has not been covered in a separate printed article.

The goal of our article is to outline the most effective methods of forming language and speech competencies for Arab students. The goal involves completing tasks: 1) to define language and speech competence; 2) to identify the effective use of language learning creative methods (classroom and distance education); 3) to check the effectiveness of the use of creative teaching methods in the formation of language and speech competencies of Arab students in listening, reading, speaking and writing. Due to the interest in a number of higher education students among the Arab citizens, the following issues: unification of educational standards and curricula, organization of the educational process using the most effective methods of education, and methodological support of the educational process remain unsolved. The first problem solves by the state. We hope that our research will help teachers to improve the teaching of the language to Arab students.

Literature Review

Considering the specificity of our study, we analyzed the scientific literature on the following issues: 1) clarification of the definition of language and speech competence; 2) study of the state of research of foreign language teaching methods; 3) analysis of effective creative methods in teaching a foreign language.

The scientific literature sufficiently covers the concept of language and speech competence. The study their genesis is not part of the tasks of our publication. In our research, the concept of ‘language competence’ is understood as "the assimilation and awareness of language norms and their adequate application in using a particular language" (Renchka, 2014, p. 172). We interpret speech competence as the practical mastery of all types of speech activity, the basics of oral and written culture, basic skills and abilities to use language in various areas and situations of communication. Confirmation of the legitimacy of this definition is in (Pats, 2018): "the purpose of language training of foreign citizens is to meet their communicative needs in various areas of activity" (p. 90). But no less vital for us is the concept of ‘communicative competence’ because "educational standards provide the acquisition of higher education competencies, which reflect as the ability to establish and maintain the necessary contacts with others, a set of knowledge, skills, and abilities to communicate effectively” (Educational program, 2018). Communicative competence combines language and speech competence.

The main purpose of learning foreign languages is communicative. "This involves the study of language as a means of communication in the conversational and professional spheres" (Sheremeta, 2020, p. 158). Speech, and communicative competencies are formed "in close connection with professionally-oriented subjects in the process of educational, scientific and practical activities in the field of foreign language education" (Ilyina, Tarasuk, Novikova &
Gribova, 2018, p. 699). Therefore we fill every lesson on Ukrainian as a foreign language with professionally-oriented didactic material.

Among the researches on didactics, we are interested in the articles of Ukrainian researchers on the methods of teaching the Ukrainian language. "For modern teaching of Ukrainian as a foreign language are important: the practical orientation of learning, the functional approach to the selection, and presentation of language material, situational and thematic presentation of educational material" (Shelest, 2018, p. 53). Researchers recommend using the discussion method, the design method, and the role-play method. We successfully implemented these methods in our experiment. The application of these methods "creates a natural environment in the classroom, activates the creative abilities of students, develops their thinking and forms in them the skills necessary for modern society" (Zozulia, Prysiazhna & Solodar, 2014, p. 26). The study is interesting in that it thoroughly reveals the content of vocabulary work at the phonetic, lexical, word-forming, morphological and syntactic levels: "systematic vocabulary work has a positive effect on the formation of speech and communicative competencies of students, gives significant results in mastering the Ukrainian language" (Piatko, 2017, p. 226). "Such tasks develop students' thinking in Ukrainian as a foreign language, expand their vocabulary, show the richness of the vocabulary of the language, deepen their professional knowledge" (Fetsko, 2021, p. 113). Having studied the experience described in the article, we used it to prepare methodological materials for the forming part of the pedagogical experiment.

Avdeenko's (2019) article helped to consider the problem of Arab higher education students with adjectives that do not exist in Arabic as a separate part of the language: "when studying adjectives in a foreign language by Arabic students, it is necessary to take into account the peculiarities of the functioning of adjectives in their native language" (p. 14). This publication helped to methodically build lessons on 'Adjective' based on a comparison of syntactic, phonetic and morphological features of adjectives in Arabic and Ukrainian.

The situation with the Covid-19 pandemic has forced the world's educational systems to move to distance and blended learning. New topics have been opened to study the possibilities and effectiveness of teaching aids in these formats. Hebah (2020) talks about the benefits of admixed learning: "that the use of blended learning has the potential to support EFL learning and maximize EFL learners’ opportunities to practice the language freely at their convenience" (p. 191). In particular, we agree with the author the blended learning format allows students to become autonomous and construct knowledge rather than acting as their passive absorber.

In discussing distance learning, the Methodists also paid attention to the technological issues of its organization. The publication Yablokov (2020) is devoted to the topical issue of choosing the methods used in foreign language teaching and analysis of technological support for learning foreign languages by specific objectives: "We consider this support as an essential component of professional training" (p. 282). We agree with the author on the issue of professional orientation of methodological support of the discipline by the educational purpose. This approach will help achieve the most significant effect. Web learning, according to Cheng-Shih & Ryan (2016), has many prospects for the development of critical thinking in learning subjects. Therefore, according to the authors, the use of creative methods in such learning is effective: "The research findings show 1) positively remarkable effects of web-based creative thinking teaching on creativity,
2) positively notable effects of creativity on learning outcome, and 3) positively significant effects of web-based creative thinking teaching on learning outcome" (p. 1675). However, it should be borne in mind that the method of web-learning described by the authors was partially implemented and was not systematic. Therefore, it should be borne in mind that in 2019, the opinions of researchers on web learning were divided.

Among the creative methods that are discussed by Methodists most actively in the project method as a way to obtain scientific and methodological knowledge: "This contributes to the development of work qualities required for the fulfillment of the technological, functional, organizational and productive of the jobs where they will perform once they graduate" (Andrés-Concepción, Alonso-Betancourt & Figueredo 2015, p. 70). The authors demonstrate the professional orientation of students through the introduction of the educational process of creative methods (in particular, projects).

Against the background of intensification of researchers to determine effective ways to learn a foreign language (including Ukrainian) in online and offline, the issue of organizing training in groups with different entry levels remains unexplored. It is necessary to study the content of professionally-oriented materials, the creation of unified textbooks and manuals based on cooperative programs.

Methods
Our research group used methods of theoretical research: we analyzed scientific works on the topic to determine the degree of research of the problem; in order to study the list of language competences and tools for their formation our researchers studied the educational programs for the preparation of bachelors of the specialties; and our group of researchers analyzed textbooks and manuals on language training of students on which it is expedient to implement creative methods.

From the methods of empirical research, we used the following: conversation with teachers to discuss the hypothesis of the experiment, to coordinate actions during the experiment; student questionnaire to identify the level of proficiency of Ukrainian and the level of awareness of the importance of language in professional activity.

Our scientists used methods of studying the products of students' activities (completed practical tasks, independent work, individual tasks, results of practice, participation in didactic games) to confirm the hypothesis.

Our research group conducted a formative pedagogical experiment to confirm the hypothesis of the study.

Participants
The material for the article is the results of a pedagogical experiment conducted in the 2019-2020 academic year and the first semester of 2020-2021 based on the following institutions of higher education: O. M. Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv, National University of Pharmacy, Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts, Automobile and Highway University. Despite the large number of international students (including Arabic) studying in mentioned higher educational institutions, foreign language teachers have joined forces to solve
the problem of choosing the most effective methods of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language to this category of students.

According to the research hypothesis, creative teaching methods are effective methods. In the new realities, these methods are implemented in online format and offline format. A total of 132 Arab students took part in the survey, but 126 people took part in the experiment due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the preparatory phase of the pedagogical experiment analyzed the language training of Arab students on the following indicators: training in the primary department (yes-no), the results of entrance testing for the Ukrainian language (for graduates), the level of motivation of Arab students to learn Ukrainian languages.

To select the didactic materials used in the experiment, we considered the specialty of students of 1-2 courses study. After studying the honest answers of the survey participants, the Arab applicants for higher education divided into two groups. The survey yielded the following results. The majority of respondents (64%) said that they know more than three languages: Arabic, French, English / Italian / Spanish, to the extent necessary for communication on household topics. Other students indicated that they knew two languages at a sufficient level. 78% of respondents told Moroccan language as their native language, and 12% told French as a common language of communication in the country and family; the rest (approximately 10%) said that they consider themselves bilingual as they switch from one language to another automatically. Many Arab students thought that the Russian language existed in Ukraine: they had such information from their relatives, friends, and acquaintances who had recently graduated from Ukraine and used the Russian language. Therefore, the teachers told the students about the history of the Ukrainian state and language. As a result, the students realized that currently, there is only one Ukrainian state language in Ukraine. Moroccan students noted the similarity of the stories of two languages: Ukrainian in Ukraine and Arabic in Morocco, due to the long geopolitical influence of Russia on Ukraine and France on Morocco, respectively. 60% of respondents said that they were not very actively interested in culture and language in the format of watching videos. A small number of respondents (about 8%) were able to name the rock bands ‘Ocean Elzy’ and ‘Skryabin’, 27% said they know the colors of the flag of Ukraine, heard the anthem, and see knew the football player Andriy Shevchenko. 84% of respondents graduated from the Faculty of Preparatory: during the oral communication, the majority demonstrated a relatively high level of language proficiency. Despite the desire of students to study at the university in English, all respondents are aware that learning Ukrainian as a foreign language is provided by the educational program, so to master the curriculum, students master Ukrainian.

After analyzing the answers, we divided the students into groups of RG (research group) and IG (inspection group). During the division, the level of proficiency in the Ukrainian language at the beginning of university studies and the level of motivation to study it were taken into account. The analysis of language training on these indicators allowed to divide the participants of the experiment (126 people) into the following groups: two research (from now on - RG1 and RG2) and two inspection (from now on - IG1, IG2). RG1 and IG1 are students with the level of Ukrainian language proficiency very low or zero. RG2 and IG2 are students who studied Ukrainian independently or graduated from a preparatory department with a sufficient level of knowledge.
The number of students in groups according to the level of expertise: students didn’t study or have a very shallow level of expertise - 43 (RG1 - 23, IG1 - 20), they graduated from the preparatory faculty/department, with a sufficient amount of speech competencies for communication - 65 (RG2 - 38, IG2 - 45). We will present the results of the entrance and final tests by indicators in the comparative table in the ‘Results’ section.

At the last phase of the experiment, the comparison of indicators according to specific criteria (motivational-value, linguistic and cognitive, text-communicative, language-normative) in RG1, RG2, and IG1, IG2.

Research Instruments

Ukrainian pedagogical science has long used proven scientific research methods (empirical, complex, and theoretical). Among the practical methods we used the following: 1) to select the most appropriate teaching methods, we organized observations of behavior, organization, daily routine, habits, preferences, interaction of Arab students; 2) comparison of the mentality, psychological characteristics of Arab students with other foreign graduates allowed specifying the chosen creative methods, to see their effectiveness; 3) a questionnaire developed by teachers of philology made it possible to measure the level of motivation of Arab students to study the Ukrainian language and identify reserves of abilities; 4) the pedagogical experiment organized and conducted for 1.5 years according to the classical method, aimed to confirm or refute the hypothesis, which is to assume that the use of creative teaching methods at the lessons of Ukrainian as a foreign language will increase the language and speech competence of Arab students.

We used the following complex methods: 1) for the selection of scientific literature on the research topic - analysis and synthesis; 2) we used the modeling method to organize methodical materials of practical direction where the connection with the future profession is needed: in professional texts, before reading and after-reading tasks, selection of professional vocabulary, topics of dialogues according to the future profession.

Among the unique methods of scientific research, we used the grouping method to students divided into RG and IG, and to didactic materials, which according to the curriculum, were grouped by topics, goals, and types of speech activities (listening (listening and comprehension), reading, speaking and writing).

In RG, classes of Ukrainian as a foreign language with constant active use of creative teaching methods offline and online. In IG we conducted classes in the usual way: with moderate and unsystematic use of these methods.

The questionnaire developed by teachers to divide students into these groups provided open-ended answers to the following questions: 1. What languages do you speak? 2. What is your native language? 3. What do you know about the language situation in Ukraine? 4. What is the state language in Ukraine? 3. Did you study the Ukrainian language before coming to Ukraine? 5. Did you graduate from the preparatory faculty? 6. What language (Ukrainian or English) will you study at the university? 7. What advantages of knowledge of the Ukrainian language do you see in your situation? 8. Do you plan to visit the cultural and historical monuments of Ukraine during your studies?
Work with students on new linguistic phenomena is organized in several interrelated stages:
"1. Repetition of information obtained earlier or important for the study of new material; 2. Perception is a recent language phenomenon that is perceived better when different means are used (visualization, board, textbook, multimedia presentation, online-simulators, Internet resources, etc.); 3. Awareness of the essential features of the language phenomenon with the use of unique teaching methods (analysis, observation, comparison); 4. Memorize the concept, word, and its linguistic meaning, structure of syntactic constructions, etc.; 5. Reproduction is the final stage of learning new material: retelling, giving examples; 6. Use of mastered algorithms" (Borodina, 2016, p. 46-47).

