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Peer Observation of Teaching in EFL Classrooms in Saudi Universities: Challenges and Applications

Najla Alghamdi
Foreign Languages Department
Taif University, Main Campus, Taif, Saudi Arabia
Corresponding Author: n.algamdi@tu.edu.sa

Haifa Al-Nofaie
Foreign Languages Department
Taif University, Main Campus, Taif, Saudi Arabia

Reem Alkhammash
English Department, University College
Taraba, Taif University, Taif, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract
This paper aims to analyze the kinds of peer observation of teaching in Saudi English language institutes. The data revealed that three models of peer observation of teaching are used: evaluative, developmental and collaborative. It was apparent that the evaluative model is the dominant one. The analysis of the results showed that there is a negative attitude toward Peer Observation of Teaching (POT) among teachers. They do not welcome the idea of being monitored and judged. The authors realized that institutes could enhance the benefits of POT by providing teachers with clear guidelines and engaging them in the construction of institutional policies that welcome other POT models.

Keywords: Collaborative Observation; Developmental Observation; Evaluative Observation; Peer Observation of Teaching; Saudi universities.

Introduction

The educational sectors continually seek to improve the quality of teaching and educational output. Peer Observation of Teaching (POT) is the primary instrument that institutions use to achieve their goals for teaching excellence. Nowadays, POT is applied to attain further goals, such as improved learning outcomes, the incorporation of technology in the classroom, arming teachers with the latest practice knowledge in the field, training novice teachers and achieving higher educational standards. POT is sometimes used as an obligatory procedure, if it is for an evaluative or developmental purpose, or as a non-obligatory procedure, when it is conducted for a collaborative purpose. Universities such as Cambridge, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Queensland and University of South Carolina provide pages on their websites dedicated to defining POT, describing its benefits, illustrating the steps involved and providing guidelines on how to use it effectively.

In research, many educators have investigated POT thoroughly to examine its efficacy, its role and to find ways to overcome its disadvantages and emphasize its advantages. Fletcher and Orsmond (2005) pointed out that POT is used in higher education in Britain to develop the reflective practice of lecturers; this is one of the important benefits of POT. Keig and Waggoner (1995) have suggested that POT provides three crucial advantages for teachers in higher education: a) it improves their understanding of the teaching process; b) it increases their understanding of teaching actions; c) it increases the level of collegiality in the workplace. However, other research has found that some teachers show strong resistance to accepting and implementing the changes demanded by POT (Trowler 2002). Evans and Nation (2000) gave an explanation for this resistance; they found that changes tend to overload teachers in university, who are already experiencing internal pressure to teach and publish more.

The focus of this study is on delineating all the recognized types of POT as practiced by English language teachers at Saudi universities. There are still unanswered questions regarding which model seems preferable and why. The issue of POT has begun to receive attention lately in Saudi higher education (e.g., Ali 2012; Shousha 2015; Tawalbeh 2020). The evaluation model is the most dominant model, and it has been characterized as involving power inequality, as will be explained in the literature review. The current studies have mainly focused on teachers’ attitudes and perceptions towards POT and how POT may contribute to their professional development, based on data obtained from questionnaires (e.g., Ali 2012; Shousha 2015; Tawalbeh 2020). Studies that compare the three models of observations at both international and local levels are scarce, a point that forms the significance of this study.

Another significance point is that the researchers have not found studies focusing on interview data which could lead to an in-depth understanding of the issues related to POT. Therefore, this study uses interviews as a main data collection method to provide an in-depth understanding of POT as practiced in language centers. This study answered the following questions:

1. How does POT/observer’s power influence authentic teaching practices?
2. To what extent does POT/observer’s influence limit teaching creativity/innovation?
3. Why do some teachers think that POT is not a helpful strategy for their professional development?
4. Why do other teachers believe in the importance of POT, even though they view it as a stressful strategy?
The first section of this study reviews the relevant literature on teaching observation models in language classrooms. The second section describes the methodology. The results are presented in the third section and there is a discussion in the fourth section. Finally, policy recommendations and the conclusion are given in the last section.

**Literature Review**

The literature discusses three models, namely: evaluative, developmental, and collaborative which are different based on who is doing the observation and its purpose.

**Evaluative**

Evaluative Observation (EO) is a two-phase procedure. In particular, it is designed to fulfill institutional requirements; it has a managerial purpose. In addition, the results of an evaluation can be used to develop teachers’ performance, hence improving the institute’s outcomes. Overall, teacher observation creates a culture of observation that teachers need to become accustomed to. Once teachers are accustomed to such evaluation, it can help them to develop their interpersonal skills and their ability to benefit significantly from observers’ feedback. Sharp (1995) discussed one advantage of observation by pointing out that ‘it provides staff the opportunity to “acclimatize” themselves to observation by external assessors’ (As cited in Martin & Double, 1998, p. 161). Furthermore, some teachers find it a beneficial procedure because it pushes them to work harder, to develop a better understanding of their profession (Keig & Waggoner, 1995).

In spite of certain positive aspects of POT, many teachers have a negative perception of EO, which prevents them from benefiting fully from it. Generally, they do not welcome the idea of being judged, especially if this will threaten their teaching career. Shortland (2004) alluded to the fact that teachers in higher education may tend to avoid being observed. Teachers may accept observation just to obey their institution’s policy, rather than taking it as an opportunity to improve their teaching practice. In the same vein, Martin and Double (1998) mentioned that some of participants are under teaching observation with a sense of obligation enthusiasm. From authors’ experiences, they notice that some teachers refuse EO when it is linked to determining promotions or investigating under-performance. Cosser (1998) pointed out that there is not enough evidence to support the idea that EO can be an effective developmental tool. His study finds it ineffective. In some cases, this model is not more than perfunctory work to fulfill the university or institution requirements. Cosser (2002) added that this model can make teachers feel uncomfortable because they perceive it to be judgmental. Cosser (2002) took an extreme position with regard to the whole process of observation by claiming that no one is qualified to judge the teaching practice of other teachers.

Teaching in universities is different from teaching in Primary or Secondary schools (Berge, 1998). Teachers in universities maintain a strong belief that they are not the only source of knowledge for students; they need to be dependent and passionate about learning. Jensen (2011) noted that in higher education, teachers’ research is more valuable than the ways in which they teach: “at many institutions of higher education, research productivity is weighted significantly more heavily than teaching performance in merit pay evaluations and tenure and rank advancement decisions” (p. 33). Researchers for this paper found that Jensen’s point is in line with some of the comments of their colleagues who believe that they should be spending most of their academic hours on research rather than teaching. In addition, teachers believe that they have enough academic duties that it is unreasonable to subject them to the additional stress of being under teaching observation (Martin & Double, 1998). These attitudes can create a psychological barrier
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towards EO and result in teachers not accepting the need to be observed. Moreover, the authority that an observer has in the classroom can upset or irritate an observee, especially when the observer lacks pedagogical or content knowledge so their contributions are not valuable. Kayaoglu (2012) mentioned this crucial point; the data revealed that some teachers did not get the expected benefit from supervision, because the supervisors lacked the necessary knowledge, supervision skills and pedagogical value. EO can result in teachers becoming frustrated, lower levels of creativity, and a loss of interest in engaging with the process. The collaborative model is presented in the following section, through a discussion of its pros and cons.

**Collaborative**

In Collaborative Observation (CO) which is also called peer review (Siddiqui, Jonas-Dwyer, & Carr 2007), teachers engage in observing each other to reflect on their practices. Power relations can be less obvious in this model (Siddiqui et al., 2007). CO is believed to be a successful observation model because it provides teachers with a space for reflecting on their teaching practices, in a non-evaluative context (Daniels, Pirayoff, & Bessant 2013; Engin & Priest 2014). Kocur’s (2021) framework introduced best practices for CO. The first element is to identify with clarity the goal of the observation. Both the reviewer and reviewee should have a focused goal. The second element of best practice is that the observation notes captured during the observation should be thought about before the post-observation meeting. Thirdly, the interaction between the observer and observee should be active and focused during the following phases of observation: the pre-observation phase in which goals are set up; during the observation in which teaching practices are captured; the post-observation phases where written notes and feedback are discussed. Finally, setting criteria for selecting the observer is extremely important. The level of experience of the observer, rather than necessarily their academic background, should be prioritized. Also, the observer should maintain common knowledge and friendly relationships with colleagues.

However, this mode of observation is questionable if both the observer and observee are friends who want to avoid confrontation and maintain harmony (Schuck, Aubusson, & Buchanan, 2008). Studies on CO have found that cultural values in some Asian countries push people towards maintaining friendly relationships with others by avoiding criticism and face loss (e.g., Nguyen, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2005; Nguyen & Pham, 2020). Other cultural values that affect the quality and credibility of feedback have been identified, such as considering people’s social position and institution (Truong, 2013). In addition, some studies have found that teachers may provide superficial comments on their reflective practices because they want to save face by avoiding self-criticism (e.g., Zhan & Wan, 2016). In the context of Saudi Arabia, there is a lack of professional training program that focus the attention of language teachers on the value of reflective practice (e.g., Sibahi, 2015). Available studies on peer observation in the context of higher education in Saudi Arabia revealed that the most dominant model of peer observation is the evaluative model (e.g., Shousha, 2015; Tawalbeh, 2020). The following section discusses the developmental model.

**Developmental**

One of the earliest works on Developmental Observation (DO) was carried out by Williams (1989). The paper laid out seven important principles that any teacher observation framework, based on a developmental perspective, should implement. The first principle aims to develop teachers’ own judgements about events occurring in their classrooms. The second principle is that
the developmental framework should have limited and focused content that caters for the needs of teachers. The third principle is to link the visits to the course. The fourth principle relates to the need for teachers to take responsibility by discussing the purposes of visits with teachers. The fifth principle is about providing the teacher with an instrument for self-development. The sixth principle is to give positive and helpful feedback to teachers. The seventh principle is that the observer should be flexible in order to be able to respond effectively to the teacher in the post-observation discussion. These seven principles represent the first attempt to remove the stigma linked to the evaluative nature of teacher observation and although it represents a good start, the approach is not well-formulated into frameworks and practices.

Recently, the developmental model has been shaped into an applicable framework in some Australian universities through a framework entitled the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (henceforth PATS) (Drew et al. 2016). PATS was created by Angela Carbone and her team and has two main objectives: to enhance teaching practices and to align teachers’ developmental goals with observation. Since the design of the framework focuses on goal-oriented observations, teachers are required to state their developmental goals before the start of the academic term. The period before the observation aims to allow collegial stress-free relations to develop with the observer as well as to identify weaknesses and strengths and set SMART goals. During the academic term, the observer then takes notes during the observation process about whether the stated goals have been realized and how. Observable features of teaching are then noted by the observer using checklists. The design of instruments is based on the developmental nature of observations and therefore, instruments included focus on providing opportunities to give feedback to the instructor using freenote notes. Feedback from the observer can involve providing development ideas, as well as highlighting strength and weakness points. After the term finishes, teachers reflect on how effective their strategies have been in terms of achieving their goals, what they have learned and how they will employ the new knowledge to develop themselves professionally.

Although the PATS framework was designed to give the observer ample opportunity to provide feedback, goal-oriented observations were lacking. Drew et al. (2016) analyzed 42 observation notes in the Australian context and found that only half of them contained developmental ideas and only five of the sets of notes were aligned with the teacher’s developmental goals. It is possible that although developmental models of POT also face less resistance from instructors, it is necessary to pay more attention to observers and how they can optimize their observation skills to serve teachers’ aspirations.

**Peer Observation in the Saudi Context**

Recently, peer observation has gained significant attention in the higher education sector of Saudi Arabia, especially in contexts similar to our study (see Deraney & AlGhamdi, 2020; Alkhatnai, 2021; Deraney, 2022). This has been evidenced by the growing literature on the topic, including works by Ali (2012), Shousha (2015), and Tawalbeh (2020). While peer observation models have been advocated as a valuable tool for evaluating teaching practices, the literature shows that evaluation remains a critical aspect of the process. In some cases, the qualifications of peer observers have been called into question, and the role of management in the process has not been well defined. Ali’s (2012) study, for instance, examined whether there were assessment criteria for the observer and the observed. While peer observation is used as an evaluation tool, it remains unclear whether the observed has a say in selecting the observer and whether the
observation forms are widely distributed or approved by senior administration. Ali adapted a checklist from the TLA Centre at the University of Edinburgh, but it is unclear whether the original form was strictly designed for evaluation purposes. The studies generally focused on teachers’ attitudes and perceptions toward peer observation and its potential impact on their professional development, as evidenced by questionnaire responses. The sole study to consider the benefits of combining evaluative and collaborative observations is Tawalbeh’s (2020), which was limited to a case study of Taif University. Consequently, there remain unanswered questions regarding peer observation practices at Saudi universities. Therefore, this study aims to bridge a gap in the literature by investigating teachers' views regarding teaching observation.

Method

Participants

The data for this study were collected via email from language centers in Saudi universities in March 2019, using structured interview questions (see Appendix A). As female researchers, convenience sampling was used to choose female participants for this work because they represented a source of data that was easy to access by the researchers (Etikan, 2016). Female language instructors from diverse levels of teaching experience and age groups were targeted. Therefore, the respondents were 35 female English language teachers.

Instrument

There were 11 questions in the interview. The researchers designed the questions based on their initial conversations with some language teachers regarding their views on POT, prior to conducting this study. The questions were open-ended, which reflected the variation of the participants’ social and educational backgrounds and their levels of experience.

Coding

Cohen’s kappa calculation was implemented to identify the levels of agreement and disagreement between the two raters (Bujang & Baharum, 2017). We divided the interview questions into three main focus areas (see Appendix B). The first focus area was descriptive interview questions which focused on letting teachers elaborate on their teacher observation experiences, namely in terms of what kind of POT model was adopted in their institution and the feedback provided by the observer. In deciding which teacher observation model each participant had experienced, we asked teachers about the relationship between the observers and observed as it is the main indicator of the overall model used in different institutions. The other question related to whether the teacher had ever learned anything from observing others. If the teacher answered no, it meant they had never observed others and they had only experienced the evaluative model.

The second focus area in the interview questions was the outcome of the observation experience which involved reflective questions about altered methods of teaching as a consequence of the observation and another two questions about ‘teacher’s cognition’ (Borg forthcoming) – lessons learned and encountering different understandings of teaching. Regarding coding for evidence of professional development, the researchers decided that the teacher should demonstrate examples of modifying their practice in the classroom for something to be counted as evidence of professional development. In coding the difference between which teaching observation model, relationship, did she learn anything from observing others? The third focus area was on teachers’ willingness to be observed and attitude.
Inter-rater Reliability
The data were coded by two researchers and the third one revised both sets of codes to check the congruence between them. Following the coding step, two authors compared their coding for 50% of the data and the inter-rater reliability check was applied. The total number of coded items was 135. The total number of items in disagreement was 10%. Thus, the percentage of agreement = 92.59%. The percentage of disagreement = 13.50%. In order to contribute to research originality, some of the participants’ responses are quoted in the results section.

Results
The participants’ answers of the two of the questions assisted the authors in identifying which type of observation they had been exposed to, the nature of the relationship (e.g., staff member, head of dep…etc.) between the participant and the observer and, whether participants learned anything from observing others’ classrooms. If so, mention them. The data show that the three observation models were used: evaluative, collaborative, and developmental. However, the majority of experiences could be classified under the first model followed by the collaborative model and only five participants had experienced the developmental model.

The Evaluative Model
Looking at the responses of participants who were exposed to the evaluative model, the data reveal critical psychological and pedagogical-managerial issues.

Psychological Issues
Saving face was one of the psychological and cultural issues. Teachers in higher education believe that they are qualified and professional enough that they should not be observed and judged; they interpret observation as an insulting and disrespectful procedure. They expressed their negative sentiments towards the evaluative model. For instance, Participant 14 said, ‘A 26-year-experience teacher who is might brimful with methods of teaching, may feel it is a wasting of time! This works better in schools with new teacher NOT with teachers in higher education’; she continued, confirming her opinion, by saying, ‘Truthfully, observation for teachers in higher education is a kind of insult.’ Participant 8 responded with displeasure, stating, ‘I feel it is teachers’ insult to be tested in front of students.’ She also said, ‘a teacher is a respectable Dictation he was person, and no one has the right to degrade or insult or harass him/her.’

A part of face-saving is being defensive, showing a positive self-image and complaining. For instance, Participant 26 was very defensive in her response. She was asked ‘Did observation increase or decrease your confidence?’ and her reply was, ‘I am professional before and after the observation.’ Being defensive is a very natural reaction, especially among experienced teachers, and they can even become hostile to suggestions (Cosh, 2002).

Other participants preferred to be positive and avoided mentioning negative points. Participant seven stated, ‘They appreciated my teaching style; It was up to the mark Alhamdulilah.’ With the same attitude, Participant 19 replied, ‘I only got positive feedback.’ She also commented on the post-observation discussion by saying, ‘The discussion was about the good and negatives if any.’