**Research Procedures**

We conducted a pedagogical experiment for 1.5 years (two semesters of the 2019-2020 academic year, and the first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year) based on four institutions of higher education in Kharkiv.

The experiment involved eight teachers from four universities in Kharkiv. We have developed a schedule for a pedagogical experiment.

**I phase** (1st semester, 2019-2020 academic year)
Competence: phonetic, lexical.
Creative methods: making up, association, role and situational games, a dramatization of educational or educational material, collective creative work, creative tasks for audio materials, adapted texts of journalistic style.
Students demonstrate their ability to perform reproductive tasks.
Expected results: the formation of the good side of speech (student pronounces the sounds of all phonetic groups correctly and clearly); formation of phonemic processes (student can hear and distinguish the sounds of a foreign (Ukrainian) language); have an idea of the different ways of word formation, the ability to use words correctly in the proper sense; highlight sound and semantic differences between words.

**II phase** (2nd semester 2019-2020 academic year)
Competence: lexical, grammatical (morphological, syntactic).
Creative methods: fantasizing, combining, functional analogies; research tasks: to compile a matrix, characterize the language material, create and express a symbolic story, and creative work with texts of journalistic and official business styles.

Students demonstrate their ability to perform reconstructive tasks.
Expected results: be able to form adjectives from nouns; formation of the grammatical structure of language: the ability to use extensive phrasal speech; ability to construct simple sentences correctly, to see the connection of words in sentences, to extend sentences by secondary and homogeneous members; ability to work with a deformed sentence, independently find mistakes and correct them; compose sentences based on keywords and pictures.

**III phase** (1st semester 2020-2021 academic year)
Competence: grammatical, stylistic.
Creative methods: project tasks, project method, heuristic conversation, discussion, controversy, debate, press conference, ‘brainstorming’, creation and presentation of reports, messages, reviews, annotations on texts of journalistic and scientific styles.

Students demonstrate their potential for reconstructive and creative activities.

Expected results: the ability to use adequately and appropriately speech in specific communication situations, using both vocabulary (intonation) and non-speech (facial expressions, pantomime) means of expression of speech; sociability, mastery of communicative skills in the use of means of expression.

The study material is selected and prepared by the "Standardized requirements for levels of proficiency in Ukrainian as a foreign language A1-C2" (Synchak, Mazuryk, Boiko, & Antoniv, 2020). The study material will be studied by students who master Ukrainian as a foreign language at level B2, contains professionally-oriented exercises and tasks.

During the experiment, we followed five main principles of creative methodology: systemic (continuous implementation of different creative tasks in each class), dynamic (task development), software (complexity should correspond to software requirements), structural (purposeful method of learning) and expressive (effective understanding of language norms).

Understanding the importance of sufficiently developed communicative skills allowed teachers to organize and conduct a pedagogical experiment in the classical format. In the research groups, innovative ways were used constantly, in each lesson, in all types of language activities. In the inspection groups, creative methods were partially and limited introduced but taking into account the initial language level of students.

According to the results of comparative analysis of Arabic and Ukrainian phonetic systems at the first stage of learning, we actively used reading aloud: individual sounds, words, and phrases (groups RG1 and IG1), short texts according to the curriculum (groups RG2, IG2) at the first stage of learning.

In the second and third phase of the experiment, phonetic work concerned improving reading and pronunciation skills of Ukrainian words and phrases (groups RG1, IG1), creation and utterance of monologues, and participation in dialogues (groups RG2, IG2).

As Moskalyuk (2016) notes: "didactic games are a kind of games according to rules that combine two spheres of human activity simultaneously - learning and play" (p. 223). In all phases of the experiment, our team of scientists used story-based role-playing games. The only condition was taking into account the level of language proficiency of the participants of the game (I phase: ‘In the hospital’, ‘In the dean's office’, ‘In the library’; II phase: ‘Interview with an architect’, ‘The Job Interview’; III phase: ‘Dialogue with the supervisor’, ‘Defense of the course project’), games-exercises (‘Find a mistake’, ‘Make sentences’, puzzles, crosswords, etc.), construction games (logically build the text from the given parts; write the end of the story with 2-3 sentences, swapping paragraphs, etc.), business games (collective preparation of a CV of an imaginary candidate for the position, ‘Customer and architect-executor of the project’, ‘Discussion of the task by a group of development engineers’). Therefore, for the participants of groups, RG1 and IG1, dialogues were simple, and the participants of RG2 and IG2 acted out the discussions with more
complex speech constructions. In these and other games, students improved their communicative competencies, showed their own creative abilities. In groups RG1 and IG1 we more often used reproductive games aimed at forming the necessary competencies; in groups RG2 and IG2, games of problem-searching (with elements of search and analysis) were added, and creative content (development of individual creative potential). Purely philological games such as ‘Word Game’ (to find out the meaning of the noun ‘table’ in combination with the adjectives) will help to improve lexical, grammatical, and stylistic norms.

In the third phase of the pedagogical experiment with RG2 and IG2 students, we used the case method. It is a miniature business game, as it combines professional activity with gaming. Here is an example of a case: "The company announced a competition for the vacant position of architect. You have long wanted to work in this company. The applicant must have creative personal qualities and creative skills. Prove convincingly that the company should hire you. Demonstrate your creative skills."

Systematic vocabulary work also took place with the introduction of creative methods. The knowledge acquired by students at the phonetic, word-forming, and morphological levels is impossible without vocabulary work. The objects of vocabulary work are commonly used words foreigners use in everyday life, lexical and semantic series that function in different contexts, and professional vocabulary. To prevent lexical errors, correct speech inaccuracies, identify ambiguities, and synonyms, we introduced the following types of creative tasks: selective work on the text; observational research; research-search.

Grammar and spelling rules students practiced during various exercises. Arab students often ignore written works aimed at the drilling spelling rules, so they show a relatively low grammar level. To close the knowledge gaps for students of groups RG1 and IG1, members of the research team made cards with individual tasks. They also had the opportunity to practice language and speech competencies with the help of online simulators in the format of full-time and distance learning.

In order to form spelling skills, students of groups RG2 and IG2 carried out research-restoration - read the text, insert the missing letters in words, explain; spelling workshop with elements of analysis - to explain the lexical meaning of the words highlighted in the text; research-analysis; performed selective work.

Classes in the language classroom also had differences, which consisted not only in the methodology of their conduction and selection of didactic material but also in taking into account the psycho-physiological characteristics of Arab students.

Experimental teachers used the opportunities of language classrooms to reproduce audio information, created conditions for virtual immersion in the Ukrainian-speaking environment, pronunciation training and simultaneous translation. In the language classroom, students performed exercises individually, in pairs, or in teams. Using the opportunities of the language classroom made learning the Ukrainian language more efficient and enjoyable. Given the tendency of Arab students to ignore tasks, teachers have provided the language classroom with the possibility of simultaneous performance of duties by all participants in the learning process.
Auditioning researchers used to study new material (formation of sound images of new language elements): "as an element of dialog (without listening, there is no communication), as a special kind of foreign language exercise (monologue unity of reading, storytelling)" (Zozulia, Prysiazhna & Solodar, 2014, p. 25). Before listening to the texts, students performed the following types of exercises: for students of groups RG1, IG1: read explanations of unknown words and phrases; find out the meaning of words on your own, using a dictionary; for students of groups RG2, IG2: to remember the importance of phrases; explain the differences between related words; form as many cognate words as possible. After listening to the text, students performed tasks: RG1, IG1: answer the questions; choose the correct answer to the question; read the passage, open the brackets, choose the word that corresponds to the listened text; agree or disagree with the opinion; RG2, IG2: complete the sentence; prepare an essay on the content of the information you heard to.

In groups of students who did not study the Ukrainian language, teachers used videos (for example, Hanna Chubach, Natalia Mai, Lesia Horova), educational video presentations, and cartoons, clips we used in different learning formats. During the preparation for the listening, teachers felt a lack of material in the Ukrainian language. Foreign translated products were treated with caution because the content of cartoons and clips did not correspond to Ukrainian realities. The links to the website http://krok.miok.liviv.ua/uk/ were a sound basis for selecting audio material for RG1 and IG1 groups. Students of RG2, IG2 groups got acquainted with video recordings of meetings with well-known experts, visited galleries, exhibitions, watched modern films.

To form and develop reading skills within the curriculum, teachers used educational texts on various topics: history, culture, traditions, language, scientific progress, technological development, etc. Experimental teachers selected most of the readers journalistic and scientific styles. The texts differed in complexity, number of characters and pre-text and post-text tasks. In the first phase of the experiment, there mainly were test tasks.

We used formal language (linguistic) and communicative games, such as dice, dominoes (preposition + noun in a particular case). To properly perform such exercises, students must carefully study the content of the text, know the grammar of the Ukrainian language.

The students composed dialogues from the first days of studying the Ukrainian language. Involvement in the conversation begins with an acquaintance the teacher's phrase, ‘My country is Ukraine, and yours?’. The use of illustrations in texts gave a good result. For example, first-year students of all levels of language proficiency are interested in discussing aphorisms and images to the parables of Omar Khayyam and Ukrainian fairy tales. To do this, we used visual material in the form of cards with the image of numbers and objects: for RG1 and IG1, it is the image of products, things, and stationery; for RG2 and IG2, there were thematic cards (for example, for the specialty ‘Construction and Civil Engineering’ there were the cards of building materials: brick, cement, reinforcement elements, etc.). In the second and third phases of the experiment, Arab students actively participated in dialogues-agreements, dialogues-exchanges of impressions and thoughts, dialogues-discussions, etc. Yes, each extracurricular activity ends with a discussion. For example, after visiting an art museum, a university museum, and a walking tour of the city, students were expected to talk about the exchange of impressions received from the event; in the first lesson after the holidays, students exchanged impressions about the rest. At the last phase of the experiment, students had enough experience and professional vocabulary to participate in dialogues on a professional topic, reported at the annual scientific conferences.
Dialogues predominate in the teaching of students of all experimental groups. Teacher and students ask each other questions. The teacher comments on the implementation of written assignments. In the third phase of the experiment, students independently composed dialogues and evaluated the dialogues of their friends. During the assessment, students took into account the number of lines in the dialogue (14-16 lines), the presence of errors, the relevance of the situation and the purpose of communication, compliance with etiquette, emotionality.

To extend the vocabulary of students of groups RG1 and IG1, such games as ‘Word puzzles’ (for example, food - potatoes, profession - engineer; doctor - pills, driver - car) were used for students of groups RG2 and IG2, cards - puzzles with professional thematic vocabulary were used (term - definition).

Reading and reading comprehension is another criteria for successful language acquisition. In the organization of this type of activity, we attached great importance to before reading exercises, which is to prepare an international student for the perception of new information and to update already acquired knowledge. To do this, we can offer tasks of this type: to establish a correspondence between words and their meaning; find out the importance of these words with the help of a dictionary; fill in the gaps with the words from the reference in the correct form; determine which of the given words is the main in the thematic chains of words. We selected the texts according to the level of students' language skills. Teachers used contextual exercises to attract attention while reading the text: pay attention to the spelling of highlighted words, pay attention to the spelling of numerals in the text, pay attention to the emphasis of the highlighted words. Post-text exercises also differed in the level of language proficiency of students. Students of groups RG1 and IG1 performed the following exercises: emphasize new words in the indicated sentences; answer questions; readout highlighted words; insert missing letters. Students of RG2 and IG2 performed the following after reading tasks: to explain a specific statement; find synonyms for words in the text; choose from the text antonyms to the given words; find in the text certain lexical and semantic groups; the name from which the words formed complex words; choose common root words; paraphrase a sentence. To test how students learned the text, teachers used the following techniques: ‘Sorting’, ‘Auction’, ‘Question-Answer’, ‘Agree-Disagree’, and ‘Remember Everything’.

Language acquisition is impossible without writing exercises. Students of RG1 and IG1 did the following tasks: "Complete and write a sentence based on the information of the text," make and write a nominative plan of the text; from the given words, form feminine nouns with the suffix -ість, etc. For students of RG2 and IG2, registered performance of tasks of the following type is provided: to write a short translation of the text; describe your attitude to what you’ve read; write an essay on the proposed topic, work in pairs: take/give (respectively, register as a dialogue) an interview about one of their working days; create a flyer of services or products of your own company. Given the level of language proficiency (from A1 to B2), using a specific variety (puzzles, role-playing games, simulation games, cards, and playing field, etc.) games. Students learned the elements of argumentation by constructing and writing sentences with conjunctions because.
Participants RG2 and IG2 performed the following creative tasks: the stylistic transformation of texts (students receive tasks to retell or rewrite the text in another way, for example, everyday phrases: in a business telegram, official business message in conversational style, etc.).

Starting from the second phase of the experiment, students gradually became involved in project work. This activity requires a lot of effort and attention from students, who are not ready for long-term performance, and Arab students are more impressed by the tasks that can be done quickly and get points for their implementation. But a more prepared audience of students of groups RG2 and IG2 at the end of the third phase of the experiment made a presentation: a correspondence tour of the city; conducted interviews with classmates on the topics identified by the program and arranged them in the form of dialogues; demonstrated project work according to the specialty; prepared and held the annual student scientific conference. During the preparation of these projects, students developed scenarios of activities, recorded videos (if necessary), prepared texts of speeches, and created presentations for them. The role of the teacher was to organize and coordinate the actions of students, creating a favorable atmosphere for creativity. In the remote work, we used an interesting creative method - a web quest (‘Internet search’). We consider this technique a kind of mini-project. The main task of such a mini-project is to search for information on the Internet.

Before searching for information on a given topic, students received a precise algorithm consisting of step-by-step instructions for each phase, and a description of the results that students should get at the end of each step. On the recommendation of teachers, students pre-selected and analyzed authentic Ukrainian-language Internet resources that they could use to search for information. The teachers organized the discussion of the web quest in the form of a conference. At this conference, students demonstrated their practical work. According to our observations, the students were most interested in the combination of elements of training: speak, write, draw, play, create, and experience. Combining such styles of presentation of educational material ensures its practical perception on the intellectual (‘brainstorming’, problem-solving), and emotional levels (games, role-playing games, discussions). The pedagogical experiment demonstrated the high efficiency of creative teaching methods in forming language and speech competencies of Arab students.

Results

At the initial and last phase of the experiment, the Ukrainian language was tested by participating students in order to compare the results. The criterion is considered to be the standard in pedagogical research. The authors identified the following criteria for the formation of language and speech competencies of Arab students:

1) motivational value: the presence of a set of motives and needs that motivate students to learn a foreign (Ukrainian) language; emotional attitude to learning and self-education;

2) linguistic and cognitive: availability of a system of knowledge about language, language culture, language traditions, features of communication, generally accepted rules and norms of behavior during interaction in various spheres of life; operation of this knowledge;

3) text-communicative: the ability to compile and structure professional texts and documents, prepare for public speaking and pronounce it, use various forms of collective discussion of professional problems; active listening skills;
4) language-normative: the ability to master practically the Ukrainian language in various types of speech activity in the scope of topics due to professional needs.

We differentiated the criteria and indicators developed by us at the level of formation according to the traditional three-level scale (primary, sufficient, high). We believe that this scale is relevant to the specifics of the object under study.

We summarized the results of the pedagogical experiment in table one.

Table 1. The results of the pedagogical experiment using creative methods in teaching Arab students the Ukrainian language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>RG1</th>
<th>RG2</th>
<th>IG1</th>
<th>IG2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entry</td>
<td>Result</td>
<td>Entry</td>
<td>Result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
<td>36.00%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>12.00%</td>
<td>46.00%</td>
<td>51.00%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>84.00%</td>
<td>18.00%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High level: students have fully completed the tasks, answered all the questions correctly, did not violate the rules of vocabulary, quickly and accurately perceive oral speech, can to reproduce and analyze scientific texts; answer questions independently and correctly; freely construct your statement; understand and perceive the text at the same time.

Sufficient level: students made several grammatical and lexical mistakes that do not significantly affect the final results; the pace of reading is the same as most students have, the participants of the experiment partially completed the task, and the focus is on the reading process, not on reading comprehension; reveals the main essence of the issues.

Basic level: students completed the tasks satisfactorily, and partially reproduced the basic knowledge of grammar; violations in the use of vocabulary are significant; the reading rate is slow; the answers to the questions are inaccurate, not always correct; understanding of the actual content of the text is partial.

Teachers noted that in mixed groups (students of different nationalities), Arab students are more interested in learning the Ukrainian language. Our team members explain this interest by the fact that the propensity for active communication is an integral part of the mentality of the Arab world. In groups with representatives of other nationalities, such as Chinese, Hindus, and Arab students, they took a more active part in the class, trying to explain Ukrainian words to other classmates in sign language, English, etc. Thus they were more communicative. Therefore, compared to other non-experimental groups, even in the absence of creative teaching methods, Arab students demonstrated a higher level of proficiency in the Ukrainian language.

Discussion
In our article, we outlined the definition of language and speech competencies. In our opinion, language competence is the assimilation and awareness of language norms and their adequate application in the process of using a certain language. Speech competence involves the practical mastery of all types of speech activities in various fields and situations. Language and speech
competence are components of communicative competence. Researchers Renchka (2014), and Pat (2018) came to the same conclusions.

We have identified effective creative methods for use in language learning in classroom and distance formats. With a practical orientation of learning, a functional approach to the organization of language material, it is most appropriate to use the method of discussion, the method of projects, role-playing games, ‘brainstorming’, etc. Confirmation of the legitimacy of our position can be found in the works of Sheremeta (2020), Ilyina, Tarasuk, Novikova, & Gribova (2018), Shelest (2018), Zozulia, Prysiazhna, & Solodar (2014) Piatko (2017), Fetsko (2021), and Yablokov (2020).

The results of the final testing showed that the creative teaching methods used in the pedagogical experiment are effective in the formation of language and speech competence of Arab students.

Conclusion
The use of creative methods in teaching international students the Ukrainian language has indisputable advantages in activating the cognitive activity of students, the dynamics of the lesson, and a higher level of knowledge acquisition compared to the classical structure of the study. Today we have the opportunity to combine traditional forms of work (in the language classroom, cards with individual tasks, exercises, cases) with innovative (online simulators, research on electronic dictionary platforms, demonstration of excerpts from movies, cartoons, songs, project individual and group work with using software tools, etc.).

About the Authors:
Olesia O. Tieliezhkina is a Doctor of Philologicy, Associate Professor, Professor of the Language Training, Pedagogy and Psychology Department. She is interested in the stylistics of literary texts, including poetry, psycholinguistics, communicative linguistics, she is looking for the most effective ways to teach Ukrainian to foreign students, as well as explores other issues of language didactics. http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2953-7368

Olena O. Dolhopol is a Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Language Training, Pedagogy and Psychology Department. She is interested in the introduction of innovative technologies in the educational process, methods of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, the problem of choosing methods of teaching Ukrainian in the format of full-time and distance learning. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9545-2290

Tetiana V. Herasymchuk is a Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor. She is interested in the introduction of Internet technologies in the educational process, methods of teaching foreign languages in technical Universities. http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1952-4977

Berestova A. Alla, is a Candidate of Philology. She is interested in the problems of lexicology, sociolinguistics, methods of teaching the Ukrainian language to foreign citizens. http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6036-7961
Margarita V. Goltvenytska is a Candidate of Philology. She is interested in theoretical issues of syntax, Ukrainian phraseology, issues of scientific language culture, problems of linguodidactics. http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3130-271X

References


Teaching High Functioning Children with Autism: Considerations for Vocabulary Course Design Using Technology

Faizah Abd Majid
Faculty of Education,
Universiti Teknologi MARA,
Malaysia
Corresponding author: faiza404@uitm.edu.my

Shireena Basree Abd Rahman
Faculty of Education,
Universiti Teknologi MARA,
Malaysia

Muhamad Fairus Kamaruzaman
College of Creative Arts,
Universiti Teknologi MARA,
Malaysia

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Abstract
This paper highlights one of the most critical aspects of facilitating vocabulary learning among children with autism. Several pertinent issues serve as the focus of the paper; vocabulary course design for high functioning children with autism and the relevant considerations required when teaching them using technology. To explore these issues, a qualitative design using content analysis through extensive literature review was conducted. The content analysis included a critical examination of the features of children with autism and their learning and the theories of vocabulary course design and its principles. The analysis brought to light relevant considerations following the five factors as identified from the critical examination of the literature. Hence, this paper proposes course design for high functioning children with autism considerations. Curriculum designers, syllabus writers and instructors for children with autism could expect to benefit from this paper. This paper also recommends quantitative research such as a survey with the relevant stakeholders to confirm or enrich the data from the present study.

Keywords: Autism spectrum disorders, high functioning children with autism, technology in education, vocabulary course

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1. Introduction

At least two of the UNESCO’s Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDG) could be related to children with autism, namely, Quality Education (SDG 4) and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10). World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that one in every 160 children is born with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) (2020). As the number of children with autism attending school continues to grow, concerted efforts toward developing quality education for the special group of children are taken (Kellems, Eichelberger, Cacciatore, Jensen, Frazier & Simons, 2020).

Interestingly, the rise of the Fourth Industry Revolution (IR4.0) in recent years has leveraged the uses of digital technology exponentially. Way of life and work transform accordingly with the upsurge of the relevant 21st century technology. Key to human and nation development, education, is mainly affected by the need to transform in line with the technology. The children with autism have particular issues that require attention when it comes to including technology in their education. One area that needs further exploration is technology in teaching language and communication to children with autism (Sarker, Linkon, Bappy, Rabbi & Nahid, 2021).

This paper will explore relevant theories underpinning the design of an English language vocabulary course for children with autism using technology such as Virtual Reality (VR). Several critical discussions based on an in-depth literature review include core features of children with autism, instruction methods for children with autism, technology use in teaching children with autism, and English vocabulary modules design principles for high functioning children with autism (HFA). Hence, this paper may be reference to curriculum developers, module designers, and language instructors for HFA.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Core features of children with Autism

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) is a form of neurological development disorder that hinders children from being socially and communicatively competent. Lucas, Thomas and Norbury (2017) further supported that children with autism often display a low level of engagement, specifically in social activities. This situation, in turn, could limit the learning that usually occurs among their developing peers. Some of the common reasons that hinder the abilities to be socially and communicatively competent are their restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior and their hypersensitivity towards sensory processing.

In addition, children with ASD can be extensively distinctive in their communication impairments (Sarker et al., 2021). Lucas et al. (2017) state that “we also examined indeterminable and inaccurate response rates, but on this measure there were no group differences” (p.8). This implies that although there is a significant percentage of children with ASD population who are unable to speak throughout their life stages, there are still some that may communicate the normal range of function. In language learning, some children with ASD show deficiency in certain aspects of language learning, such as speech function, grammar, and pragmatics. The children are also prone to have some challenges in the following elements; auditory processing, vocabulary production, perception of phonemes, higher-order semantics, syntax, pragmatics, or prosody (Lucas et al., 2017). The challenges provide potential areas for curriculum designers, course
developers and instructors to work on in facilitating the learning of the children with autism, especially the high functioning children (HFA).

Recent literature demonstrated constant issues faced by children with autism in communication and social interaction across diverse contexts. Berenguer, Rosello, Baixauli, Garcia and Miranda (2020) claim that “on measures of Peer problems and Prosocial behavior, the means of both the Cluster with Lower ToM abilities and the Cluster with Higher ToM abilities are in the borderline/abnormal range” (p.10). This shows that children with autism tend to have challenges with pro-social behavior, indicating their communication and social interaction impairment. These impairments are expressed in behaviors such as inappropriate affect, social isolation, and failure to initiate interactions with peers, cooperate, share, make friends, express empathy, or provide emotional support (Sansosti & Powell-Smith, 2006). Similarly, these social disabilities may cause daily difficulties, and lead to adverse long-term outcomes. Similarly, this opens an opportunity for the relevant experts working with children with autism to focus on. Efforts are needed to facilitate the development of children with autism’s communication and interaction development. One of the efforts is to design and develop an appropriate language course for them using a platform such as technology that could ease and encourage social interaction among children with autism.

Children with ASD also experience prevalence issues in their behavioral and sensory. Vicker (2009) claims that problematic behaviors in children with HFA are diverse and it tends to vary according to the child’s development and intellectual ability. Although stereotyped, repetitive behaviors such as body rocking or hand flapping may occur in individuals with HFA, specifically during highly stressful situations. More often, children with HFA engage in restricted behaviors and insist on doing things in a certain way (Sansosti & Powell-Smith, 2006). Any change in such routines is often perceived as complex and may result in aggressive or tantrum behaviors.

Individuals with autism may face a range of difficulties with attention. Specific deficits in attention have significant implications for development in communication and social development (Alberta Learning, 2003). As reported in Alberta Learning (2003), children with autism often have difficulty attending to relevant cues and, or information in their environment. They may also have problems disengaging and shifting attention from one stimulus to the next, contributing to some observed rigidity and resistance to change. Another feature of autism is impairment in the capacity to share attention, is referred to as joint attention. This feature also suggests their short attention span. Likewise, besides the challenges they face in communication and interaction, as discussed earlier, the challenges the children with autism face due to their behavior may suggest a dire need of a course design developed with these challenges in mind.