Other responses were loaded with complaints. Participant eight said, ‘Sometimes observers are not fair enough’ and also ‘observation is a killing device for education department.’ Another
point related to participants’ anxiety when they are observed. Participant eight generally commented on the observation process by saying, ‘It makes me stressed’; ‘feel uncomfortable.’

**Managerial and Pedagogical Issues**

The EO exists because of a departmental and institutional requirement. The observers usually play an authoritative role in which they have the power to evaluate, judge and act for or against the observees (teachers).

The data reveals the teachers’ thoughts about EO. Participant three admitted that she changed her teaching style during observation, when she was asked, ‘Did you alter your style/way of teaching because of the observer’s presence? Explain in both cases!’ She said, ‘because I want to do my best.’ In the same vein, Participant 19 changed her teaching in front of the observer; she described the observation as pushing her to do better: ‘Observation pushes you to raise your standards.’

On the other hand, Participant 35 divulged that she altered her teaching practice because of the pressure that EO creates, ‘because I was a bit anxious on being observed by the evaluation committee. It’s very normal that in front of others we always want to show our good face.’

**The Collaborative Model**

This model was not reported as a common observation type in Saudi Arabia. A few participants had experienced this model. This model seems to be more favourable than the evaluative model due to a number of advantages; teachers who were observed by colleagues in a non-evaluative context seem to develop the confidence to share their teaching practices. For example, Participant 27 said, ‘I strongly support the idea of sharing the way different teachers teach. It helps us boost our teaching style.’

Another participant said, ‘Yes, this is a very good way to exchange ideas and techniques to learn and we can be notified where all we have to develop ourselves in teaching. Observations should be done frequently.’ This view goes hand in hand with Siddiqui, Jonas-Dwyer, and Carr’s view (2007) that power does not dominate this model of observation. However, some teachers find CO stressful and being observed by colleagues might not be always positive. ‘I was anxious to get the feedback. I focused in our discussion about my teaching (the positive and negative remarks)’ (Participant 33). This means that feedback that emerges from CO is not always positive, a finding that differs from other findings that claim the influence of relationships on the credibility of CO feedback (e.g., Nguyen, Terlouw, and Pilot 2005; Nguyen and Pham 2020). Another interesting result was that teachers might change their teaching style in CO, and this is not related to the presence of the observer. It may be in order to try out certain creative practices: ‘I try to create something new and practical’ (Participant 21). It seems that this participant is enthusiastic about trying her new teaching practices for self-development. This result seems to differ from the results found in one other study which says that teachers avoid self-criticism by avoiding reflection (e.g., Zhan & Wan 2016).

**The Developmental Model**

In general, the developmental model was less practiced than both the evaluative and the collaborative model; only five participants reported experiencing observation which was developmental in nature. It is noted that in all of the cases reported, the circle of development was incomplete; all participants only reported receiving feedback that made them think about
knowledge that was new to them, whereas none of them touched upon whether their goals for the observation were aligned with DO and whether the objectives of the institutions were the main purpose of the observation. It is also worth mentioning that the developmental model was only talked about directly by one of the participants; the researchers inferred that the model in question was developmental with other participants, based on the narratives of the participants who reported the ‘good’ feedback they received, including ‘the suggestions given by the observer develop my teaching and I want to improve myself’ (Participant 16). It is also noticeable from the previous quote that such feedback affected the careers of teachers by raising their professional standards.

When the observation was developmental, one participant noted that their confidence increased: ‘It increased my confidence; I saw it as an opportunity to assess myself and to validate what I do in the classroom. It was a way to expel any doubt of myself and that of my employer’ (Participant 12) and ‘My confidence was boosted because this gave me invaluable insight into how I can improve my teaching’ (Participant 28). Part of the confidence gained related to the experience of DO in terms of how it increased some teachers’ awareness of many aspects of lesson preparation and delivery – some focused on their lesson plan: ‘My lesson plan was enhanced to provide the observer with clear teaching objectives’ (Participant 35) and others used the experience to verify their teaching techniques, for example by using humor or developing a good rapport with the students: ‘I was told I have a very good relationship with my students’ and ‘a great sense of humor that’s unique to me’ (Participant 35).

Another expected result, associated with the merits of DO, is that other participants believe that the model provided them with new learning opportunities as in the case of learning a new teaching strategy for one of the participants: ‘I have learned to involve my students more in pair or group work where I can make groups of students on my own’ (Participant 13) and another participant learned to focus attention on low performing students: ‘I should pay attention to some weak students’ (Participant 16). Although the developmental model did not go beyond providing feedback, some participants found that the feedback given to them had a strong impact on them.

Discussion

The results in the previous section reveal that all three types of observation exist in the context of Saudi Arabian higher education; however, they are practiced with different degrees of power. In addition, the attitudes of teachers towards these models varies, depending on the type of observation model, level of teaching experience, training, and the degree of observer and institution power.

The first research question explores how POT/ observer’s power influences the authentic teaching practice. The results show that this influence can be positive or negative depending on the observation model that teachers are exposed to. Mainly, the influence is positive when the teachers are observed for developmental purpose and involved in CO and DO models. Two common comments provided by some teachers are that they are learning more about the teaching process via POT and that their teaching has been enhanced through sharing different ideas and strategies. This goes along with Donnlley’s (2007) participants’ (apprentice teachers) comments who admitted that POT was a great opportunity for them to learn about how to teach (p. 124). The negative influence appears in EO context where teachers claim that they are not themselves in the classroom, and they alter their teaching style just to satisfy the observer. The first research question explores how POT/ observer’s power influences the authentic teaching practice. The results show that this influence can be positive or negative depending on the observation model that teachers
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Another important point this research is to what extent does the POT procedure limit creativity and innovation in teaching practices. Again, the results vary here based on the POT model that the institute uses with its teachers. Teachers who have been observed for evaluative purpose, find this model a stressful one which frustrates them and stops them from thinking out of the box. This result is consistent with Millis’ (1992) finding that teachers experience a distinctive nervousness during observation, while teachers who have been involved in CO say that this type of observation is a chance for them to try creative practice.

In the third research question, the researchers attempt to uncover some of the reasons why teachers think that POT is not a helpful process to develop their profession. The teachers’ answers for this question reveal a very negative attitude towards the EO and DO models, while other teachers welcome the idea of being observed within the framework of the CO model. Regarding the last research question which investigates teachers’ belief of the importance of POT, only teachers who have been involved in CO find POT an important tool to develop their profession. One teacher even said that POT should be done frequently. Below, these results are discussed thoroughly based on their occurrence in the three observation contexts.

The results indicate that although the evaluative model is the dominant one in Saudi universities, it is not the preferred model among teachers, as shown by data in the current research. In the evaluative model, the results, in general, reveal that this model is not welcomed by university teachers. This, indeed, is due to a variety of reasons. The main reason being that teachers in English language centers come from different cultural, social, and educational backgrounds. This diversity creates a competitive atmosphere where teachers work very hard to prove themselves. Teachers in this institutional environment have their own worries about promotions and sometimes about contract renewals. Therefore, the idea of being judged and criticized is loaded with negative sentiment. Additionally, being a teacher at university is another crucial reason to not accept being observed for evaluative purposes. University-level teachers believe that they have a high content knowledge which, in turn, translates into a great sense of self-efficacy. Hence, there is an argument that they should not be assessed under EO since they are above this insulting procedure (as the teachers stated in the data).

Based on the above, the concept of face-saving is raised in the data. In such an environment, face denotes honor, respect, and dignity (Nguyen & Pham, 2020). Certain responses to the interview questions by participants were face-saving in manner; they gave the impression that EO made them feel the need to protect their dignity and respect. This manifested in different ways: some participants complained, others were defensive, and some adopted a deliberately positive attitude.

Another important reason for not welcoming EO is the pressure that this model puts on teachers. It causes them to feel stressed, which in turn, limits their practice and decreases their readiness to think out of the box and be creative (Gosling, 2002, as cited in Peel, 2005).
Regardless of the frequent use of the evaluative model, the outcomes of this managerial procedure are not always reliable. This is because of the authority that the observers have during the observation. Some of the teachers in the current study admitted that they are not themselves during an observation. In fact, some stated that they alter their teaching style just to satisfy the observers and fulfil their institution’s requirements and standards (Peel, 2005).

The results also demonstrated that teachers who had experienced this model did not undertake any reflection, which constitutes a very important step in improving the teaching profession. Wlodarsky (2020) concludes that reflection helps individuals and groups to change and improve their practice and to avoid repeating past mistakes. If a teacher is unable to reflect as a result of an observational model, there is a weakness in the process for two reasons. Firstly, this model is managerially judgmental and thus, teachers are not interested in engaging with it except to simply fulfil their perfunctory duty. Secondly, teachers are not well trained to professionally reflect on their teaching. For them, reflection simply involves talking about what they have learned from an experience, but they do not discuss the implementation and application of improved practice.

The collaborative model seems to be preferred by those teachers who have had experience of this type of observation. This model of observation is stress-free (Daniels, Pirayoff, & Bessant 2013; Engin, & Priest, 2014), but it is not commonly used at Saudi universities, where EO seems to be dominant, as reported by the participants in this study. One main concern, as seen in the literature, is that this type of observation might be affected by institutional values (e.g., complements due to the status of the observees). If teachers are well-trained on how to reflect on their teaching practices, the influence of such factors will be minimized (Sibahi, 2015). It should be noted that friendly relationships might not represent a barrier to reliable feedback from observers. One of the participants reported that CO provided her with a space for using her creativity by altering her normal teaching style: ‘I’m implementing new ways to integrate technology in the classroom, new strategies to increase interaction and collaborative learning’ (Participant 31). A similar finding has been reported in Bell’s (2002) study where some teachers said that after POT, they make immediate changes to their teaching practice; they even improve their implementation of teaching and learning activities (p. 33).

The developmental model seems to be at an early stage of implementation in the Saudi context. The experience is still new to both the institutions and the teachers; however, it seems that many teachers prefer the DO that provides them with feedback that is centered around their development. This result confirms the existing evidence in Bell and Mladenovic (2008), where they found that teachers value the process of peer observation when it is done for a university developmental program. Many of the participants in Donnelly’s (2007) study reported that POT increases their confidence and self-assurance which is a finding that has been found in this study under the DO model. The strong dislike of the EO and consequently the increasing popularity of the DO are due to teachers’ trust in the institution that the scrutiny and judgment that some teachers experience will not be directed toward their evaluation and possible de-recruitment from the institution. This result is in line with studies that adopt the developmental model since judgment cannot be avoided sometimes. The model can be employed when prizes for teaching are announced or promotions are given in a higher education context (Drew et al., 2016).

Both the evaluative and the developmental models are inherently judgmental even though they serve different purposes. The attested power differential between the observer and the observed is noted in Gosling (2002). The findings showed that some language instructors who
preferred the developmental model are happier to be evaluated when the outcome of the evaluation is geared towards their professional growth. In addition, judgment is not welcomed when it is for evaluative purposes. This shows that language instructors in Saudi universities do not mind being evaluated or judged but mind very much how they are being evaluated and whether the purpose of any evaluation is in line with their professional agenda.

**Suggestions and Implications for Policy**

POT is helpful for developing teaching practices; however, institutional authorities need to rethink the implementation of EO. There should be a place for teaching innovation. Institutions need to become flexible about accepting and including new practices and not treating teaching as a fixed or prescribed process (it is not a medical procedure. Teaching is affected by various factors (context, learners, policies, etc). Institutions need to play down their power and adapt the double-learning loops (Argyris, 1976). This means that teaching practices should inform educational policy and the challenge to change the institutions towards this move.

One framework for classroom observation could involve a multi-staged purposeful activity in language institutes. We propose that any teaching observation framework should include three stages: the first stage should be informative; the second stage should be interventionist; and the third should be evaluative. The informative stage should involve getting to know the teacher, including their teaching aspirations, their goals and their ideals. The interventionist stage should involve linking what is observable on the ground with teachers’ aspirations, goals and ideals and giving advice on how to achieve them if they are not realized. The third stage then opens a door for evaluation of teachers’ performance.

Any institutional observation cycle should start with several COs where teachers can reflect on teaching practices and align these practices with institutional policies. This allows an assessment to be made of whether new implemented practices meet the institutions’ policies and allows for changes in practice or policy to be suggested. Shared discussions can be translated into goals used to identify criteria for informing evaluative checklists. Another value of the constant CO is preparing teachers for the EO and thus reducing the levels of stress that are experienced by teachers during EO.

The most popular alignment to date in Saudi higher education relates to learning outcomes and assessment. However, it is missing from many institutional efforts to focus on another equally important alignment between learning outcomes and teaching activities, that aims to achieve those outcomes. As Biggs (2014) has pointed out teaching should be “designed to engage students in learning activities that optimize their chances of achieving those outcomes, and assessment tasks are designed to enable clear judgments as to how well those outcomes have been attained” (pp. 5-6). Evidence in this study indicates that institutions need to support teachers with teaching to better the experiences of students, in line with Biggs (2014) who has stressed that policies and procedures need to be supportive. The institutions need to support the observer and the observee by providing a clear alignment between learning outcomes and teaching activities to make the whole POT process more systematic and productive in a way which would allow the institution to measure the POT experience at the end of the academic year. In other words, improvements in the teaching process should be reflected in students’ cognitive and linguistic abilities and skills. If these improvements are achieved then teachers will recognize the importance of POT and understand that POT is not just a matter of institutional procedure, rather, it is a tool to improve both teachers as professionals and productions. Higher education institutes will be able to transition from quality
assurance (alignment between LO and assessment) to quality enhancement (alignment between LO and teaching) if such improvements are put in place. A notable example is the UTAS assessment policy created by the Tasmanian Institute for Learning and Teaching mentioned by Biggs (2014) as one of the pioneering institutions supporting teaching.

- Purpose: using this as a guidance for both
- Observer and observee justified feedback based on the alignment

Conclusion

This study aims to understand, in depth, observation experiences as practiced at many language institutes in Saudi universities. As language instructors are one of the most important pillars in the process, data were gathered from them through interviews. The qualitative analysis indicated that most language instructors had experienced the evaluative model of observation rather than any other model, including the collaborative or the developmental models. Most teachers agreed with the shortcomings normally associated with the evaluative type of observation and they seemed to be eager to switch to models that are centered around personal and professional growth. One of the most prominent implications of this study is that frameworks for POT models need to be accompanied by a willingness in institutes to welcome other models of observation and initiate forward-thinking and pro-growth policies, procedures and guidelines that support language instructors and set clear expectations of the desired outcomes of POT.

About the authors

Dr. Najla Alghamdi, is an assistant professor of sociolinguistics at Taif university at the Department of Foreign Languages. Najla is interested in dialect variation and change, and she published number of articles about Saudi dialects. She is intersected in language teaching as well. Najla is a member in a linguistic research group at the University of Essex, UK, and a member of the scientific committee at Forum for Arabic Linguistics, UK. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3451-0167

Dr. Haifa Al-Nofaie, is an associate professor at the Department of Foreign Languages at Taif University, Saudi Arabia. She holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Newcastle University, UK Her research interests include bilingualism, CALL and language pedagogies. She was a series cultural advisor to ELT Oxford University Press between 2014 and 2015. She has published some research studies in international journals. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8984-8777

Dr. Reem Alkhammash, is an associate professor of linguistics at Taif University. She also the Director of the English Language Centre. She obtained her Ph.D. from Queen Mary University of London in Linguistics. Her work published in reputable journals such as Discourse & Communication, Journal of Psycholinguistic Research, Scientific Studies in Reading and other international peer-reviewed journals. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1663-5185

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The Inclusion of Polysemes in Non-native English Textbooks: A Corpus-based Study

Hicham Lahlou
English Language Studies, School of Humanities,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
Corresponding Author: hlahlou2003@hotmail.com

Hajar Abdul Rahim
English Language Studies, School of Humanities,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

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Abstract
Despite the large number of studies conducted on polysemy, they mostly compare the different methods and techniques to learn a language and establish the extent to which particular sense relations facilitate the learning of second language vocabulary. To our best knowledge, no research has been conducted to determine whether or not polysemy is emphasized in non-native English textbooks. The objective of the present research was to determine the degree to which polysemy is incorporated in English textbooks. Thus, the research question guiding the current study is: To what extent is polysemy incorporated in non-native English textbooks? The study is a corpus-based research that used a data set of 500 words, i.e., 250 words from each of the two books, utilizing the Sketch Engine word list tool and concordance. The polysemy of the resulting words in the concordance lines generated was semantically annotated manually using WordNet and English dictionaries. The results indicated that polysemy is barely stressed in the textbooks under investigation. The study’s results have substantial implications for polysemy in particular and second or foreign language teaching in general.