2.2 Vocabulary instructions methods for children with Autism

To effectively teach children with autism, each task should be decomposed into smaller parts and taught in an incrementally manner (Simpson, de Boer-Ott & Smith-Myles, 2003). In the context of vocabulary teaching, words should be easy to read, understand, and learn. Recent discoveries (Khowaja, Robins & Adamson, 2018; Omar & Bidin, 2015; Lucas et al., 2017) found that visuals may greatly aid the acquisition of vocabulary learning in children with autism. To illustrate, Omar and Bidin (2015) discovered that multimedia graphic and text helps the reading process of children with autism, thus increasing their vocabulary acquisition. Children with autism
are visual learners, which explains why multimedia graphical instructional prompts are crucial in teaching vocabulary to children with autism (Khowaja et al., 2018). The following are some teaching strategies according to Khowaja et al. (2018):

1. Reward allows players to strengthen their skills, and as an incentive to motivate players to continue using it.
2. Proper feedback at the end of every activity performed by users helps them to improve their performance and perform well in future activities.
3. Practice and drill help players improve their knowledge by repeatedly practicing tasks a few times in a row. This strategy will help them perform activities through trial and error in which each child progresses at their own pace; they can go back and practice more to improve their learning.
4. Repeat allows the children to perform tasks several times. Hence, when they think they face difficulties in understanding certain aspects of the study, they can efficiently work on it repeatedly and improve.
5. Choice lets the children make a working plan of how they wish to perform tasks based on their current progress and performance.
6. Incremental provides access to learning material and activities on a progressive basis. This situation allows the children to complete prerequisite material and activity before attempting and mastering complex material and training.

2.3 Technology use in teaching children with Autism

An intervention tool, such as Virtual Reality (VR), could address the issue of poor social interaction among children with autism. Since VR provides an environment that coaches the participants realistically, the environment could be manipulated and altered to the characteristics and capabilities of the selected subjects, who, in this case, are the children with autism (Halabi, Aljaam, ElSeoud & Alpona, 2017). Technology such as VR is a reinforcement tool that can help ASD children to be more independent. In other words, they are given opportunities to recognize their difficulties and improve their strengths.

Research on technology use in education has proven technology to be beneficial as a learning therapy for children with ASD. They often encounter difficulties in developing proper social communication skills (Halabi et al., 2017). In their research, Halabi et al. (2017) wanted to investigate how VR could facilitate communication skills among individuals with autism. Interestingly, the experimental research compared three different display types, namely, a non-VR standard desktop screen, head-mounted display (HMD), and computer augmented virtual environment (CAVE). Working on children with autism as the participants of their experiments, they discovered that the children with autism showed more improved performance in the CAVE than in the HMD and desktop. Their findings paved the way forward in the use of technology such as VR and AR in teaching children with autism. Expressly, their results indicated that immersive VR could be more satisfactory and motivational than desktop for children with ASD.

Sarker et al. (2021) also conducted another exciting research on using technology in teaching children with autism. They were interested to discover how to improve joint attention in children with autism. The study focused on using AR-VR-enabled game approach as a means to enhance
joint engagement. From their findings, Sarker et al. (2021) confirmed that several treatments and intervention strategies could facilitate behavioral development of children with autism. They proposed a game-based approach using VR-AR to enable the children to interact with digital models through problem-solving activities. Sarker et al. (2021) confirmed that “all the strategies or therapy that has been used for leveraging autistic people are mainly focused on strengthening their joint attention” (p.3) where in their study, the inclusion of interactive multi-staged game module, which included real-life situations was able to facilitate the targeted behavior development such as joint attention.

Besides these past studies, the last decade has seen various researches on technology use and children with autism. The researches have confirmed technology could facilitate the children’s development and improvement in i) employment skills (Smith et al., 2014; Walker, Vasquez & Wienke, 2016), ii) academic skills, namely Mathematic skills (Kellems, Eichelberger, Cacciatore, Jensen, Frazier, Simons & Zaru, 2020) and Science vocabulary (McMahon, Cihak, Wright & Bell, 2016), and iii) behavioral skills (Escobedo, Tentori, Quintana, Favela & Garcia-Rosas, 2014). In brief, the use of technology as an educational platform for children with autism has potential. The use of visual effects, multimedia graphics as prompts, and materials presented in a manner that keeps the children with autism to be amused and to stay focused are among the reasons why technology has the potential.

In determining the impact of technology on teaching children with autism, Valencia, Rusu, Quinones and Jamet (2019) have concluded positive outcomes from their meta-analysis of 94 past studies that showed how technology in educational contexts helps individuals with autism. Most interesting, their analysis concluded how technology is a potential platform in terms of its user experience, usability, accessibility, and how game elements enrich learning environments for individuals with autism. Valencia et al. (2019) concur that technological advancements such as virtual agents, artificial intelligence, and virtual and augmented reality undoubtedly provide comfortable environments that promote constant learning for individuals with ASD.

2.4 Technology and vocabulary course design principles for children with Autism

Along with the modern landscape of technology in education, children with autism should also have the opportunity to experience technology in their learning. The core features of children with autism, appropriate vocabulary instructions methods, and the use of technology in teaching children with autism are already discussed. Upon grasping those major concepts, elaboration on the applicable principles on vocabulary course design for children with autism using technology is appropriate next.

In terms of learning style, Khowaja et al. (2018) agree that children with autism are often visual learners. Therefore, visual strategies may help the children make better sense of the world around them. Children with autism are very optical, and they tend to be self-absorbed if a topic amuses them (Craig & Trauner, 2018). Craig and Trauner (2018) suggest game-like activities to facilitate the children’s learning. To create a practical learning experience for children with autism, the instructors should create a learning environment similar to playing games (Khowaja et al., 2018).
Additionally, Khowaja et al. (2018) posit that if a designer plans to design any learning environment for children with ASD, they must consider common characteristics of these children. Kamaruzaman, Md Noor and Azahari (2016) have also concluded an important aspect in designing a numeracy app known as TaLNA in enhancing the learning of the children with autism through their research. According to them, the most important set of considerations when designing any technology-related platform for the children with autism is having vast knowledge on the background of the children with autism, keeping them focused, and encouraging a gradual development of the target taught item through visual, interactive multimedia graphics.

3 Methods

A qualitative research design was adopted in determining the research methodology that would assist in eliciting relevant data for the present study. Content analysis through vast literature review was conducted in confirming factors that need consideration when designing vocabulary course for children with autism. Content analysis is a common research tool within the qualitative research design when the focus is to determine themes or concepts. There are five steps in conducting content analysis namely; 1) choose the texts (literature review) based on the research question, 2) define the units and categories of analysis, 3) develop a set of rules for coding, 4) code the text according to the rules and 5) analyze the results and draw conclusions (Kuckartz, 2019; Erlingsson, 2017).

This study followed the five steps closely by focusing on the literature review that was determined based on the research question – what are the factors to be considered when designing vocabulary course for children with autism? The units and categories of analysis were defined following the principles of course design and characteristics of children with autism as language learners. The coding was then developed based on the identified key factors from the literature review. Finally, the analysis was done to draw the conclusions, which eventually led to the identification of relevant factors to be considered for the vocabulary course for children with autism. In content analysis, the results of the analysis and discussions are done simultaneously as follows.

4 Results and Discussions

When discussing vocabulary course design principles, several factors need to be given consideration (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The factors are; a) Needs analysis, b) Course goals, c) Learning objectives, d) Delivery methods and strategies, and e) Assessments. The following are discussions on a potential vocabulary course design using technology for children with autism based on these five aspects. The discussions bring into a light relevant literature review on the i) core features of children with autism, ii) their learning, and iii) the potentials of technology use in teaching vocabulary to children with autism.

4.1 Needs analysis

At the onset of any new course design and development, needs analysis is essential. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), needs analysis provides relevant information needed by any course designer to determine the content of the language course and teaching process, which includes the teaching materials, activities, and evaluation strategies. Brown (1995) asserts that needs analysis guides the selection of the teaching contents and process. It is conducted by
collecting relevant information that depicts the target and learning needs. Berwick (1989) concurred by claiming that needs analysis is determining the gap between what is and what should be.

In designing and developing a language course for children with autism, a course designer would need to understand what skills and level of competencies would be ideal for the targeted group of children with autism, and in this instance, the HFA. Determining what the children are already capable of doing and confirming what else they need to be able to do with the language to be able to participate and function in their community is a good start for the needs analysis. Several measures could be considered when the required info is sought. First, as the children with autism work closely with their instructors on a one-on-one basis, the instructors could be the target respondents. In addition, the parents who usually play a big part in the children’s learning process while at home could also be referred to for the relevant information.

4.2 Course Goals and Learning objectives

Upon the conduct of needs analysis, Hawkey (1980) emphasizes the importance of developing course goals and learning objectives. Information about the children with autism, collected through the needs analysis, provides essential lead in determining and writing-up the course goals and learning objectives. In any language course, aspects such as language skills, functions, and forms are necessary. Regarding the vocabulary course for children with autism, the specifications covering those aspects are equally essential. Unlike the traditional and regular students, children with autism, specifically the HFA, having their unique learner profiles based on their core features, need proper and carefully thought course goals and objectives. In this context, the course goals and learning objectives should be achievable by the HFA.

As the course goals and learning objectives need to specify the desired competencies upon the completion of the course, they need to be written with the capabilities of the HFA in following the course entirely and successfully in mind. The insights from their instructors and parents could be referred to in assessing the viability of the course goals and objectives. Past studies on the design and development of new courses for children with autism have suggested the objectives to be specific and sequenced in the order of simpler to more complex task accomplishment (Smith et al., 2014; Escobedo, Tentori, Quintana, Favela & Garcia-Rosas, 2014; Walker, Vasquez & Wience, 2016; McMahon, Cihak, Wright & Bell, 2016; Kellems, Eichelberger, Cacciatore, Jensen, Frazier, Simons & Zaru, 2020). The keyword is task accomplishment instead of knowledge and performance. Hence, it is easier for course developers to form language course goals that focus on the children with autism’s learning needs, which enable them to participate and function in society.

4.3 Delivery methods and activities, and assessments

Following the development of the course goals and learning objectives, the feasibility of the materials, activities, and evaluation strategies is the next consideration needed. As stated in a vast literature, the core features of children with autism related to their communication, social interaction, and behaviour are significant and distinctive. Hence, designing and developing a vocabulary course for them, particularly one that leverages the use of technology would require instantaneous examination of the use of technology in delivering the contents, activities, and evaluation strategies for the children with autism.
In deciding on the delivery methods and activities, Simpson et al. (2003) have specified that each task should be decomposed into smaller parts and taught in an incrementally manner. Relating this notion to vocabulary training, they stated that the words should be easy to read, understand, and learn. Similarly, teaching children with autism could also be assisted by visual effects (Khowaja et al., 2018; Omar & Biddin, 2015; Lucas et al., 2017). The visual effects could even be made more fitting for children with autism if game-like activities are to be developed (Craig & Trauner, 2018).

As the children with autism have issues with their attention span (Alberta Learning, 2003), Khowaja et al. (2018) stated that “both the M-CHAT-R/F and STAT address core domains of behaviors related to ASD symptoms, such as use of gestures or other nonverbal communication, imitative behavior, play skills, and joint attention behavior” (p.3) which implies that there is a need to be compelling learning experiences similar to playing games. Additionally, game-like activities serve as a suitable method for instructors to assess children with autism. Each material is presented in a manner that increases its task difficulty. The critical point of the material presented is they are provided with visual effects to enable the children with autism to stay focused. This strategy is apparent since children with autism are optical and easily self-absorbed when engaging with amusing items (Craig & Trauner, 2018). Finally, the game-like approach in presenting the materials and conducting the activities could provide a relevant alternative in assessing the children with autism.

5 Conclusion

This paper believes that all children should never be left behind. Echoing at least two of the UNESCO’s SDGs (SDG #4 Quality Education and #10 Reduced Inequalities), children with autism are given special attention. Children with autism are a group of potential learners that could strive in their learning through thorough considerations of their learning environment governed by the design and development of relevant course design. Discussions on the design principles of modules using technology for high functioning children with autism presented in this paper should be able to shed some light on prospective curriculum developers, course designers, and instructors. The children’s features, which are their impairment in communication, interaction, and behavior as well as the use of technology and principles in developing courses using technology, have been elaborated. The added value put forth in this paper is that it examines all of these aspects in designing a vocabulary course using technology, with the main emphasis on children with autism.