Keywords: Corpora, English textbooks, polysemy, second language, vocabulary

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The Inclusion of Polysemes in Non-native English Textbooks

Lahlou & Hajar

1. Introduction

To grasp information, concepts, and the meanings of words, an individual needs encyclopedic knowledge. It will be easier to understand a subject with prior knowledge. Also, if they only know one meaning of a word, it will be hard to understand what it means when used differently. According to Cienki (2007), bodily, social, and cultural experiences shape people’s background knowledge. Language represents reality in the way that individuals interpret it. Words are not containers of meaning; they provide access to encyclopedic knowledge or a cognitive network (Langacker, 1987; Kecskes, 2013).

When someone hears or reads a word, their prior knowledge is triggered, which implies that the word prompts them to consider all the concepts and thoughts that go with it. A person learning a second language (L2) should pay attention to the word associations made by a native speaker. These associations, as well as the non-language variables to which they are connected, e.g., cognitive structure, meaning, and cultural experience, to use Szalay and Windle’s (1968) examples, may differ from the word associations in his or her native language.

The variation between a learner’s first language and English in terms of word polysemous meanings adds to the difficulties faced by English language learners in learning polysemous meanings. For example, Spanish speakers who learn the English word fingers use it to refer to toes as well because the Spanish term dedos is inclusive of both fingers and toes (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). The textbooks for teaching English to non-native speakers should likewise include ideas from the students’ cultures and emphasize polysemy. This guarantees that, given their past knowledge, they comprehend things accurately and know a word’s multiple meanings to avoid misusing a sense in a different context (Nation, 2013).

Despite the different methods and approaches suggested and applied, the research on English language vocabulary learning indicates that acquiring vocabulary continues to be a significant barrier for non-native English students. Developing vocabulary involves various aspects, such as semantics, phonology, morphology, and syntax (Kalyuga & Kalyuga, 2008; Christison & Murray, 2014). Students who just memorize lists of individual words miss out on a variety of opportunities to learn the language, including the chance to get familiar with the figurative and metonymic meanings of words as well as the linguistic and cultural particularities of the target language. Learners who appreciate the function of conceptual metaphor and conceptual metonymy are better equipped to comprehend and memorize polysemous words, as well as idioms, with ease (Beréndi, Csábi and Kövecses, 2008; Pérez, 2017). Moreover, recognizing the link between source and target domains via metaphorical and metonymic mappings will make abstract concepts more accessible to students (Lahlou & Hajar, 2013; Lahlou, 2021; 2023).

It is more accessible to learn words with more than one meaning than to learn each term separately. English language students should know how words’ different meanings relate to each other and how to use figurative words and phrases. Synonymy, polysemy, and homonymy are the sense relations that have been the subject of several studies on vocabulary. Even though these research contributions are valuable, they mostly argue over how to categorize the distinctions between multiple meanings (Raukko, 2003, as cited in Clemmons, 2008), compare the different methods and techniques to learn a language and determine how well certain sense relationships help people learn L2 vocabulary. To what extent polysemy is employed in English textbooks for non-native speakers has yet to be studied.
The prevalence of polysemy in the English language inspired the present study. Numerous studies, such as Durkin and Manning (1989) and Abou-Khalil et al. (2019), have shown that over forty percent of English words are used with more than one meaning. These polysemous words are significant because they are in the top 3000 most often-used words in the English language (Makni, 2013; Ferrer-i-Cancho, 2014). It is also an essential part of vocabulary since it helps students of a second or foreign language deduce the meaning of words when they learn that they have several meanings. So, studies of vocabulary should account for polysemy. And it is vital to conduct a frequency study of both individual words and the many senses in which they are used (Schmitt, 2010). The present study aims to determine the degree to which polysemy is used in the chosen English textbooks.

2. Literature Review

Much research on high-frequency words in vocabulary instruction has been conducted. By guaranteeing that the terms learned are encountered often, frequency information provides a realistic foundation for maximizing students’ vocabulary learning efforts (Nation & Waring, 1997). More beneficial than less frequent words, high-frequency words demand more attention in a language classroom since students encounter them more often and are more likely to memorize them (Vilkaitė-Lozdienė & Schmitt, 2020). However, occurrence range is only one critical factor among others when building a frequency list.

A vocabulary frequency list that considers various texts is vital for curriculum development and determining learning goals (Nation & Waring, 1997). However, the variety of settings in which the words are encountered is even more important than their frequency. According to this viewpoint, terms used in a broad range of settings are reacted to more effectively than those used in a narrow range of settings (Brysbaert, Mandera, & Keuleers, 2018). According to Johns, Dye, and Jones (2016), when people encounter novel words in various discourse contexts, they recognize them more quickly and accurately than when the terms are provided in the same circumstance again. Other essential elements of a vocabulary frequency list include idioms and information diversity, which have differences in meaning (Nation & Waring, 1997). In building a frequency list, polysemy is essential, among others. Some words’ frequency of occurrence and likelihood of having multiple meanings are linked. Zipf proposed that frequency and polysemy were related because of the economy principle (Zipf, 1949, as cited in Clemmons, 2008).

Unlike a monoseme, a polyseme has numerous meanings. And there is a systematic relationship between these meanings (Lakoff, 2008; Csábi, 2004; Dölling, 2018). For example, the term warm may refer to “temperature” and “clothes that make one feel warm” (Lakoff, 2008). In contrast, homonyms are words whose meanings are not systematically connected. To use Lakoff’s (2008) example, the term bank contains meanings that are not systematically connected, such as “place where one deposits money” and “river’s edge.” In cognitive linguistics, polysemy is a ‘radial category,’ with linked senses ranging from prototypical to peripheral. Polysemous expressions demand a radially organized category, with a central member and links specified by image-schema transformations and metaphors and with the noncentral senses being motivated by less central examples, image-schema transformations, and metaphorical models (Lakoff, 2008).

Previous research has proven polysemy to be a significant barrier to text comprehension. Like in many other languages, polysemy is prevalent in the English language. Nonetheless, the complicated link between form and meaning in English makes learning and utilizing vocabulary challenging (e.g., Schmitt, 2010; Mitsugi, 2017). Evidence from various studies suggests that
youngsters can better predict the meanings of words that are not polysemous (Saemen, 1970; Nation, 2013). Students may develop their understanding of these words autonomously. In contrast, polysemes are more difficult to predict based on context.

English language learners may acquire one sense of a polysemous word and believe it has only one meaning, especially in the early phases of language learning. This situation is likely to occur since many of the most prevalent terms in English are polysemous (Clemmons, 2008; Lahlou, 2022). Learners may comprehend the meaning based on the familiar form, yet the sense might be irrelevant in other contexts (Saemen, 1970; Nation, 2013). However, this does not mean that the multiple meanings and figurative language should be ignored in English instruction and teaching materials. According to Amaya-Chávez (2010), literal meanings are generally taught in the early levels, whereas figurative meanings are only addressed in more advanced courses. This trend may also be found in several English teaching resources. However, figurative language should be present from the beginning of learning English, but selecting semantic extensions and content sequencing is more crucial (Piquer-Piriz, 2011). Thus, it is projected that polysemy will be progressively emphasized in vocabulary instruction and English textbooks as learners progress through the grades. Furthermore, teachers’ understanding and application of semantic extension in teaching vocabulary are crucial for boosting students’ comprehension and retention of word meanings (Boers, 2008).

3. Methodology

Textbooks are crucial, even if they are not the sole resource instructors utilize to deliver teaching and help students achieve the intended learning outcomes, particularly in settings with limited resources, such as rural areas. They provide an alternative to the time and financial waste. It is possible that textbook graphics are more effective than the explanations provided by teachers. Moreover, textbooks may provide materials that are difficult to take to class (González, 2006). They are also used to guarantee that schools, where English is taught as a second or foreign language, teach a standard form of English and that the quality of this English meets international norms. To this purpose, several European and non-European nations, including Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam, adopted the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), an international standard that aids in improving and measuring English language proficiency among learners (Don et al., 2015; Nguyen, 2015).

Because many countries use it worldwide, the CEFR has become a modern educational trend, particularly in language learning, teaching, and assessments. According to a 2007 survey, the CEFR, used globally to motivate curricular, teaching, and assessment innovation, has become the most influential publication in language education (Council of Europe, 2021). The authors, therefore, chose CEFR-aligned English textbooks as one of the most critical instruments and sources of information for determining the extent of polysemy incorporation in English textbooks. The current study looks into two English textbooks used in non-English speaking secondary schools: **Close-up** for intermediate secondary students and **Full Blast Plus 4** for upper secondary students. National Geographic Learning and MM publications released these textbooks, respectively. The emphasis of Healan and Gormley’s (2015) **Close-Up**, which consists of 12 units, is intermediate English. Mitchell and Malkogianni’s (2018) **Full Blast Plus 4**, which consists of eight units, focuses on upper-intermediate English.

The study used data of 500 words, i.e., 250 words from **Close-up** and 250 words from **Full Blast Plus 4**. To gather data on polysemy, the authors employed the Sketch Engine word list tool.
to compile a list of the top 250 most commonly used terms in each of the subcorpora: *Close-up* and *Full Blast Plus 4*, uploaded onto *Sketch Engine*. The data was then filtered to only polysemous content words, excluding function words and homonyms. To determine the degree to which polysemy is included in the textbooks concerned, the authors searched the concordance lines for the polysemous terms identified one by one. The polysemy of the search words in the concordance lines generated was semantically annotated manually (Brown et al., 2005) using *WordNet* and English dictionaries, including etymological dictionaries, as a guide to the actual meanings of the resulting polysemes. As the current study focuses on polysemous words, dictionaries were used in conjunction with *WordNet* to help with identifying polysemous words because the latter helps find multiple senses, definitions, examples, and so on (Brown et al., 2005); however, it does not provide information about the difference between polysemy and homonymy (Freihat et al., 2013).

4. Results and Discussion

To identify the degree to which polysemy was employed in the books under study, the top 250 most commonly used words in *Close-up* and the top 250 most frequently used words in *Full Blast Plus 4* were selected for analysis using the *Sketch Engine* Wordlist generation of the word frequency lists. After data filtration, the number of polysemous content words in the data sample discovered was 110 for *Close-up* and 103 for *Full Blast Plus 4*. The resulting lemmas were classified as verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. As outlined in Table 1, 75 polysemous words selected from each textbook under investigation were identical (see Table 1). This similarity was invaluable in establishing if *Close-up* and *Full Blast Plus 4* use the same or different meanings for these common words.

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Based on the concordance lines retrieved from the corpora, 39 of the 110 polysemes in *Close-up* were employed with a single sense despite having two to ten related senses. It was also discovered that 27 of the 110 polysemes were utilized with two meanings, although they have three to thirty-five related meanings (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Close-Up’s Word Meanings v WordNet’s Word Meanings

In comparison, 28 of the 103 polysemes in *Full Blast Plus 4* were used with a single meaning despite having related meanings ranging from two to eleven. Besides, 31 polysemes were used with two senses, though they have a range of three to twenty-eight related meanings (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Full Blast Plus 4’s Word Meanings v WordNet’s Word Meanings

To determine whether there is any gradual introduction of new or different meanings from *Close-up* and *Full Blast Plus 4*, the 75 common words in these textbooks were investigated. According to WordNet, 15 of the 75 common words in *Close-up* and *Full Blast Plus 4* were employed with just one sense, even though the real meanings of these words span anywhere from two to ten. Moreover, these words had the same basic literal sense in both textbooks. 29 of the common terms whose use ranges from two to eleven senses in both textbooks were used with the same number of senses and with the same meanings. The number and diversity of senses for 18 of
the 75 common words in these textbooks increased slightly in *Full Blast Plus 4*, except for the verb *to make*, which gained three more meanings. This shows minimal progress in the process of introducing new senses. However, the meanings of 13 of the common words in *Full Blast Plus 4* decreased. Some of these terms brought new senses or semantic projections, while others were either repeating the same senses and contexts or repeating the same senses with fewer semantic expansions.

**Figure 3. Meanings of Close-up and Full Blast Plus 4’s Common Words**

Overall, these results would seem to suggest a minimal emphasis on polysemy, mainly when the data consists of the top 250 words from each of the textbooks under investigation, which belong to different levels, that is, intermediate and upper-intermediate.

### 5. Conclusion

Polysemy, one of the significant components of vocabulary that, if not mastered, may be a considerable barrier to acquiring language and enhancing understanding, was the focus of the current research. The study aimed to determine the degree of polysemy in *Close-up* and *Full Blast Plus 4*. Both textbooks shared the majority of the polysemes identified. Despite the intermediate level, where concrete and literal meanings with some extended meanings were already introduced, and the gap between the intermediate and upper-intermediate levels, over a quarter of the polysemes in each of these two textbooks were used with only one meaning, and another quarter were used with only two meanings. Importantly, less than a quarter of the common polysemes had a minor rise in the number of senses and variety of meanings. According to these results, the selected English textbooks did not emphasize the multiple meanings of words.

These results are in line with prior research that found a lack of emphasis on polysemy and meaning extensions in English instruction in general and word lists used in teaching materials in particular (e.g., Nation & Waring, 1997; Clemmons, 2008; Piquer-Píriz, 2011). Thus, the current study’s results support Krashen’s (2004) criticism of teaching word lists that include the most commonly used words in the English language but provide only superficial senses of words and fail to address the multiple grammatical usages and meanings they may have (Krashen, 2004, as cited in Clemmons, 2008).

The results of the current study provide insightful new information on the status of polysemes’ employment in the English textbooks selected for this study. The study’s results have significant implications for polysemy in particular and second/foreign language education.
results about the degree to which polysemy is included in these textbooks alert educators to the reality of polysemes in English textbooks for non-native students. It is thus recommended that teachers become less reliant on non-native English textbooks in the long run and employ diverse instructional resources and improvised materials, which some teachers already do, to be able to teach their students words’ multiple senses, taking into account factors like their learners’ age and grade, communicative needs and developing knowledge of the world need (Piquer-Píriz, 2011). They should also utilize diverse approaches to teaching polysemes, especially the cognitive linguistics-oriented approaches, gradually making them aware of the cognitive mechanisms that motivate semantic extension. This study employed a sample of the top 250 most common words in each of the two English textbooks. Future studies on polysemy will need to sample more polysemes and other English textbooks to attain more exhaustive data.

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About the Authors
Hicham Lahlou (Ph.D.) is a Senior Lecturer at the English Language Studies Section, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia. His research interests include cognitive linguistics, semantics, morphology, and corpus linguistics.
http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2796-9877

Hajar Abdul Rahim (Ph.D.) is a professor of linguistics at the English Language Studies Section, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia. Her current research interests include TESL, Corpus Linguistics and Lexical Studies.
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6852-9766

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Strategy Use, Cultural Intelligence, and English Language Proficiency of Undergraduate Saudi Students

May A. Abumelha
Department of English Language, College of Language Sciences
King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Email: mabumelha@ksu.edu.sa

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Abstract

The study attempted to explore Saudi English learners’ second language proficiency and how it is possibly related to language learning strategies and cultural intelligence. Research questions addressed the variables of language proficiency, cultural intelligence, strategy use, gender, and educational school background. It is hoped that more insights into the interplay between these factors and successful language learning will benefit language learners, teachers, and policymakers. The study collected data from 180 Saudi first-year undergraduates majoring in English. The data was analyzed using inferential statistics to investigate the relationship among the study variables. The results revealed that the study participants scored a medium level in both language learning strategies and cultural intelligence. Metacognitive and cognitive strategies were the most frequently used, and affective strategies were the least frequently used. No significant differences were found in strategy use when related to English language proficiency, gender, or school background. However, a significant effect was observed between language level and cultural intelligence, specifically on metacognitive, and behavioral subsections. Another positive correlation was reported between strategy use and cultural intelligence, especially with the metacognitive subsections. Pedagogical implications are presented as the study argues for the benefits of direct instruction on cultural awareness and strategy use in language classrooms.

Keywords: Language learning strategies, strategy use, Cultural Intelligence, English language proficiency, Saudi students

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Introduction

Of the many factors affecting language learning, the role of learners’ individual characteristics has generated much interest among researchers. The interest lies in what Dörnyei and Skehan (2003) have termed “the correlation challenge” describing individual differences between language learners as “potential predictors of second language learning success” (p. 589). Among those individual factors, Language Learning Strategies (LLS) have been investigated extensively, with findings indicating their importance in enhancing language learning (Griffiths, 2004). Twenty years ago, LLS research received much critique and competition, yet Griffiths (2019) asserts that it is still “a fertile area of research and publication” (p. 610). Recent research worldwide is still investigating LLS with a broad range of factors that might interact and affect the language learning process (Alhaisony, 2017; Alrashidi, 2022; Bęcirović, Brdarević-Čeljo, & Polz, 2021; Bruen, 2020; Dahmash, 2023; Huang, 2018; Javid, Al-Kuwaiti, Uthman, Karbakhsh, & Safa, 2020; Lee & Heinz, 2016; Liyanage & Bartlett, 2012; Ma & Abdul Samat, 2022; Radwan, 2022; Sadeghi & Soleimani, 2016; Sahragard, Khajavi, & Abbasian, 2016; Taheri, Sadighi, Bagheri, & Bavali, 2019; Tai & Zhao, 2022; Tang & Tian, 2015; Tezcan & Deneme, 2016).

The theoretical underpinning of LLS incorporates cognitive and sociocultural views allowing the exploration of a wide range of related concepts (Griffiths, 2019). In particular, the idea of culture has been identified as closely associated with language and to the point that Oxford and Gkonou (2018) described the three factors as being “interwoven”, forming “a grand tapestry” (p. 403). Yet they note that there is an imbalance in language learning studies regarding the cultural factor. One of the well-developed L2 acquisition frameworks in this regard is Gardner’s (1985) social-educational model, which emphasizes the role of cultural beliefs of individual learners. Realizing the importance of social-cultural awareness and globalization, Earley and Ang (2003) developed the concept and an instrument to evaluate cultural intelligence (CQ) based on the theories of intelligence (Livermore, 2011; Sternberg, 1986). Thus, studies on LLS would benefit from further explorations of the cultural factor, more precisely, what has been defined as an individual’s cultural intelligence.

Much research has been conducted on LLS and language proficiency across cultures. Liu and Rao (2023) argued for a strong correlation between cultural practices and strategy use. However, less attention has been paid to the link between, cultural awareness, and language proficiency. An original study by Rachmawaty, Wello, Akil, and Dollah (2018) explored these variables among college students in Indonesia. Their results reported significance between using LLS and cultural intelligence, but not with language proficiency. They recommended further investigations into strategy use and cultural backgrounds.

Recent studies on LLS in the Saudi context have investigated strategy use, gender, and proficiency (Alrashidi, 2022; Alhaisoni, 2012; Alhaisony, 2017; Javid et al., 2013; Dahmash, 2023). Alnufaie (2022) observed a growing body of research on strategy instruction in the Saudi context, recommending more investigations into other variables that interact with language learning strategies. Many researchers also called for more studies into learners’
individual variables and cultural beliefs (Alhaisoni, 2013; Alsashidi, 2022). Yet to the best of my knowledge, no study has investigated the variables mentioned above in the Saudi context. Accordingly, examining English language proficiency, LLS, and cultural intelligence will shed light on an area that yet remains underexplored. Such knowledge would have pedagogical implications by identifying aspects that lead to successful language learning. The study aimed at uncovering the individual characteristics of the language learners of this study in relation to their success in language learning by answering the following research questions:

1. What are the levels of strategy use, cultural intelligence, and language proficiency of Saudi college-level students in this study?
2. What are the differences in strategy use and cultural intelligence related to gender or school educational backgrounds (public, private, or international schools)?
3. What is the relationship between English language proficiency, and the variables of cultural intelligence and strategy use?
4. Is there a correlation between the subcategories of the strategy inventory and the cultural intelligence scale?

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: First, the literature review provides the theoretical and empirical backgrounds of the different concepts involved. Then the methodology outlines the design of the study describing participants, procedure, instruments, and data analysis. This is followed by the presentation and discussion of the results noting their relevance and implications. The main aim and outcomes of this investigation are summarized in the conclusion.

**Literature Review**

**Language Learning Strategies**

Researchers initially explored LLS to identify characteristics that distinguish people who are good at language learning (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975). Studies named LLS as an important tool that could be used with other techniques to enhance learning in the language classroom (Griffiths, 2004). Oxford (1990) defined LLS as steps made by the learner to improve learning's ease, speed, effectiveness, and adaptability. Cohen (2011) added that those actions are “consciously selected by learners, to assist them in learning and using language in general, and in the completion of specific language tasks.” (p. 682).

A widely used division of language learning strategies is the one proposed by Oxford (1990), which identified six strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, memory, compensation, affective and social. Oxford (2003) explained that cognitive and memory strategies relate to cognitive processes like identifying, grouping, storing, and retrieving, while compensation strategies involve guessing and compensating for missing knowledge to sustain communication. Metacognitive strategies deal with how learners plan, identify and organize their learning process. Finally, effective strategies are those actions that tap into the person’s feelings, anxiety, and self-assurance, while social strategies are those related to how a learner seeks verification, help, or conversations...
with others. This classification divides strategies according to function, while there are other categorizations based on strategy use or skill area (Cohen, 2011).

In the past decade, investigations into LLS continued globally with different groups of language learners across different cultures. Most studies used Oxford’s (1990) Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL) which is described by Ellis (1994) as the most comprehensive instrument in this line of research. LLS was explored in China (Liu & Rao, 2023; Ma & Abdul Samat, 2022; Tang & Tian, 2015; Zou & Supinda, 2022), Hong Kong (Tai & Zhao, 2022), Taiwan (Huang, 2018), Malaysia (Muniandy & Shuib, 2016), Iran (Karbachsh & Safa, 2020; Sadeghi & Soleimani, 2016; Taheri et al., 2019), and Turkey (Tezcan & Deneme, 2016). The scope of those studies included different contextual and individual factors, but a recurring finding is a positive correlation between language proficiency and strategy use.

The possible link between strategies and language proficiency was investigated in different pedagogical contexts. For example, Zou and Supinda (2022) related strategy use and development in language proficiency among Chinese students in Thailand in a cross-cultural educational context, and Ma and Abdul Samat (2022) with Chinese undergraduate students in flipped English classrooms. Tai and Zhao (2022) focused on factors that predict success in university-level English language proficiency by comparing secondary school background, motivation, and language learning strategies. Their results showed that previous school instruction was not relevant and that motivation and the use of LLS were linked to increased language proficiency. Huang (2018) used a grounded theory approach to investigate strategy use in a learning context. The findings suggest varied strategies between individuals in response to different contexts. Moreover, Tezcan and Deneme (2016) investigated LLS among 8th-grade school EFL learners in Turkey. Their findings indicated that females use strategies more widely, but unlike other studies, there was no correlation between strategy use and achievement.

Other studies focused on factors related to the learners themselves, such as learners’ beliefs (Tang & Tian, 2015), perceptual styles (Muniandy & Shuib, 2016), goal orientation and self-efficacy (Karbachsh & Safa, 2020), characteristics of shyness and anxiety (Sadeghi & Soleimani, 2016), and cognitive and emotional intelligence (Taheri et al., 2019). Positive correlations were established between most factors investigated, language achievement, and LLS.

Many studies were also conducted on LLS in the Arab world (Al-Buainain, 2010; Khalil, 2005; Radwan, 2022; Riazi, 2007). Earlier studies such as Khalil (2005), Riazi (2007), and Al-Buainain (2010) looked at the strategies used by L1 Arabic students in EFL settings. Khalil’s (2005) study showed a correlation between strategy use, language proficiency, and gender among Palestinian students, while Riazi (2007) and Al-Buainain (2010) found no significant correlation with students from Qatar. Recently, Radwan (2022) looked at strategy use and learners’ beliefs and uncovered a positive correlation between motivation, expectations, and language aptitude with most subcategories of strategies similar to Tang and Tian’s (2015) study. This study recommended incorporating strategy instruction for a more successful language learning experience.
Many researchers investigated LLS in the Saudi context. Javid et al. (2013) explored the strategy use and proficiency of 240 undergraduate students majoring in English at Taif University, and their results revealed a positive correlation. Alhaisoni (2012) also reported positive correlations among 701 undergraduate students at Hail University but recorded overall low to medium strategy use. There was no significant effect of the gender variable on the overall results except for the slightly more frequent use of social strategies. On the other hand, Alhaisony’s (2017) study on 134 students of Aljouf University showed a significant difference in favor of females. Overall strategy use was low to medium, with no correlation with the duration of language studies. More recently, Dahmash (2023) examined the strategy use of 145 female students in three universities and reported medium to high use with no correlation with language level. She recommended that further research explore other factors “such as age, gender, nationality, belief, learning style, linguistic proficiency, motivation, culture, curriculum design, and educational system.” (p.38). All in all, most studies in the Saudi context established positive correlations and recommended further investigations of strategy use by looking at more variables and factors, which is the aim of this current study.

Language learning, culture, and intelligence

Boulding (2000) defines culture as attributes that a group of people shares regarding history, attitudes, practices, etc. Culture could also refer to the people who share those attributes in a specific place or without boundaries due to migration and globalization (Oxford & Gkonou, 2018). Early and Ang (2003) define cultural intelligence CQ as “a person’s capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts” (p.58). This type of intelligence shares the main characteristics of other types of intelligence with a focus on the skills that make people more effective in globalized, culturally diverse contexts (Livermore, 2011).

Ang, Van Dyne, and Koh (2006) created the cultural intelligence scale (CQS) to understand why some people perform better in multicultural environments. The scale subsections include a) Metacognitive CQ, which involves higher-order mental processes of understanding and control; b) Cognitive CQ, which reflects acquired knowledge of practices and systems within different cultures; c) Motivational CQ, which means the ability to function and channel energy and attention to cross-cultural situations, and finally d) Behavioral CQ, which reflects the ability to perform appropriately in cross-cultural interactions. CQS was investigated in different disciplines, including cross-cultural applied linguistics, as it offered a valid measure to assess an individual’s cultural intelligence (Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2012).

Gardner’s (1985) social-educational model incorporates social and cultural variables with language acquisition. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) argued that social integrativeness with other groups plays a significant role in second language learning. They called for the refinement of measurements to look at how these variables interact with proficiency. Researchers recommended developing cultural awareness in language learning classrooms (Genc & Bada, 2005; Scarino, 2009; Thanasoulas 2001). Scarino (2009) and related this to globalization and global citizenship,
which has affected all aspects of life. Ismailov (2021) asserted that improving the intra-cultural awareness of Japanese undergraduate students enhanced their intercultural communication and their engagement in the learning process. Nguyen (2017) recommended using instruments to collect data and track language learners’ cultural perceptions. Alyeksyeyeva, Chaiuk, Kovalchuk, and Galitska (2022) believe that advanced L2 learners would benefit from direct instruction to improve their intercultural awareness of the second language culture. They examined Ukrainianmaster’s students’ interpretation of L2 English texts and observed that the lack of cultural awareness increased miscomprehension and slowed down development in the second language.

However, in the literature, there are a few studies that explored cultural intelligence (Ang et al., 2006) among language learners. One of the few studies was conducted by WujiabudulaandKaratepe (2020) who investigated Turkish ELT teachers’ and students’ cultural intelligence CQ. They stated that there was a significant link between language proficiency and metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral subsections, but not with cognitive intelligence. Another study in Turkey was Karadag’s (2020) study examining 86 university students, and findings revealed that although participants’ cultural intelligence was at a medium level, a significant positive correlation with language proficiency was found. Contrary to Karadag’s (2020) study, Rachmawatyet al. (2018) found no relationship between English language proficiency and CQ among Indonesian language learners. However, their investigation confirmed a significant correlation between CQ and LLS, and they recommended further investigations to verify the results. Therefore, more research into these variables is needed to effectively evaluate the function of cultural intelligence in the language learning process.

Methodology

The study aims to identify the connection between strategy use, cultural intelligence, and English language proficiency of Saudi undergraduate students while considering the effect of two variables: gender and school background. To achieve the objectives, quantitative data was collected through three main instruments: a language proficiency test, the strategy inventory SILL (Oxford, 1990), and the cultural intelligence scale CQS (Ang et al., 2006). This research design is widely used in studies on LLS and its relationship to language achievement and other variables (e.g. Al-Buainain, 2010; Alhaisoni, 2012; Alhaisony, 2017; Bećirović et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2023; Javid et al., 2013; Muniandy&Shuib, 2016; Radwan, 2022; Riazi, 2007; Tai & Zhao, 2022; Tang & Tian, 2015) and also in studies of cultural awareness and intelligence and its relationship to language learning (Karadag, 2020; Rachmawatyet al., 2018).

Participants

The study comprised a convenience sample of 180 college-level Saudi students (111 females and 69 males) enrolled in the first year at the English department, at King Saud University KSU, after studying their school years at either public, private, or international schools.
Instruments and data collection

The instruments of the study were distributed in the academic year (2019-2020) among students willing to participate in their classrooms with help from their teachers. At first, more than 200 responses were collected, but incomplete ones were excluded. Participants first answered a question on the first page asking if they attended public, private, or international schools. Then they took a 40-item cloze test (from Slabakova, 2000) to measure language proficiency as it is a valid measure of overall proficiency (Jonz, 1990). The Arabic-translated 50-item version of the Strategy Inventory of Language Learning SILL (Oxford, 1990) was used. The strategies assessed by the SILL are cognitive, metacognitive, memory, compensation, affective, and social strategies. The final instrument was Ang et al.’s (2006) Cultural Intelligence Scale CQS which included 20 items looking at four subcategories of cultural intelligence: cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral. The assessment on both the SILL and CQS followed a 5-point Likert scale. Following Oxford’s (1990) division of mean scores, the results of the two questionnaires were divided into three levels: High (a mean of 3.5–5.0), Medium (a mean of 2.5–3.4), and Low (a mean of 1.0–2.4).

Data Analysis

The participants were categorized into three proficiency groups (elementary, intermediate, and advanced) based on the results of the proficiency test. Each subcategory of SILL and CQ was given a descriptive mean score. Then, an independent-sample t-test was conducted to identify the correlation between gender, CQ, and LLS. A one-way ANOVA examined the relationship between school background, CQ, and LLS. Another one-way ANOVA was carried out to find if there are significant relationships between CQ, LLS, and English language proficiency groups. Finally, correlations were performed on the subsections of SILL and CQS.

Research Procedure

The instruments were printed as hard copies and handed to participants who were willing to fill them out and participate in the study. The data was collected from the first year of study at the English department by visiting different classes in both the girls’ and the boys’ campuses over the course of two weeks. Participation was voluntary and no grades were involved.

Results

Table one shows the distribution of participants based on their gender and school background. The highest percentage of participants in this study came from government schools 57.78%, followed by private schools 38.33%, and finally, only 3.89% from international schools. Most of the participants are at an elementary English level proficiency 57.22%, while 28.89% are intermediate, and 13.89% are advanced.
Table 1: Distribution of participants’ gender, school background, and proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>School Background</th>
<th>Language Proficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>38.33</td>
<td>61.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequencies and percentages were calculated to show the levels of strategy use and cultural intelligence of Saudi college-level students in this study. The level of most of the students’ strategy use ranged quite evenly between medium (46%) to high (47%) with only 6.11% reporting low strategy use. The level of cultural intelligence ranged between medium (54%) to high (36.65%), but more students were at the medium level, as shown in Table two.

Table 2: SILL and CQS overall levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SILL level</th>
<th>CQ level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>4.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3.3939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.5726</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent-samples T-test was performed to answer RQ two on the difference in strategy use and cultural intelligence between students based on gender. There was no significant effect for gender on the SILL, t = 0.61, p = 0.54, as females (M =3.38, SD=0.57) and males (M = 3.42, SD=0.58) attained similar mean scores. Moreover, the T-test was conducted on all six subsections based on gender, and no significance was found. No significant difference was reported for gender on the CQS as well, t=-0.98, p= 0.3, although females scored a slightly lower average (M=3.19, SD=0.56) when compared to males (M=3.30, SD=0.77).

Regarding school backgrounds (coming from public, private, or international schools), results of the overall SILL showed almost equal averages from students coming from the government (M=3.40, SD= 0.58) and private (M=3.40, SD= 0.55) schools with a slightly lower average by students from international schools (M=3.21, SD=0.71). A different similarity was revealed by the results of the CQS with students from private schools (M=3.32, SD=0.72) and international schools (M=3.32, SD=0.93) with a slightly lower average from government schools (M=3.17, SD=0.58). A one-way ANOVA was performed to assess if this difference based on their school backgrounds is statistically significant. The ANOVA showed no significant difference for the SILL (F= 0.308, p= 0.73), and the CQS (F=1.02, p=0.36). Another finding with the breakdown of results based on school background was that students from government schools and private schools reported the same tendency in the use of strategies ordered as follows from most frequent to least: 1) Metacognitive, 2) Compensation, 3) Cognitive, 4) Social, 5) Memory, and 6) Affective.
This was also found with their results on CQS subsections in the following order: 1) Motivational, 2) Metacognitive, 3) Behavioral, and 4) Cognitive. The results of students from international schools differed with SILL in the order of use as the highest strategies were social, metacognitive strategies came third, and similarly, affective strategies were ranked lowest. Their results on the CQS were also different, with the metacognitive intelligence scoring the highest average rather than the motivational intelligence.