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About the authors:
Faizah Abd Majid is a Professor in Adult and Higher Education at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA. She has vast experiences in research and publication in the areas of...
TESL, teaching and learning. Recently she is involved in a special funded project on the use of technology in teaching children with autism. ORCID ID http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9642-6342

Shireena Basree Abdul Rahman is an Associate Professor in English Literature and Early Childhood Education at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Teknologi MARA. She has keen interest in early education and her latest research involves an ethnographic study on the learning development of an individual with autism. ORCID ID http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1088-1975

Muhamad Fairus Kamaruzaman is an Associate Professor in Graphic Design at the College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA. His main research focus is the use of technology in teaching and learning among school children. He is currently involved in a research project looks into the graphic design suitable for children with autism. ORCID ID http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9577-9237

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Algerian EFL Secondary School Students’ Attitudes towards Using Group Investigation Cooperative Learning Model for Teaching English School Projects

Asma Belmekki  
Department of English, Faculty of Letters and Languages  
University of Abbes Laghrour, Khenchela, Algeria  
Corresponding Author: belmekki.asma@univ-khenchela.dz

Sabrina Baghzou  
Department of English, Faculty of Letters and Languages  
University of Abbes Laghrour, Khenchela, Algeria

Abstract
To help secondary school learners overcome the difficulties they encounter when working on their English school projects, we have used one of the cooperative learning techniques Group Investigation (GI), based on the Sharan and Sharan (1992) Model. After applying the model, we wanted to determine the students’ attitudes towards project work and the new teaching method. Thus, this research study aimed to measure the effect of the Group Investigation technique on the students’ attitudes towards English projects in general and Group investigation in particular. We hypothesize that the GI model will positively affect the students’ attitudes and motivation towards their school English projects. To reach the aim of this descriptive quantitative study, we developed a four-section attitude scale, and the current situation is described by analyzing the data obtained from the applied scale. The study's sample is a focus group of 21 students studying at Elhachemi Bouzidi Secondary School in Khenchela, Algeria. The research data were collected, coded, and analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 24.0 Packet program). The researcher also used Cronbach's Alpha to measure the scale's reliability. The research findings reveal that the applied model positively influenced the students' attitudes, project performances, motivation, target language use, and cooperation.  
Keywords: cooperative learning, group investigation model, oral project presentation, project-based learning, secondary school students’ attitudes

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Introduction

Recently, there has been a noticeable trend away from teacher-centered toward learner-centered classrooms. Teachers are no longer considered the experts in charge of transmitting knowledge to their learners, often described as “empty vessels” who listen and absorb their teachers’ lectures or direct instructions. Instead, student-centeredness focuses on students understanding their role, constructing and exploring information, and thus taking responsibility for their learning. This approach proved its effectiveness by boosting students’ academic performances and empowering lifelong learning, making it more fun. Moreover, since education focuses on developing learners’ social interests to expand their curiosity in their world, schools worldwide should consider the learners’ interests in their social environment. In this regard, they should foster the child’s social interactions and communications via group involvement. Therefore, The Algerian Ministry of National Education has incorporated Project-Based Learning (PBL) under the Competency-Based Approach (CBA) and designed project-based curricula in secondary school course books (At the Crossroads, Getting Through, New Prospects). The main aim was to make learning more like the real world. Unlike traditional teaching, PBL allows learners to include what they know in real-life situations (Markham et al., 2003). It helps them develop flexible skills to cope with the rapid technological change. Now learners are requested to use what they learn in class to solve real-life problems. They are supposed to direct their learning guided by well-trained educators.

However, based on several studies that have been conducted in different regions in Algeria, the English project is not dealt with appropriately (Asma & Sabrina, 2021, Bessai & Djaffar, 2021, Baghoussi & El Ouchdi, 2019). Students are not interested in doing English projects; all they do is copy Google-made work.

In recent years, there has been an increase in Cooperative Learning (CL) studies to improve classroom teaching and learning. Thus, this study investigates the students’ attitudes towards the Group Investigation CL model after being applied to English School Projects.

Literature Review

Project-Based Learning

Many researchers have given various definitions of PBL. According to Beckett (2002), the project is:

A long term (several weeks) activity that involves a variety of individual or cooperative tasks such as developing a research plan and questions, and implementing the plan through empirical or document research that includes collecting, analyzing and reporting data orally and/or in writing (p.3).

Because PBL moves the focus of learning from the teacher to the learner and empowers learners to interpret, analyze, and make judgments, it necessitates precise comprehension and promotes real-world inquiry (Harun, 2006). According to Wrigley (1998), project-based learning involves a group of students investigating a problem they are passionate about, producing a solution, and presenting their findings to a larger audience. Thus, PBL enables students to explore a topic of their choice, come up with solutions, and share their findings and experiences with others. Put
differently, it is a method of education in which students take responsibility for learning knowledge by assessing what they know and applying it to new situations (Simpson, 2011).

According to proponents of PBL, learning occurs when students explore personal interests to build on existing knowledge and engage in hands-on, authentic activities. While a wealth of literature expresses such goals, research on implementation tactics such as cooperation for PBL in classrooms is sparse (Chen, 2004).

Cooperative Project-Based Learning

John Dewey is credited with pioneering the establishment of democratic learning in communities in the early twentieth century; he recognized the intimate connection between democracy and education. Most of us use the term "learning by doing," which Dewey coined to underline the importance of experience in all forms of learning, not only in school but also in private and professional contexts (De Florio, 2016). This educational paradigm is closely tied to cooperative and project-based learning. Dewey's concept of experience-based action is cited by progressive educators and scientists who employ quantitative methods.

Integrating cooperation and project-based learning aims to help learners develop automaticity in their knowledge and abilities, as well as the desired attitudes. Learners will be equipped with a variety of engaging opportunities to help them develop automaticity in their knowledge and abilities, as well as the desired attitudes (De Florio, 2016).

As previously stated, PBL is a student-centered approach in which learning occurs in small groups, the teacher serves as a facilitator or guide who offers authentic challenges, and students acquire new material through self-directed learning. These same features are present in all forms of cooperative learning and apply to learning projects as well (Hattie, 2009).

Students learn most effectively when they are taught to cooperate and given appropriate help. Academic success, critical thinking, and the development of social skills are all associated with cooperative and project-based learning and, as such, should be incorporated into the instructional design (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1994). In addition, students contribute to one another's learning through cooperative and PBL. Thus, educators should incorporate both concepts into their classrooms as they can help develop creative, independent thinkers capable of solving future problems and thinking critically to achieve higher academic results.

Cooperative learning models, including learning together (LT), Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD), Team-Games-Tournaments (TGT), jigsaw, and group investigation (GI), are systematic, planned instructional strategies that can be used in a wide variety of educational settings and at any grade level. Each method calls for the teacher to divide the children into four to six learning groups of high-, average-, and low-achieving students.

The majority of the models are founded on social psychological theory and research, some of which extend back to the early 1900s; nevertheless, they have been adjusted to some extent to meet the practical needs of classrooms and to address challenges associated with the use of cooperation (Hertz-Lazarowitz et al., 2013). While different CL approaches have some characteristics, they differ in their components, methodology, and applicability for various subject areas, grade levels,
Group Investigation

Group Investigation is a cooperative learning technique that places a premium on student participation and activity. Sharan and Sharan (1992) define Group Investigation as:

A method for classroom instruction in which students work collaboratively in small groups to examine, experience, and understand their topic of study. Group Investigation is designed to appeal to all facets of the students' abilities and experience relevant to the process of learning, not just to the cognitive or social domains (p.1).

Sharan and Sharan (1992) identified four essential components of classroom learning that typify the GI cooperative learning model by following in Dewey's footsteps. These four components can determine if we are adopting the Group Investigation method following its essential ideas and goals or if we have only made superficial modifications to the way classroom teaching and learning is conducted. The four components are investigation, interaction, interpretation, and intrinsic motivation. These four elements are interrelated and fall together to ensure the full implementation of the method (Sharan & Sharan, 1992).

Learners’ Attitudes

The term "attitude" refers to good or negative emotions and thoughts about a particular social item (Bilgin, 2007). Attitude is a state of mental or neurological preparedness that serves as both the premise and the outcome of conduct because of emotional, cognitive, or behavioral tendencies that formed as a result of prior experiences (Richardson, 1996).

Şen (2013) affirms that “attitudes towards learning are important factors on the learners’ levels of goal setting, problem solving abilities, their beliefs towards learning, their inner and external motivations in the process of learning and all the academic performances they perform” (p. 1).

While attitudes, which are not visible but can be detected through behaviors, guide human conduct, they are a phenomenon that can differentiate decision-making, problem-solving processes, and all relationships, resulting in bias. Thus, the student's effort to demonstrate expected behaviors in terms of teaching objectives and their attitudes toward learning is a predictor of the student's academic success (Williams, 1992; Richardson, 1996). A student expresses sentiments and thoughts about the learning environment and learning processes through appropriate or incorrect activities that conform to the environment's expectations. In addition, he or she frequently uses positive or negative sentiments to justify oneself (Meral, 2019).

While positive attitudes help learners understand the nature of learning, they also make pupils more receptive to learning, raise their expectations for the learning process, and decrease their anxiety levels (Şen, 2013). For this reason, we attempted to investigate the pupils' attitudes towards a cooperative learning technique to determine better the model's effects on their learning and achievements.
Methodology

To determine the learners’ attitudes towards GI cooperative learning model and English school projects, we have relied on an attitude scale that the researcher developed. The study was conducted in Bouzidi Elhachemi Secondary School, Khenchela during the academic year 2019-2020 with a selected focus group of (21) second-year scientific-stream students.

The Likert Scale

Constructing the Scale

Depending on the literature review connected to attitudes to English and the attitudes toward project-based learning and cooperative learning methods, the researcher built this scale. We used simple language with clear short statements to ensure pupils’ understanding. We consulted teachers and specialists in the English language, and changes were made based on their comments and suggestions.

Describing the scale

The scale consisted of four parts: attitudes towards group investigation in English projects (nine statements), attitudes towards target language use (five statements), attitudes towards content knowledge (four statements), and attitudes towards group work (six statements). The scale items were constructed to measure pupils’ answers. Thus, the 5-point Likert scale was employed: strongly disagree (1 point), disagree (2 points), Neutral (3 points), agree (4 points), and strongly agree (5 points). We asked the pupils to tick the answer that best describes their viewpoints.

Reliability and Validity of the Scale

Reliability of the Scale

Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability

To measure the internal consistency of the Likert scale, we applied the Cronbach’s Alpha technique, and the results are presented in Table 1.

The table below shows that the values of Cronbach's Alpha for all axes (Attitudes towards Group Investigation in English Projects=0.835, Attitudes towards Target Language Use=0.724, Attitudes towards Content Knowledge=0.823, Attitudes towards Group Work=0.798), as well as the total score (0.945), are greater than (0.7). Therefore, it indicates a high reliability of the test, which allows it to be used in data collection.

Table 1. Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability coefficient

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability Statistics</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Group Investigation in English Projects</td>
<td>0.835</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Target Language Use</td>
<td>0.724</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Content Knowledge</td>
<td>0.823</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Group Work</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Validity of the Scale

Construct Validity

Results illustrated in Table 2 show that all the degrees of significance (Sig) for the axes' correlation with the total score are less than (0.01), indicating a statistical significance for the correlation. These results confirm the Likert scale's high construct validity.

Table 2. The scale's Construct Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axes</th>
<th>Correlation with the total score</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Group Investigation in English Projects</td>
<td>0.970**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Target Language Use</td>
<td>0.926**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Content Knowledge</td>
<td>0.941**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Group Work</td>
<td>0.938**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intrinsic Validity

Intrinsic Validity = \( \sqrt{\text{Reliability}} \)

Table 3. shows that the values of validity coefficient for all axes (Attitudes towards Group Investigation in English Projects is 0.914, Attitudes towards Target Language Use= 0.851, Attitudes towards Content Knowledge= 0.907, Attitudes towards Group Work = 0.893), as well as the total average (0.972), are higher than (0.8), which are high values that indicate a high validity of the scale that allows it to be used in data collection.

Table 3. Intrinsic Validity of the Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axes</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Intrinsic Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Group Investigation in English Projects</td>
<td>0.835</td>
<td>0.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Target Language Use</td>
<td>0.724</td>
<td>0.851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Content Knowledge</td>
<td>0.823</td>
<td>0.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards Group Work</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>0.893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td>0.972</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings, Discussion and Analysis

Attitudes towards Group Investigation in English Projects

This table shows that the value of the test (T) is (11.787), and the degree of significance of the test is (Sig= 0.000), which is less than the significance level (0.01). Therefore, the test has a statistical significance, indicating statistically significant differences between the arithmetic mean (Mean= 38.0476) and the hypothetical test value (Test Value= 27). When comparing these two, we find that the differences go for the validity of the mean value. This means that the answers of the sample members go in the positive direction (Approval).

Table 4. One-sample T-test for attitudes towards GI in Project work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One-Sample Test</th>
<th>Test Value = 27</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Towards Group Investigation in English Projects</td>
<td>Test Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. shows that most respondents enjoy doing projects under the group investigation model. Most of them think the model helps them relate what they learn in class to real-life contexts. Almost all participants agree that GI helped them think of authentic ideas, thus developing creativity. Furthermore, the pupils agreed that learning becomes more enjoyable after using the GI model, and all felt more independent and took over responsibility for their learning. Besides, incorporating technology into their presentations becomes an easy and necessary task. They believe that the method made them experience self and peer evaluation, which reduced their anxiety and fear of assessing themselves and others. After dealing with GI, the participants learned how to work independently and at the same time with other individuals within a group. Therefore, they developed both individual accountability and positive interdependence. Finally, the majority of the informants feel excited to work on future projects using the same technique. These results indicate that the pupils’ attitudes towards the GI model were positive. They liked the new methodology and benefited greatly from the unique experience.

Table 5. Pupils’ attitudes towards GI in Project work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project work becomes more enjoyable</td>
<td>6 28.6</td>
<td>11 52.4</td>
<td>3 14.3</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now, I can make real-world connection to what I learn</td>
<td>6 28.6</td>
<td>12 57.1</td>
<td>3 14.3</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Investigation helps me think of new ideas and be more creative</td>
<td>10 47.6</td>
<td>10 47.6</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Investigation makes learning more interesting</td>
<td>7 33.3</td>
<td>10 47.6</td>
<td>3 14.3</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now I feel more independent and responsible</td>
<td>13 61.9</td>
<td>8 38.1</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The method encourages me to incorporate technology into my presentation</td>
<td>7 33.3</td>
<td>10 47.6</td>
<td>4 19.0</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can evaluate myself and others</td>
<td>7 33.3</td>
<td>9 42.9</td>
<td>4 19.0</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work both independently and together</td>
<td>13 61.9</td>
<td>7 33.3</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel excited to do future projects</td>
<td>6 28.6</td>
<td>9 42.9</td>
<td>5 23.8</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td>00 00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>39.67%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>2.13%</td>
<td>00%</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attitudes towards Target Language Use**

Table 6 indicates that the value of the test (T) is (8.533), and the degree of significance of the test is (Sig=0.000), which is less than the significance level (0.01). Therefore, there is a statistical significance of the test, and from this, we can say that there exist statistically significant differences between the arithmetic mean (Mean= 20.0476) and the hypothetical value (Test Value= 15). In addition, when comparing the two, we find that the differences go for the validity of the arithmetic mean; that is, the answers of the sample members go in the positive direction (Approval).
Table 6. One-sample T-test of pupils’ attitudes toward Language Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes Towards Target Language Use</th>
<th>Test Value = 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.533</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 7, group investigation increased classroom participation in the target language by more than half. It also helped them use their target language with friends and family outside class. Now, most people feel relaxed and secure speaking English. Almost all agree that GI prompted them to read more articles and short stories in the target language, which expanded their vocabulary. Most respondents agreed that GI improved their language skills (speaking, reading, and writing).

To summarize, Group Investigation taught students to appreciate and listen to one another. They used to talk in English all the time. This reduced their fear of public speaking and increased their language proficiency.

Table 7. Pupils’ attitudes towards Target Language Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now, I can participate in the class using English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can use English outside the classroom better than before</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I speak English now, I feel more relaxed and confident</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The method encourages me to learn new words to use later</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can speak, read and write better than before</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>44.76%</td>
<td>22.88%</td>
<td>2.88%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attitudes towards Content Knowledge

Table 8. shows that the value of the test (T) equals (7,737), and the degree of significance (Sig=0.000), which is less than the level of significance (0.01), and therefore there is a statistical significance for the test. These results reveal statistically significant differences between the arithmetic mean (Mean= 16, 0476) and the hypothetical Test Value (12). The differences go for the validity of the arithmetic mean; that is, the answers of the sample members go in a positive direction (Approval).

Table 8. One-sample T-test of pupils’ attitudes towards Content Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes Towards Content Knowledge</th>
<th>Test Value = 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,737</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9. indicates that most participants (76.1%) developed investigation skills and searching techniques after experiencing project work under GI. In addition, the method made the majority of the class learn how to play the role of the teacher and explain information to themselves and others. They used to look for the data needed, summarize it, and find easy ways to make other members grasp it. Therefore, pupils had to understand what they were learning first in order to be able to share it with others. Moreover, the pupils agree that GI helped them connect background knowledge with newly acquired one to make relevant results and conclusions and enhance the way they memorize information. Finally, a significant component of learning is answering questions. Questions to be answered entail having pupils listen carefully to the question, think about it, and understand its meaning.

Most importantly, answering questions about a given topic proves the pupils’ understanding of what they are doing. Most of the participants (85.7%) could easily find answers to their teachers’ and peers’ questions. Therefore, we can say that GI helped pupils search for information about a particular topic using keywords, understand the topic of the project, explain it to their peers and answer questions about it. This indicates that GI greatly impacted pupils’ learning in general.

Table 9. Pupils’ Attitudes toward Content knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now, I am able to search for useful information and sources about my topic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 19.0%</td>
<td>12 57.1%</td>
<td>4 19.0%</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand my topic very well, and I can explain it to others</td>
<td>7 33.3%</td>
<td>9 42.9%</td>
<td>5 23.8%</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I connect what I am learning to what I already know, which enhances my memory storage</td>
<td>4 19.0%</td>
<td>12 57.1%</td>
<td>3 14.3%</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily answer questions about my topic</td>
<td>6 28.6%</td>
<td>12 57.1%</td>
<td>3 14.3%</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>53.55%</td>
<td>17.85%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>00%</td>
<td>21 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attitudes towards Group Work

Results in Table 10 indicate that the value of the test (T) is equal to (10.445), and the degree of significance of the test (Sig) is equal to (0.000), which is less than the level of significance (0.01). Therefore, there is a statistical significance of the test; therefore, there are statistically significant differences between the arithmetic mean (Mean= 25.0952) and the hypothetical Value Test (18). When comparing both results, we find that the differences go for the validity of the arithmetic mean; that is, the answers of the sample members go in the positive direction (Approval).
Table 10. *One-sample T test of Pupils’ attitudes toward Group Work*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes Towards Group Work</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.545</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>25.0952</td>
<td>7.09524</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 shows that all the participants enjoyed working in groups under Group Investigation Model. Most of them experienced better ideas exchange and teamwork interaction, and communication. Almost all of them agree that learning from peers is exciting and fun. Group Investigation helped them learn to trust and respect each other in a team. They discovered that teamwork is like family work. Thus, the model helped them develop stronger team bonding, increasing creativity and productivity. The majority now realize the importance of team roles and responsibilities, which is one of the critical elements of GI.

The informants agree that GI improved collaborative problem-solving, a requirement of cooperative learning. Most participants learned how to bring the correct attitude to the group and cope with other members. They learned to keep eye contact, listen to others, and freely exchange ideas. This allowed them to share knowledge and build creativity and problem-solving skills.

Table 11. *Pupils’ Attitudes toward Group Work*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working in groups becomes easier and enjoyable</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I exchange ideas and interact better with my teamwork</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can learn new interesting things from my peers better than before</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I respect and trust my peers; it is like family teamwork</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I respect team roles and understand my and others’ responsibility</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now, I can resolve team conflicts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35.7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>50.01%</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.1%</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>21 100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pupils’ Attitudes towards the New Teaching Method*

Table 12 indicates that the value of the test (T) is equal to (10.531), and the degree of significance of the test (Sig) is equal to (0.000), which is less than the level of significance (0.01). Therefore, there is a statistical significance for the test, confirming statistically significant differences between the arithmetic mean (Mean=99.2381) and the hypothetical Test Value (72). It is clear that the differences go for the validity of the arithmetic mean; that is, the answers of the sample members at the level of all the scale’s sections are in the positive direction (Approval).
Table 12. One-Sample T-test of pupils’ attitudes towards the methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10,531</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>99.2381</td>
<td>27.23810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

It is worth noting that the current work attempts to explore the students’ attitudes toward a cooperative learning technique, Group Investigation. Its scope is restricted to examining the second-year scientific-stream secondary school students. However, the study only included one focus group with 21 members from Elhachemi Bouzidi Secondary School, Khenchela. As a result, the presented results should be regarded as tentative and should not be generalized. Nevertheless, the findings reported in this study show that Group Investigation Model has a positive impact on the pupils’ projects, oral performances, attitudes, motivation, target language use, knowledge, and cooperation. It completely changed the way they perceive and work on English school projects.

The Likert scale results indicate that working on projects becomes an enjoyable and exciting part of the pupils' learning, where they can meet as a family to work on the topic that interests them. They become more aware of the importance of projects and appreciate the time they spend together in class. In addition, it helped teachers create an engaging classroom where learners can freely interact with each other and discuss ideas. Pupils also developed a sense of responsibility. For the first time, they felt independent and autonomous as they took control of their learning.

Furthermore, the more educators are aware of peer connections in their classrooms, the more equipped they are to create an environment where pupils may interact with one another while participating in beneficial instructional activities. As a result, the difficulty is to provide opportunities for students to engage with one another while also learning in structured environments. Pupils learned how to employ social interaction to foster and create new information acquired by the group during the investigation.

The Group Investigation Model (GI) is a student-centered approach that helped the researcher develop pupils as information specialists who can share their knowledge with their peers. Therefore, they enjoyed playing the role of the teacher, explaining and giving assignments to others. Because the teacher only interacts with the group when needed. It also helped cultivate the spirit of collaboration in groups to promote active, creative, and enjoyable learning.

Group Investigation proves to build a stronger teacher-learner relationship. It made pupils more willing to participate in activities their teachers want them to do because it helps create a trusting relationship. This leads to constructive classroom conduct such as helping, cooperating, sharing, being courteous to each other, and engaging in pleasant social exchanges with others.

About the Authors:
Dr. Asma Belmekki Holds a Ph.D. in Didactics of the English Language from Abbes Laghrour University, Khenchela, Algeria. She is also a secondary-school teacher of English. She has been teaching English for ten years. Her research interests center around Didactics, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Culture and Psychopedagogy. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0698-1287
Dr. Sabrina Baghzou holds a Ph.D. in Language and civilization from the University of Mohamed khider, Biskra, Algeria. She is currently teaching as an associate professor at the University of Abbes Laghour Kenchela, Algeria. Her research interests center around teaching foreign languages, culture, and culture teaching. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2482-6355

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Corpus-based Studies of Metaphor: An Overview

Norasyikin Abdul Malik¹, Mohamad Syafiq Ya Shak², Faizah Mohamad³, Siti Aeisha Joharry⁴

¹,² Academy of Language Studies
Universiti Teknologi MARA Perak Branch, Perak, Malaysia

³,⁴ Academy of Language Studies
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

Abstract
The researchers performed this systematic review to offer insights into the trend of the corpus-based approach in studying metaphor in recent years and investigate the potential gaps and under-researched areas in the past literature on the topic. Two research databases, namely Google Scholar and Academics, were explored to collect data. The analysis of metaphor-related research studies published between 2015 and 2020 revealed more than 78 studies dealing with the topic of investigation. After the screening process, 23 studies that met the research criteria were retained for analysis. The selected articles were further analyzed using the two-step analysis involving quantitative and qualitative approaches, i.e., descriptive statistics, and thematic analysis. The findings revealed that metaphor studies employing the corpus approach tend to use existing corpus like the Reference Corpus instead of a specialized corpus. In addition, metaphor studies in this review centered more on written discourse than spoken data. Furthermore, there is also a lack of information on the corpus tool employed in the examined studies. Meanwhile, the thematic analysis unearthed potential gaps and under-researched areas, such as limited studies on COVID-19 metaphor even though the outbreak had started at the end of 2019. Future studies on this research could include more specialized corpora, specifically in the under-researched topics, to fill in the gaps in this area of study.

Keywords: corpus approach, COVID-19 metaphor, metaphor, systematic review, thematic analysis

Introduction

The classical theorists of metaphors believed that metaphor functions as a literary device to create an artistic effect. Nevertheless, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argued that metaphor could also be used in an everyday language because its presence is ubiquitous in daily life, even to the most mundane details. In addition, metaphor is also an excellent tool to disseminate ideology, express emotion, and communicate moral purposes (da Silva, 2016) to intended audience. It is also used to craft gender identities in society (Alhumaid, 2017). Hence, it is no surprise that it has been investigated in many types of discourse in different communications fields. Nevertheless, such research is scarce in certain types of discourse.