Table 3: ANOVA between SILL, CQS, and Proficiency Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Learning Strategies</th>
<th>Cultural Intelligence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>0.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>1.690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>1.322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>0.470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>4.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>0.098</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

To answer RQ three, a one-way ANOVA was conducted between SILL and CQS results in relation to language proficiency. The results in Table three above indicate that cultural intelligence results are significantly different across levels of language proficiency ($F=8.024$, $p=0.001$). The results on the CQS subcategories showed a significant relationship between language proficiency and the two intelligence subsections: metacognitive ($F=16.249$, $p=0.001$) and behavioral ($F=5.035$, $p=0.007$).

Table four below shows that the mean score of metacognitive intelligence increased with language proficiency, starting with (M=3.09, SD=0.81) for the elementary group, (M=3.58, SD=0.88) for the intermediate group, reaching (M=4.04, SD=0.68) with the advanced group. Mean scores of behavioral intelligence also increased with language proficiency from elementary (M=2.96, SD=0.79), to intermediate (M=3.28, SD=0.92), and advanced (M=3.47, SD=0.88). The results indicated that the three proficiency groups’ mean scores on the CQS were indeed linked to proficiency, with the advanced group scoring the highest total (M=3.59, SD=0.45), followed by the intermediate group (M=3.35, SD=0.73), then the elementary group (M=3.09, SD=0.61). The results of the advanced and intermediate groups were similar in the order of CQS subsections from highest to lowest: 1) Metacognitive, 2) Motivational, 3) Behavioral, then 4) Cognitive. The order of subsections with the elementary group was different, with motivational intelligence being the highest ranking and cognitive and behavioral the lowest.
Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of CQS Based on Proficiency Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intelligence</th>
<th>Advanced Group</th>
<th>Intermediate Group</th>
<th>Elementary Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, the ANOVA in Table three above shows that total LLS results were not significantly different across levels of language proficiency ($F= 0.499$, $p=0.608$). The only significance was between affective strategies and language proficiency ($F= 4.580$, $p=0.012$). The results were further analyzed to show the participants’ use of LLS in the six subcategories in relation to their language proficiency. Table five below shows that the three proficiency groups’ mean scores on overall strategy use were at similar levels: elementary (M= 3.37, SD= 0.56), Intermediate (M=3.46, SD=0.62), and advanced (M=3.35, SD=0.52). The subsection of affective strategies with the advanced learners received the lowest mean score of all other subcategories among all groups (M=2.58, SD=0.84). The mean score of the intermediate group was higher (M=3.05, SD=0.76), and the elementary group was the highest (M=3.11, SD=0.78). This means that participants of this study used affective strategies less frequently with the progress of their language proficiency. As to the order of frequency in strategy use, results showed that cognitive strategies were at the top, followed by metacognitive strategies for the advanced group. The intermediate and elementary groups were different, with metacognitive strategies first, then compensation strategies.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of SILL Based on Proficiency Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Advanced Group</th>
<th>Intermediate Group</th>
<th>Elementary Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pearson correlations were conducted between the six subsections of SILL and the four subsections of CQS (Table 6), to answer the final research question. The results confirmed a significant positive correlation between all subsections of SILL and subsections of CQS except for affective strategies. Affective strategies had a positive but insignificant correlation with metacognitive \( (p=0.085) \) and motivational intelligences \( (p=0.065) \).

Table 6: Correlation between SILL and CQ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SILL</th>
<th>Metacognitive</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Motivational</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.243</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>0.390</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.345</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>0.399</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.326</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>0.306</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.205</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>0.277</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.395</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.330</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

The results showed that the use of LLS (M=3.3) and the level of CQ (M= 3.2) among the Saudi college-level students of this study were at a similar average level of medium. The language proficiency of most of the participants ranged between elementary (57.22%) and intermediate (28.98%) with a small percentage of advanced-level students (13.89%). The independent-sample T-test revealed that overall strategy use and cultural intelligence scores were not significantly different between males and females nor between students from different school backgrounds. Students from public and private schools were similar in their preference for strategies and the order of cultural intelligence scores while students from international schools reported different results. A significant result was established between language proficiency and the two cultural intelligence subsections: metacognitive and behavioral. As to language learning strategies, the only significance was indicated in the low use of affective strategies among students with advanced language proficiency levels. Finally, the results showed a significant positive correlation between all subsections of the two instruments SILL and CQS except for effective strategies.
These results are in line with many other studies on LLS (Alhaisoni, 2012; Alhaisony, 2017; Dahmash, 2023; Ma & Abdul Samat, 2022; Zou & Supinda, 2022) and CQS (Karadag, 2020; Rachmawaty et al., 2018). This could be because most participants were at the elementary level (57%). Contrary to many previous studies, this study found no effect of gender or school background on strategy use or the results of the CQS. The decreasing effect of school background on the development of English language proficiency at the university level was similar to the findings of Tai and Zhao (2022) on students in Hong Kong. It is also very promising given the fact that the Saudi government schools were under improvement in the past two decades to catch up with private and international schools and earlier studies such as Aburizaizah et al. (2016) noted that graduates at that time did not reflect that because the improvements haven’t been fully implemented.

The significant relationship between language proficiency and cultural intelligence confirms the findings of Karadag (2020) linking cultural intelligence to language proficiency, and more specifically, the findings of Wujiabudula and Karatepe (2020), and Rachmawaty et al. (2018) specifying the significance of metacognitive, behavioral, and motivational intelligences. In addition, the participants’ descriptive results whether grouped according to proficiency or school background showed that metacognitive and motivational intelligences are the most dominant of the four subsections of cultural intelligence. The findings also support Rachmawaty et al.’s (2018) observation that cultural intelligence or awareness could play a role in determining strategy type and rate of occurrence. Rachmawaty et al. (2018) further explain that metacognitive intelligence is crucial because it induces critical thinking when differences in culture arise, allowing learners to evaluate their understanding. This process is believed to raise cultural awareness when learning a foreign language and could help in the choice and frequency of LLS. On the other hand, motivational intelligence is connected to learners' beliefs about their abilities leading them to use specific strategies. As to behavioural intelligence, it is defined as the changes in linguistic or non-linguistic behavior when communicating with other cultures through travel and exposure (Karadag, 2020; Keung, 2011). Exposure could also occur through social media, especially by younger generations of Saudi EFL learners who were described by Haque and Al Salem (2019) as being highly engaged with social media with positive attitudes and beliefs.

Unlike the findings of Javid et al. (2013) and Alhaisoni (2012), English language proficiency was not related to strategy use, which is consistent with more recent findings of Alhaisony (2017). This might be caused by the discrepancy in the number of students in each proficiency group. On the other hand, this study supports Oxford’s (1990) claim that the use of types of LLS is influenced by culture. The findings indicate that metacognitive and cognitive strategies were ranked as being the highest used strategies linked to proficiency. This finding agrees with Tai & Zhao’s (2022) results indicating that the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies predicted higher success in English learning among university students in Hong Kong. Conversely, studies on other cultures named other types as being the most used, such as social strategies in China (Ma & Abdul Samat, 2022), compensation strategies in Thailand (Zou &
Supinda, 2022), and affective strategies in Turkey (Tezcan & Deneme, 2016). Additionally, the results are consistent with other studies on the Saudi context, noting that metacognitive and cognitive strategies had the highest frequency while affective strategies had the lowest frequency among Saudi language learners (Alhaisoni, 2012; Alhaisony, 2017; Dahmash, 2023; Javidet al., 2013). The frequent use of metacognitive strategies could be explained by the learning environment, which is very demanding and intensive since it is linked to professional advancement (Al-Buainain, 2010, Dahmash, 2023). Previous studies suggested that affective strategies were the least used, and this was attributed to students’ anxiousness, fear of making mistakes, and refusal to reflect on their feelings (Alhaisony, 2017; Bećiropić et al., 2021; Dahmash, 2023; Javidet al., 2013). This study also showed a significant decrease in the use of effective strategies as participants advanced in their proficiency, which might mean that they needed them less as they became more proficient in the second language. Bećiropić et al. (2021) offered a similar explanation of affective strategies noting that Bosnian high school students of their study have spent years studying English formally in schools and “are now at higher stages of language learning and have made considerable progress towards L2 proficiency and thus do not need these strategies as much as they needed them in their initial stages.” (p.103).

All in all, most previous research on language learners investigated LLS and cultural awareness separately. Following the recommendations of a few recent studies, this investigation brought together those concepts to identify connections in relation to success in language learning. The results revealed that male and female students from all school backgrounds with higher cultural intelligence scores were more advanced in language proficiency. Also, most students had medium to high averages on LLS which means that those strategies are adopted by language learners at all levels. The crucial finding was the significant positive correlation between LLS and cultural intelligence. Accordingly, language learning institutions and teachers would benefit from including tasks and activities to raise students’ cultural awareness and increase their cultural intelligence. Implementing such practices along with direct strategy instruction carries the potential to improve the language learning process.

Conclusion

The study aimed at looking into the relationship between Saudi students’ English language proficiency, their use of language learning strategies, and their level of cultural intelligence. Significant results found between cultural intelligence and language proficiency confirm the importance of investigating the relationship between cultural factors and language learning as set forth by the aims of this study. Therefore, it is recommended to raise cultural awareness in language classrooms in Saudi Arabia. Further studies are needed to verify the possible link between LLS and language proficiency to overcome the limitations of this study by increasing the number of participants with an even distribution in each proficiency group, or by conducting longitudinal studies that track the progress of language learning. There was also a positive correlation between the two instruments: the SILL and CQS and the metacognitive subsection was
the highest used in both. This indicates the importance of the metacognitive factor, which needs further investigation on ways to incorporate it in classroom instruction. Results of previous studies on LLS in the Saudi context and worldwide are consistent with this study’s findings in the order and frequency of types of strategies, with affective strategies being the least used. Hence, more refined strategy instruction based on research findings is needed to enhance the use of strategies and revise them based on students’ needs and preferences.

About the Author

Dr. May A. Abumelha is an Assistant professor in applied linguistics at the Department of English, College of Language Sciences, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia. She received her Ph.D. in applied linguistics from the University of Leeds, UK. She is the head of the Linguistics Research Lab LRL. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8830-1240

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Improving EFL Teaching in Chinese Universities: Perceptions of Teachers with Oversea Experience

Xiaoshu Xu  
School of Foreign Studies, Wenzhou University, Wenzhou, China

Yujie Su  
School of Foreign Studies, Wenzhou University, Wenzhou, China  
Corresponding Author: E-mail: susanwtf@wzu.edu.cn

Lu Xu  
School of Foreign Studies, Wenzhou University, Wenzhou, China

Yunfeng Zhang  
Centre for Portuguese Studies, Macau Polytechnic University, Macao

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Abstract
This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of English teachers regarding the adverse effects of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in China, as well as their proposals for improving EFL instruction in the country. By exploring the views of experienced English teachers, this study provides valuable insights into how English as a Foreign Language pedagogy can be improved in China and other countries. The main research question is about the adverse effects of teaching English as a Foreign Language in Chinese higher education and the ways to improve its instruction. A thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews was conducted on a sample of 20 English teachers who possessed substantial experience teaching in Chinese higher education institutions. The participants' teaching experience ranged from 3-20 years (SD = 5.3). The analysis involved the establishment of concordant codes and sub-codes, with the aid of two researchers and an external expert, to ensure the reliability and validity of the results. The findings showed that the teachers attributed English as a Foreign Language learners' English deficiencies to the English teaching curriculum, self-directed learning, and the education system. Finally, the teachers suggested that self-directed learning skills and self-regulation were crucial for effectively applying language in authentic contexts. These findings have implications beyond China and are expected to enhance English pedagogy in other English as a Foreign Language countries. Thus, this research may contribute to improving the effectiveness of English teaching in China and other countries by providing a deeper understanding of the challenges and potential solutions associated with English as a Foreign Language instruction.

Keywords: English as Foreign Language, higher education, oversea experience, side effects, teacher perception, thematic analysis

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Introduction

English, as the first global Lingua Franca, plays a crucial role in the era of informatization and globalization. The significance of EFL proficiency among Chinese university students has been widely recognized by researchers and policymakers (Zhang & Xu, 2019). In response, the Chinese government has invested heavily in EFL education in recent years to enhance the country's overall English proficiency. However, despite this investment, many Chinese university students still struggle with English, particularly weak in speaking and listening, due to the lack of a natural language environment in the EFL classroom (Gu, 2019). College English teaching and learning, including English education and reform in China, has become a hot topic in recent years (Wang et al., 2018; Yuan, 2022). This has led some scholars to question the effectiveness of current EFL teaching methods in Chinese higher education and to call for a re-evaluation of EFL pedagogy in light of current challenges (Li, 2018).

The digital era, with its increased opportunities for informatization and easy access to information via the Internet and multimedia, does not necessarily lead to authentic communication or enhanced EFL teaching and learning. Instead, it brings challenges. Recent research has focused on various side effects of EFL teaching, such as issues related to language proficiency, cultural identity, and teacher burnout (Chen, 2019; Derbyshire, 2018; Shehadeh & Coombe, 2019). In particular, several challenges or drawbacks of EFL teaching in China have been identified. A significant challenge is the lack of qualified EFL teachers, particularly in rural areas. This can result in lower-quality instruction and limited opportunities for students to practice their language skills, thereby exacerbating the challenge of improving English proficiency among Chinese university students.

Moreover, test-oriented teaching and learning approaches dominate EFL instruction in China, presenting a major challenge to the development of effective EFL pedagogy. EFL instruction is often geared towards preparing students to pass high-stakes English language proficiency tests, such as the College English Test (CET). The College English Curriculum (2022) aims to enhance the language competence of university students to meet their career and academic requirements by emphasizing the development of strategic and proactive learners through the use of diverse learning strategies. However, this focus on testing can lead to a narrow and superficial approach to language learning, characterized by a preoccupation with memorization and rote learning, at the expense of meaningful communication and interaction. This issue highlights the need for a re-evaluation of the role and purpose of testing in EFL instruction and a shift towards more communicative and interactive pedagogical approaches that prioritize the development of real-world language proficiency.

The existing research on the side effects of EFL teaching has predominantly examined traditional teaching methodologies employed in EFL during the period spanning from the 1980s to the 2000s (Fu, 1986; Rao, 2013). However, studies exploring side effects in secondary education have been limited (Hu, 2005), as have those conducted in higher education. The research has primarily employed methods such as classroom observation, conversation analysis, discourse analysis, or project intervention (Aubrey, 2021). There has been a dearth of qualitative studies, particularly those examining how EFL teachers with overseas experience comprehend professional EFL teaching in practice (Zhang & Watkins, 2007). As such, this research adopted a semi-structured interview approach to investigate English teachers' perceptions of EFL teaching in Chinese higher education.
Over the past decade, social acquisition has gained attention in the field of EFL teaching. According to Schilhab (2015), the social acquisition is an essential factor in the development of language skills in EFL education, alongside biological factors. From the perspective of social acquisition, this study aimed to investigate the perceptions of EFL teachers with overseas experience regarding the side effects of EFL teaching in China. The study aimed to uncover underlying conceptualizations towards EFL teaching, EFL self-learning, the education system, and language competence. The findings of this study can provide insights into the challenges and potential solutions for EFL teaching in China and other countries. To examine the adverse effects of EFL instruction in Chinese higher education and enhance the quality of English language teaching in China, this study conducted interviews with English teachers possessing overseas teaching experience to explore their perceptions. Two research questions were thus raised:

Question One: What are the side effects of EFL teaching in Chinese higher education?
Question Two: How to improve the effectiveness of EFL teaching in Chinese higher education?

A qualitative research design was carried out in which the data were analyzed through thematic analysis, which consists of a research approach that presents effective objectivity in the analysis of issues (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The paper commences with a thorough examination of the challenges associated with EFL teaching in China and globally. A comprehensive review of the literature on the effects and side effects of EFL teaching is presented before delving into the relevant theories applied to EFL teaching. The methodology employed in the study is then introduced and justified, taking into account ongoing debates surrounding the efficacy of EFL teaching in higher education, which in turn informed the semi-structured interview approach. This section also provides an introduction to the study participants and details the experimental process. Subsequently, an analysis of the empirical data obtained is presented. Finally, the paper explores the recommendations of the participating teachers on strategies to enhance EFL teaching in higher education.

Literature Review

Side Effects/Challenges of EFL Teaching in Higher Education

The challenges and drawbacks of EFL teaching are a matter of concern in many regions worldwide due to limited input quantity and quality (Krashen, 2009) as well as access to interaction (Gass & Mackey, 2006). Teacher proficiency varies, and some conventional grammar instruction is insufficient in imparting EFL learners with extensive and systematic knowledge (e.g., mastery of tense, common difficulties in generality, referentiality, specificity, and noun countability; formulation of verbal phrases in writing through a learner corpus) because it conceives grammar as a set of rules without integrating syntax with semantics or language use with cognitive development (Chan, 2022).