Corpus linguistics is a method in language study which does not necessarily link to any specific theory (Semino, 2017). Researchers can use this method alongside various theoretical descriptions in numerous fields to explain how a particular language is used. The corpus approach uses sophisticated corpus tools to analyze language in a collection of naturally occurring (either written or spoken) texts. There has been a recent trend in using the corpus approach to analyze metaphor (e.g., Adnan, 2014; Ahrens & Jiang, 2020; Sardinha, 2007; Semino et al., 2015). This conventional trend is due to the corpus tool which speeds up the linguistic analysis of a huge amount of data through language patterns and word frequencies.

Moreover, analysis of word frequencies and collocations allows the linguists to learn aspects of language based on empirical evidence (Charteris-Black, 2004) instead of relying on their judgment alone. This matter reduces the tendency of researcher's biases when performing qualitative analysis that involves the researcher's intuition and perception. Nonetheless, both quantitative and qualitative approaches play an equally significant role in linguistic analysis because a more in-depth analysis via qualitative methods can explain the results drawn from quantitative corpus analysis (Partington, 2007).

To date, corpus methods have contributed a lot to developing metaphor theory and analysis in various ways. Charteris-Black (2004), for instance, developed Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA), which integrates corpus linguistics with cognitive linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) in identifying metaphors. He used CMA in analyzing metaphors in diverse discourse (e.g., sports, religious, political, business, etc.). This method is performed by following a three-step critical approach: (i) metaphor identification, (ii) metaphor interpretation, and (iii) metaphor explanation. Meanwhile, some researchers consider Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) as another method to study metaphor. CADS is an approach of the corpus linguistics methodology, and there is an increasing body of research in discourse that adopts the corpus linguistics approach (Jaworska, 2016). The method has been extensively employed to examine various types of discourses.

Multiple studies have been conducted to investigate metaphors in various types of discourse. This paper intends to review 23 studies to learn noteworthy perspectives on the research trends of metaphors, specifically using the corpus approach for the last six years (2015–2020). To be more specific, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the trend of metaphor study that uses the corpus approach in the last six years (2015 – 2020)?
2. What are the potential gaps and under-researched areas in the analyzed literature?

**Methodology**

In the first phase of the search strategy, key terms (and any combination of these terms) ‘metaphor’, ‘metaphor study/analysis’ and ‘corpus’, ‘corpus-based’, ‘corpus linguistics’, and 'corpus-assisted' were used in the search items. The research publications were mainly selected by considering the title, key terms, and abstract (Tamilchelvan & Rashid, 2017). The technique revealed research publications with content that was partially or fully linked to metaphor study using the corpus approach. In the next phase, a screening process was executed to eliminate the irrelevant articles. The research publications that meet these criteria were further analyzed later.

a) Published in the English language or at least have an abstract in English
b) Providing data related to the study of metaphor using the corpus approach
c) Research studies must be published from 2015 until December 2020 so that this review would reveal recent insights into the investigated phenomenon.
d) The studies must be published in a journal or conference proceeding.

The two-step analysis suggested by Ahmed and Matthes (2017) was applied for data analysis. The analysis involves a detailed quantitative analysis that permits researchers to learn research trends and make comparisons. At this stage, the compiled studies were coded into the following categories:

1. Publication year
2. Corpus involved
3. Instruments/Tools used
4. Theoretical lens

Apart from that, the analysis also involved qualitative analysis by drawing significant themes from the compiled literature. Each study was categorized according to its overall theme. The past literature was segmented and classified under the same themes and categories. The thematic categorization was checked and certified by an inter-rater, a senior researcher in this field, to diminish any issues relating to the validity and reliability of the qualitative findings.

**Results**

The objectives of this systematic review were (i) to discover the trend of metaphor research that used the corpus approach in the last five years and (ii) to identify the potential gaps and under-researched areas in the analyzed literature, particularly in terms of methodological and topic findings. In meeting the first objective of the review, the discussion of the trend of metaphor research from 2015 to 2020 was done based on a quantitative analysis of these categories: (a) publication year, (b) corpus involved, (c) instrument/tool used, and (d) theoretical lens, while the data from thematic analysis helped the researcher to meet the second research objective based on the identified themes. Table 1 summarises the publication year, type of corpus, instrument/tool used, and theoretical perspective raised in the chosen past literature.
Table 1. Content analysis of the selected past studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Author/Year</th>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>Theoretical Perspective</th>
<th>Instrument/Tool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>He &amp; Wen (2017)</td>
<td>Corpus of Historical American English (COHA), the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the British National Corpus (BNC)</td>
<td>Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, 2014) grammatical metaphor</td>
<td>search queries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Zhao, Han, &amp; Zhao (2019)</td>
<td>Pavilion of Women, a novel by Pearl S. Buck</td>
<td>Conceptual Metaphor Theory MIP and MIPVU</td>
<td>Antconc3.2.4w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Zibin (2020)</td>
<td>Political and economic articles from daily Jordanian newspapers</td>
<td>Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA)</td>
<td>WordSmith Tools (Scott 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Afrashi &amp; Ghouchani (2018)</td>
<td>Persian Linguistic Database corpus (fiction, nonfiction, play, scenario, newspapers, etc.)</td>
<td>Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff, 1987; Koveces, 2002)</td>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation ID</td>
<td>Corpus Description</td>
<td>Conceptual Metaphor Theory References</td>
<td>Corpus Linguistics Tools</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Ahrens &amp; Jiang (2020)</td>
<td>Hong Kong Chief Executives Corpus (1997–2014), a sub-corpus of the HKBU Corpus of Political Speeches (Ahrens, 2015)</td>
<td>Source domain verification and corpus linguistics</td>
<td>SUMO (Suggested Upper Merged Ontology), WordNet, &amp; online dictionary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Krennmayr (2015)</td>
<td>63 texts from British newspapers randomly sampled from the news section of the BNC-Baby Corpus</td>
<td>Conceptus Linguistics</td>
<td>Corpus-based dictionaries (Macmillan English Dictionary), Part of speech taggers in BNC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Semino (2016)</td>
<td>Data from Oxford English Corpus (OEC)</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Sketchengine (Kilgarriff et al., 2004)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Potts &amp; Semino (2019)</td>
<td>British National Corpus, the Corpus of Contemporary American English, and an ad hoc corpus of reportage collected from Nexis (1 June-1July 2017)</td>
<td>Conceptual Metaphor Theory &amp; Discourse analysis</td>
<td>Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al., 2014)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Jaworska (2017)</td>
<td>Descriptions of tourist destinations in Britain (Home-Corpus), Europe (Europe-Corpus), and in faraway tropical countries (FarawayCorpus)</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Wmatrix &amp; USAS tags; Oxford English Dictionary (OED) (2016)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distribution of Published Journals (2015–2021)

The findings revealed that the overall mean of 3.83 research studies related to metaphor using the corpus approach per year seems low for six years. Figure 1 highlights a fluctuated trend of research studies on the said topic. There is an increasing trend of research studies from 2015 (N=2) until 2017 (N=6). Nevertheless, the number decreased in 2018 (N=3) before escalated again in the following year (N=6) and declined again in 2020 (N=2).

Figure 1. Research trends of metaphor study using corpus approach (2015-2020)

Corpus Used

Apart from the distribution of published journals, the quantitative analysis revealed the trend of research studies regarding the corpus used in the selected literature. As illustrated in Figure 2, most of the literature analyzed existing corpus as 39% of the past studies examined data taken from existing reference corpus or corpus database. For example, He and Wen (2017) analyzed the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA), the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), and the British National Corpus (BNC). Meanwhile, Potts and Semino (2019) examined the British National Corpus (BNC), the Corpus of Contemporary American English, and an ad hoc corpus of reportage collected from Nexis (1 June-1July 2017). On the other hand, Jaworska (2017) investigated descriptions of tourist destinations in Britain (Home-Corpus), Europe (Europe-Corpus), and faraway tropical countries (Faraway Corpus), while Afrashi and Ghouchani (2018) studied the Persian Linguistic Database corpus. This is followed by news articles with a total of 13% that include news and opinion articles (Da Silva, 2016), British business English press (Herteg, 2019), and economic reports in English and Spanish press (Gil, 2019). In the meantime, business, literature, and health corpora have a similar percentage (9%). Academic corpus followed with 5%. The lowest percentage, 4%, is shared by four corpora types: political, sports, artwork, and mixed corpus.
**Instruments Employed**

As shown in Figure 3, most studies did not mention the specific instrument or tool employed in analyzing the data, with 26.1% (N=6). Then, 21.7% (N=5) of the studies used multiple instruments to analyze the data. Then, five different tools were used, namely WordSmith Tools, Antconc, Wmatrix, Sketch Engine, and search queries, with a similar percentage, 8.7% (N=2). Fewer studies (N=1, 4.3%) employed the #Lancsbox and concordance programme to analyze the collected data.

Interestingly, it is also found that the other past studies that did not mention the instrument used were analyzing non-English corpus. For instance, Raffaelli and Katunar (2016) studied sports discourse in Croatian. They only noted that frequency analysis identified conceptual metaphors in the Croatian corpus. Meanwhile, Gandomkar (2019) and Afrashi and Ghouchani (2018) analyzed the Persian corpora. Gandomkar examined thematic categorization and conventional metaphor and metonymy among Persian speakers. He only mentioned deductive method and frequency analysis were employed in the study. In the meantime, Afrashi and Ghouchani (2018) compared the FEAR metaphor between Persian and English languages. Luo (2018) also studied a non-English corpus,
i.e., Chinese TALK metaphor using the Center for Chinese Linguistics (CCL) Corpus, while Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019) studied a non-language corpus, i.e., (verbo-) pictorial metaphor in street artworks in Athens. Apart from that, many researchers used multiple instruments in studying metaphors in their research. For instance, in Ahrens and Jiang (2020), corpus-based linguistic tools such as SUMO (Suggested Upper Merged Ontology), WordNet, collocational patterns, and an online dictionary were employed to verify keywords for the BUILDING metaphors.

**Theoretical Lens**

Figure 4 illustrates the theoretical lens employed in the examined past literature. The figure shows that 73.9% (N = 17) of the studies used either a grand or middle-range theory as a theoretical lens.

![Figure 4. The Theoretical Lens Employed in the Analyzed Studies](image)

Most of these past works of literature (e.g., Afrashi & Ghouchani, 2018; Dodge, 2016; Gandomkar, 2019; Güldenring, 2017; Herteg, 2019; Potts & Semino, 2017; Raffaelli & Katunar, 2016; Semino, Demjen, & Demmen, 2018; Zhao, Han, & Zhao, 2019) employed Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) in their studies. Some studies used the CMT and paired it with other theories, such as Naicker (2017), who analyzed an ancient Hindu scriptural lore using the CMT and the theory in Cognitive Linguistics. Another study conducted by Da Silva (2016) employed the CMT with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the theory in Cognitive Linguistics in studying persuasive metaphors in the Portuguese press, while Potts and Semino (2019) used both the CMT and Discourse Analysis (DA) in studying the CANCER metaphors. Other than CMT, it is evident that Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) was also preferred by the researchers of metaphor based on the analyzed past literature. For example, Gil (2019) used it as a theoretical lens in studying ideology and persuasion in economic reports in English and Spanish press, while Zibin (2020) used the theory to examine metaphors describing Syrian refugees in Jordanian newspapers. Apart from the CMT and the CMA, the theory of Grammatical Metaphor was employed in two past studies. It was used in He and Yang's (2017) study that examined text technicality and ideational metaphor and in He and Wen's (2017) study that investigated grammatical and textual metaphor. Finally, Luo (2018) used theory in Cognitive Linguistics to analyze the Chinese TALK metaphor.
Meanwhile, another 26.1% (N = 6) of the studies did not employ any grand or middle-range theory, as shown in Figure 4. For example, Ahrens and Jiang (2020) and Krennmayr (2015) both used corpus linguistics, i.e., a method in language study which does not essentially relate to any specific theory (Semino, 2017). Apart from that, even though no theory was used in a study conducted by Semino (2016), she used corpus analysis, i.e., lemma search and concordance analysis, to identify metaphors in Oxford English Corpus (OEC). Meanwhile, Jaworska (2017) and Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019) identified metaphors using Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) guidelines without using any theoretical lens. The same goes with Skorczynska and Ahrens (2015), who used metaphor signaling and MIP guidelines to examine words and phrases metaphors in different genres.