Meanwhile, EFL instruction has been found to potentially have a negative impact on students’ first language development, as several studies have shown that increased exposure to a second language may lead to language attrition in the first language (Slavkov, 2016). Additionally, the cultural and ideological aspects of EFL teaching pose a challenge. The global spread of English has been criticized for promoting cultural homogenization (Trninić, 2016) and EFL instruction can lead to the internalization of dominant cultural values and worldviews, potentially impacting learners’ sense of identity and relationships with others (Lou & Noels, 2018). Therefore, it is
essential to recognize the diverse values and benefits of language learning beyond just economic ones, to motivate collective action and promote sustainable development (Chan et al., 2016).

Several studies suggest that EFL teaching in China poses significant challenges and side effects, as students often struggle to use English effectively, despite the extensive investment of time and resources (Chen & Lu, 2021; Wang, 2018). For instance, Chen and Lu (2021) found that a majority of surveyed Chinese university students lacked confidence in their English proficiency and faced difficulties expressing themselves in English. Wang (2018) similarly observed that graduates often lacked the practical language skills necessary for the workplace. The Chinese education system’s emphasis on rote memorization and test-taking skills may devalue authentic communication and critical thinking in EFL learning, according to some scholars (Li, 2020). Moreover, research has indicated that students’ attitudes toward EFL learning can be negatively impacted by the high-stakes nature of English proficiency exams, leading to anxiety and a lack of motivation to learn (Liu & Hu, 2020).

Factors Impact the EFL Teaching and Learning Effectiveness in Higher Education

The challenges of EFL teaching in higher education are compounded by several factors that negatively affect its effectiveness. These include limited exposure to English outside of the classroom, a lack of interaction with native speakers, and a shortage of qualified EFL teachers (Yang & Gao, 2020). In addition, several internal factors have been identified that influence the effectiveness of EFL learning, such as self-regulated learning (Teng, 2022), learning motivation and interests (Lamb, Csizér, Henry & Ryan, 2019), and the development of Information Communications Technology (Cheung, Wang, & Kwok, 2023).

Self-regulated Learning


Learning Motivation and Interest

Intrinsic motivation and interest in language learning are important factors that impact the success of EFL learners, as they play a vital role in monitoring the learning process and adjusting SRL strategies (Gardner, 1985, 2006, 2010). Classroom learning motivation is influenced by the social context and group dynamics, with highly motivated students demonstrating superior academic performance due to longer attention spans, less distraction, and greater progress and satisfaction (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2008; Yanguas, 2011). Students who approach coursework with intrinsic goals and perceive the material as interesting and significant are more likely to utilize cognitive and metacognitive strategies in their EFL learning, particularly in learning to write in English (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia & McKeachie, 1993; Teng, 2022). Moreover, interest in tasks is a crucial factor that influences EFL learning and can serve as a key driver for strategic and effective learning. Interest is considered a dynamic state that emerges from an ongoing interaction among the learner, the content, and the environment.
EFL goals, activity characteristics, and context, within the motivational regulation construct (Sansone & Thoman, 2005).

**The Development of Information and Communication Technology**

Over the past decade, the digital communication era saw much development in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). EFL teaching and learning in higher education then change teaching and learning are enabled by VR, AR and AI chatbots. Learning flexibility enjoys more possibilities to be maximized through richer learning experiences.

Enhancing learning effectiveness, ICT creates and merges the content of EFL in a new way that promotes; the teaching plan and curriculum, the instructional means and assessment methods are to be adjusted in the long run. To be specific, in flipped classrooms, pre-lecture individual learning tasks could be well achieved through spherical video-based immersive virtual reality (SV-IVR). If EFL learners adopted an intensive theory application strategy, they would achieve higher academic results. Social presence framework (interpersonal, open and cohesive communication) facilitated learning especially in EFL listening tasks; and AI systems supported teacher-student interaction, fostering learner engagement online and improving examination scores and problem-solving competence (Cheung et al., 2023). When it comes to feedback, ICT provides some good quality technology-enhanced EFL feedback.

**Theories Applied in EFL Teaching**

EFL teaching in China has undergone five distinct periods, each of which has had a significant impact on EFL pedagogy (Rao, 2013). During the first and second periods, the Grammar-Translation Method and Intensive Reading were widely adopted, reflecting China's traditional language teaching methods. These methods prioritized the cultivation of reading and translation skills, treating English learning as a process of memorizing rules or facts to manipulate language morphology and syntax. The original goal was to learn English to read literature or to improve mental discipline and intellectual development (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In the third period, the Audio-Linguual Method was introduced with a focus on developing learners’ oral skills. However, this approach had limited success due to a lack of training and fear of losing face. In the fourth period, English teaching textbooks were criticized for their inauthentic content, especially for “slogans” and “quotations” that were irrelevant to the societies and cultures of English-speaking countries.

Following the period of reform and opening policy, the EFL emphasis shifted towards developing learners’ linguistic and communicative competence. Reformers such as Vietor and Sweet believed that natural learning occurs in meaningful contexts, from EFL listening to writing. Current research also supported the effectiveness of a “top-down” instructional approach rather than a “bottom-up” approach (Xu, 2022). EFL teaching now also considers learners' cultural backgrounds and mother tongues (Carter & Nunan, 2001).

EFL teaching approaches are influenced by three major theoretical views: the traditional structural view, which regards language as a system of structurally related elements for the coding of meaning; the functional view, which views language as a vehicle for the expression of functional meaning; and the interactional view, which sees language as a means of realizing interpersonal relations and social transactions between individuals (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Learning theories associated with EFL teaching methods may emphasize an exploration of psycholinguistic and cognitive processes involved in EFL and the conditions required to activate
the learning process. Thus, in the post-method era, interdisciplinary theories are becoming increasingly important for EFL teaching.

Social Acquisition
Language acquisition is an ongoing process that can be divided into two phases: the pre-competent and post-competent phases (Schilhab, 2015). Schilhab (2002, 2004) posited that both advanced cognitive abilities and social interactions are crucial to human language acquisition, with the former working bottom-up and the latter top-down. This view is supported by Collins (2010) and Hasse (2008, 2015), who emphasized the importance of social sensibility in absorbing social rules and improvising through social embedding. The “social turn” (Block, 2003) highlights the critical role of the social context in shaping and influencing learner cognition, shifting SLA or EFL research focus from the process of language learning to the language learning environment (Wang, Zhang, & Long, 2022), aspects of language learners (Shi, 2014; Wang, 2022), etc.

Language is considered a system for communication, and the interrelation between language and social cognition has been the subject of intense debate. Wang et al. (2022) suggested that it was worthwhile to explore how the virtual environment influences SLA processes, as learners' surrounding environment could influence their language acquisition. Moreover, Shi (2014) stressed the importance of learners' intercultural communicative competence, while Wang (2022) emphasized the value of learners' affective variables in the social network of classroom learning. Shi (2014) pointed out that integrating cultural communication content directly and systematically into foreign language syllabi and textbooks could promote the simultaneous development of foreign language skills and intercultural communicative competence.

Methods
A semi-structured interview was conducted in the study to address the adverse effects of teaching English as a Foreign Language in Chinese higher education and the ways to improve its instruction. One significant advantage of using semi-structured interviews is that it allows for a focused interview while still providing the researcher with the flexibility to delve into relevant topics that may arise during the interview process (Adeoye-Oluntade & Olenik, 2021). This can lead to a deeper understanding of EFL teaching in Chinese tertiary education being evaluated.

Participants
The research, undertaken by the committee of the School of Foreign Languages at Wenzhou University in China during the academic year of 2022-2023, has been subject to institutional ethical guidelines and protocols, which were approved before the commencement of the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants who voluntarily took part in the study, and their interview responses were kept anonymous.

The study employed snowball and criterion sampling methods to recruit 20 English teachers with a minimum of one year of overseas experience and over three years of EFL teaching experience in higher education in China. The participants' teaching experience ranged from two to 35 years, with an average of four years of overseas experience. The gender distribution was 60% male (n = 12) and 40% female (n = 8), while 13 participants held Ph.D. degrees, and the remaining seven held Master’s degrees (see Table 1 in Appendix A).
Research Instruments

In the present study, a semi-structured interview was utilized (see Appendix A), which consisted of a set of optional questions that could be asked depending on the flow of the conversation (Dearnley, 2005). The semi-structured interview questionnaire comprised seven questions, of which questions one, six, and seven were optional and contingent on the timing of the interviews.

After obtaining permission from the relevant educational authorities, teacher participants were interviewed using a semi-structured format. The researcher followed the guidelines of the interviews strictly. Interviews were conducted either in the teachers' rooms or online and lasted between 15 and 20 minutes. Each interview was recorded or transcribed directly, and each participant was assigned a pseudonym. The study's purpose was explained to the participants initially, and the required questionnaires were related directly to the teachers' opinions on teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in higher education in China.

Data Analysis

The study utilized thematic analysis (McKillop, McCrindle, Dimitropoulos, & Kovacs, 2017) to analyze the interviews. Inductive data analysis was performed to gain new insights into reality (Armborst, 2017). To scrutinize the open-ended questionnaire, content analysis methodology as outlined by Elo and Kyngäs (2008) was followed. The researchers conducted an iterative analysis of the data to identify new themes and then carried out unstructured categorization and open coding procedures (refer to Table two).

Table 2. Themes and sub-themes extracted from the opinions of the teachers who were assessed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Subthemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English teaching</td>
<td>Pursuit of a high score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imbalance of teaching resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reliance on multimedia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Much focus on one specific language skill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers' influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English self-Learning</td>
<td>Lack of exposition to English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access to media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doing regular practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fostering interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education system</td>
<td>Disconnection of different grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Test-oriented education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language competence</td>
<td>Speaking difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading narrowly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak writing skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural capability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results

Thematic Analysis of the Answers Given by the Participants

According to the thematic analysis of the data, there were four main themes for classifying the teachers’ opinions on English education in China: (1) English teaching; (2) English self-learning; (3) Education system; (4) Language competence. The themes respectively covered subthemes. The category system used in the thematic analysis is shown in Table 2 above.
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English Teaching

Generally speaking, the teachers affirmed that English teaching needed reform like changing the test-oriented teaching, helping students develop critical thinking, teaching practical English for real use in life, and so on. They also admitted that teachers usually had a great influence on students.

-Pursuit of a high score. The teachers’ opinions linked performance in entrance exams with degrees and other qualifications. This could be reflected in the answers to the question “What do you think are the fundamental problems in English education in China?”:

“The problem with English teaching in China is that Chinese students have so many exams. Whether their English learning was qualified or not is weighed upon the scores they received in the exams. But it did not really mean their language proficiency.” (Interviewee 3)

-Imbalance of teaching resources. The teachers consented that due to the wide scope of Chinese regions, teaching resources could not be evenly distributed.

“China is a big country, places varying from each other…Teaching resources are unevenly distributed. For example, some places have native English teachers, while other places don’t. Some places have groups of experienced, proficient teachers, while others don’t.” (Interviewee 18)

-Reliance on multimedia. According to the teachers, Chinese learners were greatly restricted by the lack of English environment, so multimedia were applied in classroom teaching to increase the chance of exposition to English. But instead, some side effects were caused. “At my age, there were few distractions from learning like the online interactions” (Interviewee 6)

-Much focus on one specific language skill. The teachers’ opinions linked the problems students face in learning English with teaching focus and approach. “The biggest headaches for English teaching in China are making use of the unevenly allocated teaching resources in developing some specific language skill.” (Interviewee 7) “We are not capable of teaching Chinese children the real skills of writing, reading comprehension, or even communicating.” (Interviewee 5)

-Teacher’s Influence. Teachers were recognized to have played a great role in learning at the stages of higher education. “When I was a third-year student, I started to explore the meaning of my English name because of a teacher.” (Interviewee 6)

English Self-learning

The teachers proposed that the improvement of English proficiency could be realized via persistent, regulated and systematic self-learning. Within the new era of high technology, learning had become diversified, fragmented and interdisciplinary. It meant that learners objected to doing wider and deeper learning using advanced self-learning devices and multichannel information. They had to teach themselves to expose to English and to apply English to use.

-Lack of exposition to English. The teacher had the consensus that the insufficient exposition to English was the reason why Chinese learners could not express themselves in English. “You could have a good master of English in China, but I am sure that you must have made much more effort to do so. It’s known to us that in China unless you work in a foreign company, you seldom have the opportunity to use English in daily life.” (Interviewee 16) “In my hometown, there are few foreigners living here. So, we don’t have many opportunities to communicate with foreigners directly, but more in school education.” (Interviewee 4) “I used to
work as a part-time interpreter many years ago. Now I only speak English when I give students lectures.” (Interviewee 11)

-Access to media. The teachers believed the less-exposition-to-English learning environment can be changed by using media. For example, one could find someone to chat with in English on some social media like Twitter, YouTube, and the like. “I went on the Internet in the hope of finding people that I can practice speaking with.” (Interviewee1) Or one could refer to online courses for information. “College students can learn English through the online platform such as MOOC.” (Interviewee4) Or one could learn to make use of Apps on the phone. “Apps on the phone can help you to form the habit of memorizing words.” (Interviewee 1)

-Intercultural communication. The teachers agreed with the opinion that English was just a tool of communication, so they proposed immersed English learning environment was a good way to learn English efficiently. They attributed it to intercultural communication. “If you want to learn something deeply, you probably need to move to another country. Learning English helps you to broaden your horizons, broaden your viewpoint.” (Interviewee3) “Imagine that, when one was in the US, where you could only refer to the Americans for help, then your English could be greatly improved.” (Interviewee 15)

-Doing regular practice. Putting language into practice is a crucial aspect of enhancing language proficiency, particularly in speaking and listening. The teachers suggested that habitual practice ensured a good master of language skills. “I entered out finding 20 to 30 people with whom I would practice English regularly across that period of 2 or 3 years…Speaking practice only makes you more fluent in what you have already acquired.” (Interviewee 1) “If you think about it, if you want to be good at anything, you need to practice…You have to keep practicing, and eventually, you’ll be good.” (Interviewee 18) “So you created most of your language environment for yourself. At that time, I took out all the IELTS listening materials I had learned before. … I wrote down everything he said, whether it was useful or not. So during that time, my listening had changed a lot in three months.” (Interviewee 8)

-Fostering interest. It’s well-recognized that interest is a good teacher. The teachers accepted this idea well and reinstated that learning with interest could make things half done.

“It’s true that learning is a painful process, but learning English can be enjoyable. For example, you can learn English in an interesting way by means of watching English TV plays and dramas or listening to English songs or news. Honestly speaking, if you think what you are doing is fun, it will be easier for you to keep on doing and in the meantime, enjoy what it brought you, like happiness and knowledge.” (Interviewee 2)

-Personal initiatives. The teachers believed personal initiatives were critical to English learning in China. “I think that we should take the initiative to learn, to search for the information, to contact the teacher, etc.” (Interviewee 10)

Education System

-Disconnection among different grades. It was known that there were lots of repeated teaching contents across different grades of the education system. The teachers criticized this disconnection and low efficiency it caused.” “All the English teachers need to think deeply about what differences in different grades, how to connect, and whether it was reasonable to differentiate the grades and the teaching materials.” (Interviewee 7)

-Test-oriented education. The teachers agreed that Chinese education was test-oriented, which led to elite education.
“Chinese test-oriented education pushed students to go all out for talent selection tests such as the national college entrance examination and to regard getting advanced degrees as the ultimate objective. It gave rise to the misunderstanding that scores were the criterium to evaluate students, teachers and schools.” (Interviewee 11)

Language Competence

The teachers unanimously agreed that Chinese learners had much space to improve their language competence, such as speaking difficulty, listening difficulties, narrow reading, weak writing skills and intercultural capability.

-Speaking difficulty. The length of learning was thought unproportionate to speaking competence. The teachers claimed that English learners in China were unable to speak fluently because of a few occasions and the need to use English. In addition, lack of confidence was also one of the causes.