**Thematic Analysis**

This analysis phase provides the possible gaps and omissions in terms of the focus of the metaphor studies that employed the corpus-based approach. The findings at this stage also offer some insights into recommended issues of the under-researched areas in metaphor study, which help close the identified gaps. The data from the thematic analysis revealed several themes to meet the second research objective, i.e., to determine the potential gaps and under-researched areas in the analyzed literature. Table 2 illustrates the identified themes from the synthesis of the research studies in response to the second research objective of this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Drawn Themes</th>
<th>Author(s)/Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Conceptualizations and patterns of metaphors</td>
<td>Skorczynska &amp; Ahrens (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Krennmayr (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dodge (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Semino (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Raffaelli &amp; Katunar (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He &amp; Wen (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He &amp; Yang (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Naicker (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Herteg (2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gandomkar (2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stampoulidis &amp; Bolognesi (2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ahrens &amp; Jiang (2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zibin (2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>metaphor and health</td>
<td>Potts &amp; Semino (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Semino, Demjen, &amp; Demmen (2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Potts &amp; Semino (2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>metaphor, ideology, and persuasion</td>
<td>Da Silva (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jaworska (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gil (2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>metaphor and culture</td>
<td>Luo (2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zhao, Han, &amp; Zhao (2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>metaphor and languages</td>
<td>Gündenring (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Afrashi &amp; Ghouchani (2018)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Table 2, most of the examined past studies were highly focused on the conceptualization and patterns of metaphor. Across the 23 studies, 13 studies concentrated mainly on analyzing the word(s) or phrase(s) that could be the source domains of metaphor in a discourse.
or examining types of metaphors. For example, Skorczynska and Ahrens (2015) studied words and phrases which signal metaphors in the discourse of three different genres, i.e., U.S. presidential addresses, popular science articles, and business periodical articles. They found three metaphor signal categories through the analysis, i.e., copular similes, verbal processes, and modals/conditionals. Meanwhile, He and Wen (2017) investigated the diachronic and genre distributions of two types of textual metaphor identified. These types are conventionalization of conjunctive adverbial groups and pre-positionalization of hypotactic conjunction groups. In a much more recent study, Herteg (2019) explored different conceptualizations of the ECONOMY metaphors in the British business English press through a concordance analysis of headwords from various sources and target domains. From this evidence, it can be concluded that researchers of metaphor were fond of studying how metaphor is constructed and exists in a discourse. This revelation suggests that there are under-researched areas that researchers who are keen on studying metaphor can explore to understand better how metaphor works together with its impact when being used in a discourse, either spoken or written.

Gibbs (2008) stated that metaphor is deemed a creative communicative function that permits people to surpass the boredom of discourse. Therefore, it can be found in various discourses like political discourse, business communications, advertisements, news reports, and even religious scriptures. Nevertheless, the thematic analysis reveals that many under-researched areas have not been extensively explored in terms of their usage and effect. As tabulated in Table 2, only three studies concentrated on how metaphor was used in health discourses. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic starting to hit the world at the end of 2019, no research focuses on metaphor usage regarding the pandemic. Only two studies conducted before 2019 delved into metaphor in health discourse. As an illustration, Semino, Demjen, and Demmen (2018) examined the function of metaphor in framing the metaphors for cancer, while Potts and Semino (2017) analyzed healthcare professionals' online use of violence metaphors for care at the end of life in the U.S. and the U.K.

Only three studies focused on the area regarding the corpus-based research of metaphor and its function in disseminating ideology and acting as a medium of persuasion. It is undeniable that the use of metaphor is prevalent in persuasive discourses. Its use varies from politics (e.g., Lenard & Ćosić, 2017; Stojan & Mijić, 2019) to advertisements (e.g., Jeong, 2008; Van Mulken, Van Hooft, & Nederstigt, 2014). Yet, it is surprising to see those studies, especially those that use the corpus approach, are limited in this area. One such study was completed by Da Silva (2016), who examined news and opinion articles corpus persuasive and manipulative power of metaphor of austerity in the Portuguese press.

The evidence also reveals that the research on metaphor and culture that used the corpus approach is limited to the Chinese culture. There were only two studies that focused on metaphor and culture. For instance, Luo (2018) investigated the Chinese TALK metaphors in the Center for Chinese Linguistics (CCL) Corpus. Meanwhile, Zhao, Han, and Zhao (2019) examined the metaphors used in 'Pavilion of Women', a novel by the Nobel Prize-winning author Pearl S. Buck, and their relationship with Chinese Yin-Yang semiotics and the author’s experiences in China.

Finally, the same lack of focus was also identified in the research of metaphor and languages since there were only two studies that focused on the area based on the thematic analysis in this review. Despite its prominence in various types of discourse across languages, not many
researchers of metaphors are fond of using the corpus approach in examining metaphors in multiple languages. This situation is another gap that researchers of metaphor in the future can fill.

**Discussion**

Based on the data of the distribution of published journals, the research standpoints on metaphor study using corpus approach did not show a consistent and steady increment over the years, i.e., 2015 until 2020. Nevertheless, the upsurges with the highest numbers in 2017 and 2019 indicate positive interest trend of research studies of the area.

Apart from that, the corpus used in the distribution of the synthesized studies proposes a trend among the researchers of metaphors in using existing large-sized corpus compared to building their own specialized corpus, specifically spoken discourse. It is understood that the supremacy of written data in corpus studies is due to the complications and expense related to recording, transcribing, and compiling corpora of the spoken discourse (Römer, 2006; McCarthy, 2008). Nevertheless, metaphor research in spoken discourse should not be neglected regardless of the reasons. It can contribute to the body of knowledge in understanding the construction, function, and impact of metaphor in such discourse. In further understanding metaphor, researchers of metaphor should examine it in the written corpus and the spoken material within specific and distinguishable genres (Goatly, 2007). Henceforward, it allows the researchers to learn how language such as metaphor is used in real-life situations. The distribution also reveals several gaps in the knowledge and understanding of metaphor use in other types of discourse that are not listed in the synthesised studies. For example, no single study of metaphor used the corpus approach focusing on religious discourse. There has been only a handful of studies conducted on metaphor in spoken religious discourse compared to other types of discourse (Wardani, 2019) which indicates a scarcity of research conducted in the area of study.

Meanwhile, the findings related to the corpus tool preferred by the researchers of metaphor in their studies highlights another gap. Since most of the researchers did not specifically mention the corpus tool used to analyze their data, it reflects the instrument used is not a significant element in corpus research, specifically in studying metaphors. If the devices can produce a basic frequency list, keyword list, collocates, and concordance lines, they are viable and adequate to help researchers study metaphors in a discourse. It was also revealed that some of these past studies analyzed non-English corpus which explains the…. Since the latter part of metaphor analysis is still done qualitatively, contemporary researchers of metaphors are trying to find systematic and efficient ways to examine metaphors in discourse. This matter helps to reduce the researcher's biases and influence in identifying metaphors in discourse. Then, it can also be concluded WordSmith Tools, Antconc, Wmatrix, and Sketch Engine are the common corpus tools used to analyze metaphor in a discourse.

In terms of theoretical lens, most of the analyzed past literature employed Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) even though it has received a lot of criticism from contemporary researchers of metaphors. Kövecses (2008) stressed that the theory is mainly criticized due to the issue of methodology, direction of analysis, schematicity, embodiment, and relationship with culture. However, the breakthrough of the CMT paves the way for the avid researchers of metaphor to discover the manifestation of thought through the conceptual mappings of linguistic metaphors.
Hence, it is still being employed as a theoretical perspective in many metaphor studies. Some of the other analyzed past studies did not use any theory in studying metaphor. These researchers of metaphor utilized corpus approach to identify metaphor in a discourse. The research involved quantitative analysis such as word frequencies and collocations which allow the linguists to learn aspects of language based on empirical evidence (Charteris-Black, 2004). This matter enables various theoretical descriptions in numerous fields to explain how a particular language is used. Semino (2016), she used corpus analysis, i.e., lemma search and concordance analysis, to identify metaphors in Oxford English Corpus (OEC). Meanwhile, Jaworska (2017) and Stampoulidis and Bolognesi (2019) identified metaphors using Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) guidelines without using any theoretical lens. The same goes with Skorczynska and Ahrens (2015), who used metaphor signaling and MIP guidelines to examine words and phrases metaphors in different genres.

Conclusion

This review exposed several gaps in the selected studies. First, the corpus-based studies of metaphor in this review focused on written discourse. Other specialized corpora are understudied, especially the ones that involve spoken discourse. As suggested by Mauranen (2006), analyzing spoken discourse that happened naturally could provide fresh insights into language while revitalizing linguistics and challenging "the adequacy of sentence-based models which have developed from analyzing written [discourse] – or invented sentences" (2006, p.143).

Secondly, the researchers of the reviewed past studies utilized analytical tools that are not explicitly intended for metaphor analysis. These researchers used tools that could produce basic frequency and concordance lists, such as #Lancsbox, WordSmith, Wmatrix, and GloWbE web interface. This situation could be attributed to the lack of specific analytical tools to analyze metaphors. However, at least two tools are available on the internet for this purpose. The first one is VU Amsterdam Metaphor Corpus, a corpus tool for metaphor identification by Steen et al. (2010). The second one is FinMeter, a tool for analyzing Finnish poetry's meter and rhyme, semantics, and metaphors.

Third, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) was still highly referred to across the selected studies. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who proposed the theory has had more than its fair share of criticism over the years (Cameron, 2007, 2010; Gibbs, 2011; Kövecses, 2020; Zhang, 2021). Gibbs (2009), for instance, reported that this theory had been widely criticized "both as a theory of metaphor use and for its claims about the embodied, metaphorical character of abstract thought" (2009, p.14). Cserep (2014) seemed to agree with this by suggesting that this theory lacks clarity in some of its statements and only a little attention was devoted to cross-cultural and linguistic aspects (2014, p.283). Not only that but after more than thirty years the theory was introduced, more recent theories of metaphors have emerged (Barnden, 2006; Gibbs, 2008; Ortony, 1993; Vega, 2007; Wilson & Carston, 2006, 2008).

Fourth, the selected studies from the year 2020 in this review did not focus on investigating metaphors used to report the COVID-19 pandemic, even though it is an exciting area to be looked at. The situation, however, could be linked to the fact that in early 2000, the pandemic was still in
its initial stage before it started to wreak havoc around the world as the year 2020 progressed in which, more materials on metaphors were readily available to be analyzed.

**Suggestions for Future Studies**

This review examined the recent trend of corpus-based approaches to analyzing metaphor and offered possible gaps and under-researched topics that might be identified in the topic's prior work. It is suggested that future studies on this topic could include more specialized corpora that are currently under-researched, especially the spoken ones. Future studies could also initiate analyses of metaphors between different languages or genders to see whether such factors can play a role in how metaphors are employed in discourses. On the other hand, studies on metaphors using the corpus approach have concentrated highly on their conceptualisation and patterns in a corpus or discourse. Therefore, it is high time for such studies to focus on its functions in culture, public communication, ideology or propaganda dissemination, and health, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In relation to the use of metaphor in the pandemic era, researchers can analyze plenty of thought-provoking aspects. These aspects could include different ways on how metaphors explain the virus, how it spreads, where it is being spread to, and how to contain the virus. Furthermore, the types of metaphors used to explain COVID-19, such as war, disaster, and visual metaphors could also be examined. Apart from that, emerging symbols and alternative forms of communication used metaphorically to symbolize the situations around the pandemic could be another fascinating aspect of metaphor analysis in the pandemic era. This includes symbols such as the 'White Flag' campaign in Malaysia, where Malaysians who were struggling amid a strict lockdown were flying white flags outside their homes as a plea for help.

**About the Authors**

**Norasyikin Abdul Malik** is a lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perak Branch, Seri Iskandar, Malaysia. Her research interests include metaphor study, corpus linguistics, figurative language, and semantic. She is currently pursuing her PhD in Applied Linguistics. Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8867-547X
E-mail address: noras967@uitm.edu.my

**Mohamad Syafiq Ya Shak**, is a member of the Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Perak. the Academy of Language Studies at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perak Branch, Seri Iskandar, Malaysia. His research interests include material development and evaluation, vocabulary learning, and corpus linguistics.
Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4702-6633
E-mail address: moham381@uitm.edu.my

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Faizah Mohamad** is senior lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam, Malaysia. Her research is situated in the field of technology enhanced learning, ICT in education, e-learning in higher education, and online education. Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3029-6132
E-mail address: fareema@uitm.edu.my
Dr. Siti Aeisha Joharry is a senior lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam, Malaysia. Her expertise and interests, among other things, are corpus linguistics, applied linguistics, and critical discourse analysis. Aeisha teaches several English courses for degree students and supervise Master and PhD students.

Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1231-0589
E-mail address: aeisha@uitm.edu.my

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