“Then when I was a freshman in college, I would constantly get frustrated by the fact that I could not speak a word of English, even after all those years of learning...Like the majority of English learners in China, I started to learn English from the years in primary school. Though I could get high scores in exams, my English proficiency was still far from the need for overseas study. I could not understand what the other people said. What’s more, I was short of vocabulary to express myself.” (Interviewee 1)

“Chinese little boys dare not open their mouth casually, who dares to raise their hands, not only to face normal eyes but also to face the evaluation of the surrounding students, who dares to pronounce it, who dares to read it, with what accent, someone will evaluate” (Interviewee 5) “Because of lacking confidence, exercise environment, and partners, I felt nervous when I spoke in English.” (Interviewee 2)

-listening difficulties. Listening weakness was one particular point mentioned in the teachers’ interview. “When I went to the English-speaking country for the first time, I could hardly understand what I heard.” (Interviewee 9)

-Narrow reading. Among the language skills, reading was mostly criticized by the teachers as “I thought that English learners in China were weak at listening and speaking, but barely ok at reading and writing.” (Interviewee 5) “The extracurricular reading materials were mainly reports or transcribed exercises.” (Interviewee 7)

-Weak writing skills. Reading and writing are believed to be correlated. The teachers commented that “It’s criticized that students from the elite schools could not read the original English literature and compose an English thesis, even though they had passed the CET 4 and CET 6.” (Interviewee 5)

-Intercultural capability. Language learning is for practical use, which is in accordance with conviction and custom. The intercultural capability of Chinese students was commented as: “In my opinion, under the test-oriented education system, Chinese students could not fluently interact with foreigners. At present, though Chinese English education was still suitable for the majority of students, there was still a great gap in fluent intercultural communication.” (Interviewee 15) “English teaching in China could only improve my script writing skills, but when I studied overseas, I could hardly understand what those people said and I could not express myself either.” (Interviewee 2)

-Adaptive. The teachers valued tolerance for accents in intercultural communication. “I tell my students it doesn’t matter if you say it differently as I do. We all sound different...You are
Chinese. You are supposed to sound Chinese.” (Interviewee6, 12) “As long as you can write such a high level of articles, what is the use of your pronunciation?” (Interviewee 5)

Discussion

This study aimed to evaluate teachers’ opinions on the side effects of EFL teaching in Chinese higher education. The result of the data analysis indicated two main side effects of EFL teaching in Chinese higher education: first, the Chinese learners were unable to apply English in actual communication due to a lack of exposition to English; second, there was a prevailing concept that the higher score the better college and career. In terms of the way to improve the effectiveness of EFL teaching in Chinese higher education, data analysis revealed that learners’ self-learning skills and self-regulation were critical for successful English learning.

After the analysis carried out, the results generally showed that the teaching staff considered the critical and positive role of learner’s self-learning skills, self-regulation and interest in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context in China, which was also recognized in the previous studies (Peng, 2021; Liu & Zhong, 2022). They commented on 4 aspects: English teaching, learners’ self-learning, the English education system and learners’ language competence.

It was also shown that “Deaf and dumb” English learners were highly related with a focus on grammar, vocabulary, and written language in practical teaching, which was also found in the previous research (Zhang & Sun, 2022; Zhang & Zhang, 2021). The teachers also admitted that successful learning was highly related with academic motivation due to their recognition of hardship and long-term effort in learning a foreign language, which is in line with the findings in previous studies (Bo Zhang, 2022; Teng & Zhang 2016). “Test-oriented” teaching and learning were deemed to lead to the stereotyped idea that a higher score ensured better education and ample rewards among all the hierarchy of education.

Thus, the teachers gave suggestions on exposition to English with the use of multimedia in class and off class, which help students embrace English language skills and develop intercultural understanding, global outlook and so on. This was also seen in the previous research (Huang, Qi & Xie, 2022; Hu, 2019; Sendek, Herzmann, Pfeifer, & Lai, 2022) affirmed that the environment of language acquisition and communication had an impact on both sides of social interaction. Language learning was more likely to be accomplished in social interaction, involving social interactions, behavioral effects, emotional expression, affiliation with the same group, course content exchange, sharing of knowledge, or personal appraisal of each other (Wang, 2022).

Teachers also identified the role of teachers in the motivation of students, which was following the statement that language learners were usually intrinsically and extrinsically motivated, and strongly motivated students with long-term goals were easier to teach (Harmer, 1991). The teachers’ opinion was also corresponding to the previous research (Hua He 2021), proving that educators’ devotion and attention to students motivated them more and helped them cultivate independence and self-efficacy in learning.

In addition, the teachers also criticized the present prevailing misunderstanding of English proficiency in speaking, not accuracy of pronunciation but intercultural capability, which was in line with the findings in the previous studies (Marjerison & Yang, 2022). It was also revealed that higher English learning was sustainable, enjoyable, motivated and fragmented, and most of the learning was high-tech assisted, which also coincided with the results of other investigations (Shadiev, Wang, Halubitskaya & Huang, 2022; Zheng, 2022; Cui & Li, 2022).
In short, the EFL education in China was insufficient in language exposition and focused on test scores, but teachers’ enthusiasm for teaching and learners’ initiative in learning English indeed accounted for successful learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides significant insights into the adverse effects of EFL teaching in Chinese higher education and the ways to improve its instruction. The findings suggest that English deficiencies among EFL learners can be attributed to the English teaching curriculum, self-directed learning, and the education system. To address these issues, the development of self-directed learning skills and self-regulation is crucial for the effective application of language in authentic contexts. Additionally, social interaction plays a crucial role in language learning, emphasizing the importance of behavioral effects, emotional expression, affiliation with the same group, course content exchange, sharing of knowledge, or personal appraisal of each other. However, the study's limitations should be noted, and the results should be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, this study contributes to the existing research on EFL teaching in China, and future research should involve administering large-scale questionnaires to further validate the findings. In addition, new Information Communication Technologies, such as ChatGPT, could be utilized in EFL teaching to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

About the authors

Dr. Xiaoshu Xu (Ph.D.) is an associate professor at the School of Foreign Studies, Wenzhou University. She is the Editor in Chief of the Journal of Educational Technology and Innovation. She has published papers on higher education, Personal Learning Environments, and teacher development in SSCI journals. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0667-4511

Dr. Yujie Su is currently a lecturer at the School of Foreign Studies, Wenzhou University. Dr. Su has published articles on teachings and language research, covering topics of contrastive study between Chinese and other languages, corpus-based studies of vocabulary, online writing automatic correction and other linguistic-related issues. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1444-1598

Lu Xu is a senior lecturer at the School of Foreign Studies, Wenzhou University. Her research interest is in higher education, TESOL with applied linguistics, and teacher development. She has joined research in online learning in higher education, Self-regulated Learning, and EFL teaching in Asian countries. https://orcid.org/0009-0001-7963-3358

Dr. Yunfeng Zhang is an associate professor as the Director of the Centre for Portuguese Studies, Macau Polytechnic University (MPU). He received Ph. D. in Linguistics at the University of Coimbra, Portugal. He has published books and journal papers in the fields of Translation & Machine Translation, education, etc. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9995-8432

Reference


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Zhang, S., & Zhang, L. J. (2021). Effects of a Xu-argument Based Interactive Continuation Task on an EFL Learner’s Linguistic and Affective Development: Evidence from Errors, Self-


### Appendices

#### Appendix A

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#### Appendix B

**Semi-structured Interview**

1. How old were you when you started to learn English? How long have you studied English?
2. How long have you been abroad? How did you feel when you were in the native-speaking environment?
3. What kind of language difficulties you encountered when you were abroad?
*4. What are your opinions on exam-oriented EFL teaching in China?
*5. What are your suggestions for improving EFL teaching in China?
6. How do you define “good English proficiency”?
7. Can you share with us some interesting oversea experience?
Transportable Identities in Conversational Interaction among Batna 2 University Students of English

Radia GUERZA
English Department
Mostéfa Benboulaïd, Batna 2 University
Batna, Algeria
Email r.guerza@univ-batna2.dz

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Abstract
The relationship between language and identity was an issue of huge debate over the last few years. It is observed, mainly in educational institutions, that the interrelation between identity and language does exist in various conversational interactions to portray modes of thinking and venues of interacting with knowledge. This issue has gained momentum among researchers and experts. This paper endeavors to shed light on the feasibility of transportable identities that engage and motivate learners of English. It aims to showcase how transportable identities can generate genuine discourse in classroom settings. The current study might enrich the existing literature, especially in the Algerian context, knowing that transportable identities were not addressed before in Algeria. The data gathered will provide empirical evidence of the viable impact of transportable identities within conversational interaction. Hence, this study is a reasonable attempt to improve the quality of both English as a Foreign Language learning and teaching. To equate with research objectives, an exploratory study was conducted to address the following research question: “To what extent can English as a Foreign Language conversational interaction, supported by transportable identities, generate authentic classroom discourse and, by extension, enhance learning?” Research findings obtained confirmed that conversational interaction that engages learners’ transportable identities engendered genuine discourses and impacted their proficiency positively.

Keywords: Authentic classroom discourse, Batna 2 University, English as a foreign language, English as a foreign language learning, Conversational Interaction, Transportable Identities

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Introduction

The relationship between language and identity remains an issue that still generates a controversial debate among practitioners. A pivotal element linking language with identity is discourse. It is perceived as a means via which words best portray values, norms, ways of individuals' thinking, and venues of interacting with knowledge. In the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, the interplay between language and identity reflects the nature and effects of interactions between learners and learning contexts. Hence, the notion of Conversational Interaction (CI) that generates genuine discourses is relevant to the discussion about the importance of identity in EFL learning.

One of the focal issues that gained momentum over the last few decades within the EFL context is conversational interaction. The assumption held here stems from contextualizing EFL learning using a broader sociocultural perspective of language teaching and learning (Brooks & Donato, 1994; Donato & Lantolf, 1991; Ellis, 1990; Ellis, 1999; Gass & Varonis, 1994; Hall & Walsh, 2002). Learners are perceived as active collaborators of the communicative act, where they construct their understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences (Educational Broadcasting Corporation, 2004). It has been claimed by Emerson (2015) that we may deduce in great measure about the nation's character from its language, which functions as a kind of monument to which each forced person for many centuries has added a stone. Thence, the poetics of language and discourse is the blood of the soul into which thoughts run and out of which they grow.

Consequently, this paper endeavors to highlight on the feasibility of transportable identities in institutional contexts such as EFL classrooms, where transportable identities are assumed to bridge the worlds inside and outside the classroom, and extend beyond the physical boundaries of the classroom and those of teacher-student roles and relationships (Murray, Gao, & Lamb, 2011; Ushioda, 2011). Thus, this research paper looks at classroom conversational interaction as a means of engaging, constructing, and negotiating identities.

According to research practice and experience, there is a difference between speaking, which refers to the mere sending and receiving of a given message, and communicating which implies this social act that engages two or more interlocutors in a process of purposeful mutual exchange of ideas, feelings, and thoughts. To engage in meaningful comprehensible communications using the target language, learners need to master means of conversational interaction. However, what has been observed in the EFL context at the department of English at Batna 2 University is entirely the opposite. EFL learners do not showcase a good command of the target language despite a great deal of exposure to the target input. Again, little attention was paid to how learning could result from language use. Therefore, learners in an EFL environment face a real impediment to achieve communicative competence. Henceforth, the current study attempts to investigate the liability of the concordance between language, identity, and conversational interaction that might engender an appropriate intelligible communication using English. Genuinely, this study aims to bring about evidence of the impact of Conversational Interaction on learning English. This paper’s core purpose is to investigate how EFL learners can make use of their transportable identities in the EFL context in a way that facilitates the mastery of the target language.

This research paper addresses two overarching research queries:

1. How discourse and language can be a reflection of one’s culture and identity?
2. To what extent can EFL conversational interaction, supported by transportable identities, generate authentic classroom discourse and, by extension, enhance learning?
The current paper is structured as follows: the introduction comprises the statement of the problem, the research objectives, and the research questions. The second section is devoted to the literature review wherein a definition of the critical concepts related to transportable identities, conversational interaction, and authentic classroom discourse have been highlighted. The third part focuses on the research methodology design. The fourth part attempts to present the core results obtained with the discussion. The paper ends with the most prominent recommendations and conclusion.

Literature Review
Defining Key Concepts

Key concepts related to the use of language within interactive contexts and communicative events. In the following treatise, there is an attempt to clarify what is meant by discourse, situational and transportable identities.

Discourse

Cook (1989) defined discourse as “Stretches of language perceived to be meaningful, unified, and purposive” (p.156). Starting out from a narrow definition of discourse, one could describe this discipline as Scollon and Scollon (1995) have done: “Study of grammatical and other relationships between sentences” (p.95). Discourse is defined by Crystal (1992) as “a continuous stretch of especially spoken language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit, such as a sermon, argument, joke or narrative” (p. 25).

Discourse, Situational, and Transportable Identities

Discourse, situational and transportable identities are concepts first used by Zimmerman (1998) as a categorization of identity in talk. They refer to:

1/ Situated identities, which are explicitly conferred by the context of communication, such as doctor/patient identities in the context of health clinic or teacher/student identities in the context of the classroom;

2/ Discourse identities, as participants orient themselves to particular discourse roles in the unfolding organization of the interaction (e.g. initiator, listener, and questioner);

3/ Transportable identities are latent or implicit, but can be invoked during the interaction, such as when a teacher alludes to her identity as a mother or as a keen gardener during a language lesson. (Richards, 2006; Ushioda, 2011), cited in Pinner (2015, p.1)

According to Zimmerman (1998), discourse identities are conceived when participants engage in multiple sequentially organized communicative tasks like “current speaker, listener, storyteller, study recipient, questioner, answerer, repair initiator” (p.90). For situated identities, he contends that they are concurrent within specific situations; whereas, transportable identities “travel with individuals across situations and are potentially relevant in and for any situation, and in and for any spate of interaction” (p.90).

Conversational Interaction

For many years, conversational interaction is considered to be a vital variable for the learning process. It is viewed and conceptualized to refer to any interactional practices that include
“routines and exchanges that involve repair and subsequent meaning negotiations” (Guerza, 2017, p. 92).

Towards Understanding EFL Conversational Interaction/Discourse and Transportable Identities

To understand the contribution of classroom conversational interaction to language development, there should be a need to search the effectiveness of the different teaching approaches, classroom dynamics, as well as the relationship between the teacher and the learner, and how far their roles would impact the quality of the language produced in the EFL context. It has been conceived through the current project that what contributes to a meaningful conversational interaction that yields a good command of the target language is the one that is grounded in a way that engages all participants in the communicative acts, and the one that encourages purposeful communication. Within this respect, EFL communicative ability, discourse, or conversation entails two or more interlocutors engaged in an active process of sending and receiving comprehensible and meaningful messages. The two agents make use of their knowledge of the world and strategies necessary to apply language proficiency to contextualized situations. This capacity helps learners to use language to fulfill either social or personal purposes within an interactive context. Besides, it is the knowledge, the ability to use it, and the ability to create that knowledge for communicative purposes. Consequently, it is the capability of the learner to exchange, create and use the acquired and, or innate knowledge. In reverence to this, Ushioda (2011) contended that:

We as teachers invoke and orient to students’ transportable identities in the classroom and engage with them as ‘people’ rather than as simply ‘language learners’; to the extent that we encourage and create opportunities for them to ‘speak as themselves’ and engage and express their own preferred meanings, interests and identities through the medium of the target language; the more likely that students will feel involved and motivated to communicate and thus to engage themselves in the process of learning and using the target language. (p.17)

From this stance and adding to that, it has been claimed by Februansyah & Aeni (2019) that “identity and motivation are interconnected constructs […] when teachers were able to understand their students’ transportable identities, their rapport was better” (p.110). Furthermore, Taylor (2021) in a different context contended that transportable identities may have a positive and valuable impact in teacher-student classroom interaction. Though the studies reported in this account all emphasize the importance of transportable identities in creating supportive conditions for learning, those studies are carried out in contexts different from the Algerian one. Henceforth, this study, and because of the absence of empirical research in the Algerian field and where no study to date has been found on this topic, it attempts to consider the issue of transportable of identities in Algeria.

Method

Researching conversational interaction requires careful consideration of both data collection and analytical procedures. To address the after-sought research queries, the current project adopts a mixed-method approach for data collection and analysis. Both classroom observation and focused group interviews were used wherein Van Lier’s (2008) Interactional Scheme, Walsh’s (2006) Self Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) Framework, and Schegloff and Sacks’s (1973) were deployed for the analysis of data. In classroom observation, classroom conversational interaction has been
Transportable Identities in Conversational Interaction

recorded and analyzed according to Van Lier’s scheme. To interpret the meanings and purposes of EFL learners' actions, interactions, their use of transportable identities, and by extension learning, the data analysis primarily takes the form of verbal descriptions and explanations, with quantification and statistical analysis at most playing a minor part. With respect to the use of the focused group interviews, it permitted the researcher to get in-depth data concerning students’ personal identities, and try to understand how the latter would impact the way they interact in the classroom and, more importantly, they learn. The mixed-method approach is deemed beneficial for the current study as it enables the researcher to corroborate between different data sets. The mixed-methods approach was conceived appropriate for this study because it captures the essence of conversational interaction and examines its subtle and varied intricacies since it allows us to recognize, emphasize, and interpret the type of interaction occurring in the EFL context. It scrutinizes conversational interaction from both the teachers’ and students’ perspectives. Henceforth, classroom observation and focused group interviews would fit the research objectives, and using multivariate models would enable us to reach valid and reliable results.

Participants
During one specific semester course that lasted eight weeks, a sample of thirty-five (35) undergraduate students of English at the English department at Batna 2 University randomly selected, with a mean age of 23, were exposed to intensive instructed sessions. The selected sample included the researcher’s enrolled students in 2014.

Research Instruments and Procedures
Data were collected through classroom observation and focused group interviews. Data are primarily analyzed using Walsh’s (2006) Self Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) Framework, Schegloff and Sacks’s (1973) Conversational Analysis, and Van Lier’s (2008) Interactional Scheme. Classroom observation is one of the research methods that were used to gather important information on conversational engagement in EFL classrooms. The usefulness of classroom observation has been recognized for its capacity to record in-depth information about the discourse, activities, interaction styles, instruction, and events occurring in the EFL classroom. Additionally, it is possible to record more significant contextual characteristics through classroom observation (Mackey and Gass, 2005). Participant observation has been employed in this study to collect data. Walsh's (2011) SETT Framework and Van Lier's (2008) Interactional Analysis Schemes have been used to code classroom interaction. To substantiate teachers' and students' opinions collected through focus group interviews and participant classroom observation has been carried out. For analysis, the checklists and observational notes were compiled.

To consider the various complexities of conversational engagement in EFL classrooms, the SETT framework has been implemented. The aim through utilizing this framework was to evaluate the key components of classroom discourse, including the management of communication patterns, elicitation tactics, repair strategies, and speech modification for learners. It was also intended to promote teacher development through classroom interaction. This approach was created to reflect on student-teacher interaction as a strategy to enhance teaching and learning (Walsh, 2011). The categories provided by the SETT framework allow us to take a closer look at our own professional growth as teachers and how we may improve student engagement in classroom conversational interaction.
The study also sought to determine the extent to which the interaction that involved students' personal meanings and identities could lead to learning, and to investigate what promotes or inhibits genuine interaction in the classroom using data from focus group interviews with students. The focus group interviews were effective tools to engage learners in selecting the learning materials and the teaching techniques. The focus group interviews were deployed to reveal the extent to which EFL learners face a significant challenge when communicating in English because, according to their own experiences and assertions, they do not have enough opportunities to practice the target language. This is more closely related to the learners' learning styles and even the various teaching techniques used, as well as their own lack of effort. Henceforth, the focus group interviews were thought more appropriate. Focused group interviews are a suitable data collection technique for this study because they mainly capture students’ attitudes, opinions, and experiences. They facilitate the discussion with students, and they engage them to speak as themselves, which is the core of this study.

The main elements of the research design are summarized in the following chart:

![The Context](image)

**Figure 1.** Research design framework

**Results**
Results obtained are of two categories: classroom observation findings and focused group interviews. In the first category, two illustrative classroom conversational interaction excerpts are displayed to showcase how classroom conversational interaction encouraged by transportable identities engages EFL learners in different communicative exchanges.
Classroom Observation

Excerpt One:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T: What if you got lost in a walk in the woods, and you can’t see anything?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>S15: I will pray God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T: it’s dark and you can’t see anything!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>S11: I will stay in my place because I know that the morning is coming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>T: you think that the morning is coming? Okay?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>S6: I will breath (mistake in pronunciation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>T: you will Breath (correcting the mistake).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>T: Good. YES who else? Others? Who wants to speak?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>S13: For me I will wait the light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>T: Sure the light is coming sooner or later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>S2: I ask God for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>T: Okay you ask God for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ss: [inaudible]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>T: you can even think of praying? UHH?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>S2: Maybe yes, and uh I will take time to wait for help OOHH!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>T: Yeah a Good hand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Except One of the Classroom Observation (Adopted from Guerza, 2017, pp. 640-641)

Applying Walsh’s (2006) SETT Framework, Schegloff and Sacks’s (1973) Conversational Analysis, and Van Lier’s (2008) Interactional Analytical Scheme enabled us to confirm that conversational interaction enhanced by transportable identities procured pedagogical practices that encourage students to develop and express their personal identities, and to “speak as themselves” through enhancing autonomous and agent learning. What they learned has become part of who they are. Engaging students’ personal identities and experiences, which stimulate a much higher personal involvement, effort, and investment, are vividly demonstrated through classroom interaction displayed above.

Excerpt Two:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brilliant: I would like to talk about the culture of food in Algeria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Especially here, in Algeria, we don’t care a lot about diet. You know we talk a lot about flavor, meat. What is special about the Algerian Cuisine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>is that there is a lot of hybrid uhh or carbohydrates oil. There is a big percentage of carbohydrates why? Because uhh a lot of food like this there is a lot of oil. Also, the use of a lot of spices like beans especially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thniat El abed in my home town or in Algeria. Yeah! It’s all our country I mean all in all this is what I think of food in Algeria. They use a lot of oil [inaudible] a lot of spices. Also, we have like our food to be chilly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>like uhh Mahjouba, Doubara uhh this is we like a little bit chilly. I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**mean this is uhh!**

**T:** What distinguishes Algerian traditional cuisine from international dishes?

**Brilliant:** What I can say about food in Algeria?

**T:** Like features especially the Chaoui “Berber” ingredients.

**Brilliant:** Like the Chaouia ingredients?

**T:** Ingredients!

**Brilliant:** Like the Chaouia ingredients cause a lot of problems in our health, but it’s gonna uhh

**T:** How?

**Brilliant:** Yeah! It causes a lot of problems, but we really don’t care about the health of the prominent food we are preparing. The food they eat; They don’t care about health [inaudible] especially Algerians it’s obvious.

**T:** In Algeria?

**Brilliant:** we Algerians especially, in Algeria yes! We concentrate a lot on flavor, a lot.

**T:** Yeah! Good! Good!

**Brilliant:** You welcome!

---

**Figure 3.** Excerpt Two of the Classroom Observation. Source: (Adopted from Guerza, 2017, p. 666)

The former findings support the assumption that for enhancing communicative skills in the EFL classroom, it is a prerequisite to strive for a positive, pleasant atmosphere where every student can feel engaged, relaxed, and motivated to communicate and interact orally. Also, results displayed in excerpt two of classroom interaction demonstrate that the more students are engaged to express themselves and share their experiences, the more likely they can communicate and interact.

To support these findings and assess the feasibility of conversational interaction enhanced by transportable identities, EFL students are asked to share their perceptions and attitudes concerning the role of conversational interaction as a working factor in enhancing their communicative abilities. The following interview data set is an illustration.

**Focused Group Interview Excerpts**

In this section, separate interview excerpts were selected as an example (Guerza, 2017, pp. 877-878, 883). They are set as follows:

**Teacher:** How important is conversational interaction for you to master English rules?

**Student One:** I think uhh it’s very important very crucial. How else can I promote my speaking skills without conversational interaction.

**Student Two:** Of course, it is really important I think that the best way to learn any language is by practicing it orally besides reading and writing.
Student Three: Very important ummm very uhh very important umm I think we learn uncountedly grammatical rules by speaking and grasping the mistakes and the rules.

Student Eight: Conversation for me is the really crucial thing so if you uhhh and also here we are going to talk about the person himself. So the person if he uhh when he is discussing and interacting if accepts the new knowledge that is of good one to discuss with somebody who is just very uuhh hard-headed and uhh he just wanted to convince you and convince about to convey his ideas giving you no opportunity to express yourself I don’t think It’s going to work. One if he is open to discuss or given the fact given for example that we have good uhh good people or two for example good people discussing for me uhh it is going to be so useful in the way that in which we are exchanging ideas first and the way we are exchanging ideas it’s certainly going to depend upon which uhh ground we are thinking if we are thinking this that is the target language that would be so much better if you are thinking in their mother languages language and then you later on translate your point the greater is the problem. You aren’t going to express themselves respectively more than going to be able to speak with uuhhh the target language in it correct forms and ways.

Based on data obtained from learners’ interviews, the prominent techniques deployed to maximize learners’ learning potential are achieved through meaningful conversational interaction that meets students’ aspirations and needs, and which exposes their personal experiences. It has been argued that EFL conversational interaction is a means via which opportunities for participation and authenticity are provided. To sum up, these significant findings do indicate that learners’ agency is encouraged through EFL conversational interaction. It has been evidenced that EFL conversational interaction may be a liable criterion for creating “real world authenticity” wherein it allows for purposeful participation and engagement.

Discussion
To highlight the liability of transportable identities, the current account attempts to answer the research queries raised beforehand. The previous few decades have seen increasing importance of EFL learning in the Algerian environment. Algerian higher education curricula for teaching English could be described as teacher-led, with the instructor dominating most of the talk in EFL classrooms. As showcased earlier, the goal of this study is to suggest a novel teaching strategy based on students' interests and requirements while taking into account contextual and psychological elements, and especially the significance of meaningful conversational interaction enhanced by students’ genuine discourse. Considering the raised query aiming at highlighting and finding about the extent to which English in conversational interaction, supported by transportable identities, could engender genuine discourse, and by extension, impact their proficiency positively, results indicate that, indeed EFL conversational interaction generates genuine classroom discourse, and engaged students to speak as themselves, and respectively developed their learning. It has been found that conversational interaction offered opportunities for meaningful communication and encouraged students to participate, wherein their discourses were a mere reflection of their culture and identity. Classroom observation revealed that EFL conversational interaction encouraged active learner initiative and created a dynamic context through transportable identities which, by extension, contributed to enhancing their proficiency level. The findings brought to evidence that EFL conversational interaction enhanced by transportable identities constructed learning instead of obstructing it. These findings were supported by the claims of Walsh (2002). In reverence with Ushioda’s (2011) claims, this study revealed that EFL conversational interaction engendered as well as prompted meaningful and authentic discourse wherein students were speaking as
themselves instead of using the language mechanically. In summary, this study confirmed that EFL conversational interaction, advanced by students’ transportable identities engaged them in generating palpable classroom discourse and positively impacted their learning.

**Recommendations**
The recommendations set in favor of the current study are summarized as follows:
1. Create a healthy, positive, relaxing environment where all learners feel at ease.
2. Develop a good rapport with learners.
3. Create interesting tasks that meet learners’ needs.
4. Familiarize learners with authentic target language culture.
5. Promote learner autonomy.
6. Allow students to participate in everything and every task.

From above, this will not be feasible unless the following practices are implemented:
- Enhance EFL practices by encouraging active learner initiative and creating a dynamic context through meaningful conversational interaction;
- EFL conversational interaction should be grounded in a way that creates opportunities for EFL students’ participation and engagement to invest their personal identities and experiences in classroom discourse; and
- Prompt EFL learners to generate an authentic, meaningful discourse whereby they “speak as themselves”.

**Conclusion**
To conclude, this study has shown how teaching pedagogies could be transformed to make them conducive to learning. It has proved that meaningful conversational interaction, liable to enhance positive learning outcomes, is the one that should be fostered through motivation, creating ample opportunities and spaces for practice, collaborative conversations, promoting conditions for socializing, and establishing a relaxed atmosphere based on building trust and mutual rapport. Teachers and practitioners are required to bear in mind that, in every interaction they undertake, they might succeed and lift people up, or fail and hold them down. Finally, this study could be perceived as a practical initiation to enhance the quality of EFL learning and teaching at the university level.

**About the author:**
**Dr. Radia Guerza** is a Senior Lecturer at the English Department at Mostéfa Benboulaïd, Batna 2 University. She has BA in TEFL Algiers University, MA in Psycho-pedagogy and Applied Linguistics, Batna University, Doctorate in English Didactics, Batna 2 University. She is a Former Postgraduate student and Visiting Scholar in The United Kingdom. Currently, she is the vice-dean. ORCiD ID: [https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1235-5234](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1235-5234)

**References**


Appendices
Appendix A

Students’ Interviews Questions ( Adopted Guerza, 2017, p. 876)

1. How important is conversational interaction for you to master English rules?
2. How important is conversational interaction for promoting your speaking skill?
From Needs Analysis to the Establishment of a University Vocabulary List for English Majors

Konul Hajiyeva
Department of Foreign Languages Teaching Methodology
Azerbaijan University of Languages
Baku, Azerbaijan
Email: hajiyeva.konul83@gmail.com

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Abstract
This paper concerns the academic vocabulary needs of undergraduate English majors in a tertiary context in Azerbaijan. Based on the results of the previous studies, it is suggested that developing an appropriate course material to meet the specific learning needs of these students will be beneficial for them. Thus, this study aims to identify the percentage of the running words and high-frequency word families beyond the 2,000 most-frequent words in the university textbook corpus to help the students to attain 98% lexical coverage. To address English majors’ scant academic vocabulary knowledge, a University Vocabulary List has been created. First, a university textbook corpus comprising the words used in 11 subject-specific course textbooks across subject areas taught at Azerbaijan University of Languages was compiled. Next, the range and frequency distribution of the words beyond the British National Corpus scale 2,000-word families was examined. Finally, the 396 most frequently occurring word families in the corpus were chosen; these formed the proposed University Vocabulary List for English majors, accounting for a 6.96% lexical coverage. The University Vocabulary List for English majors and the British National Corpus 2,000 high-frequency word families, including proper nouns, provide a text coverage of 97.28%, which is only marginally lower than the suggested lexical threshold of 98% suggested by Laufer and Ravenhorst-Kalovski (2010) and Nation (2006). It is, therefore, argued that the University Vocabulary List represents a sufficiently frequent and relevant vocabulary load for English majors whose secondary educational background and first-year general English textbooks have not equipped them for the linguistic challenges they face at the initial stages of their tertiary education. The article concludes by stating the pedagogical implications for developing these learners’ knowledge and use of the most frequent word families.

Keywords: English majors, frequency, needs analysis, range, University Vocabulary List, vocabulary development

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Introduction

English for Academic Purposes (EAP), the first recorded use of which dates back to 1975, is concerned with those “communication skills in English which are required for study purposes in formal education systems” (Jordan, 2012, p. 1) and the transition from “pedagogic genres to increasingly authentic genres” (Carkin, 2005, p. 85) associated with various disciplines. Despite increased professionalism in the teaching of EAP at university level in most English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Jordan, 2012), it is still a “first” in a tertiary context in Azerbaijan. In other words, English language, which has been recognized as a medium of instruction in some higher education institutions (HE) in Azerbaijan, is in the process of changing from teaching a language for general purposes to teaching a language for academic and, in some instances, for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP). Students studying within such a context have varying proficiency levels in English, different EAP needs, and a diversity of interfaces between English and their major fields of study.

The context of the present study is the Azerbaijan University of Languages (AUL) in Baku, Azerbaijan. Since the AUL joined the Bologna process in 2005, it has been a staple of its education policy that undergraduates – English majors (future English language teachers) – in the Faculty of Education follow elective and compulsory subject-specific courses through the medium of English and earn credits for these courses. This idea has led to a fundamental transformation of the curriculum and syllabus design, teaching and learning context, and in materials development. However, a hitherto unpublished investigation of course syllabi and teaching materials shows that, although AUL joined the Bologna conventions more than 15 years ago, no formal needs analysis has ever been conducted to identify the academic needs of these undergraduate students since then.

Carkin (2005) emphasizes that the main building blocks of an EAP program are academic texts, tasks, and content, which facilitate language learning. In this sense, instruction that takes the form of a highly pragmatic approach to learning, encompassing needs analyses, evaluation, academic skills, vocabulary, subject-specific content, and tasks should be included to support the students studying in a tertiary education environment.

With these suggestions and the tertiary setting in mind, the researcher has undertaken a needs analysis as a “cornerstone” (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p. 121) tied to a particular context and population in this research area prior to developing a course syllabus and teaching materials for the students studying at a higher education institution in Azerbaijan.

In attempting to bridge the gap, the academic needs of Azerbaijani English majors in an educational context have been investigated in several ways (Hajiyeva, 2014; 2015a, b, c). These studies include the assessment of both the receptive and the productive vocabulary knowledge of learners at the beginning of the first year of tertiary education. It also includes estimates of their vocabulary growth after one year of instruction. Other studies include a corpus-based lexical analysis of the academic texts – subject-specific university textbooks – and general English textbooks that students must be able to internalize and the measurement of lexical richness in students’ answers to examination papers. These studies focus on the frequency, range, distribution, and occurrence of high-frequency, academic and low-frequency words, and specialized vocabulary both in the subject-specific university textbooks and in student-produced texts in a tertiary context. Among the significant findings of these above-described studies are:

- the low estimates of the English majors’ vocabulary-size figures at the beginning of the first-year of tertiary education (2,104-word families receptively and 806-word families productively),
• a vocabulary size growth of productive as opposed to receptive vocabulary knowledge after one year of instruction at the beginning of the second year (974-word families known productively and 1,966-word families known receptively),
• the inappropriateness (that is, an inadequate representation of high-frequency word families) of the general English textbooks,
• the lexical threshold necessary to read and comprehend the subject-specific textbooks is much higher than the students can cope with (3,500–4,000 word families for 95% text coverage and the knowledge of 6,500–7,000 word families for the coverage of 98%),
• the composition of the subject-specific university textbooks is lexically versatile (for example, low coverage of the academic words in the textbooks), and
• while there has been substantial growth in the productive vocabulary knowledge and use, the students can still not convey or use meaning, form, associations, collocations, and register accurately.

Based on the outcomes of the previous studies, it is suggested that developing tailor-made course materials to meet the specific academic needs of these students will be beneficial to them. With these ideas in mind, this study aims to develop a University Vocabulary List for English majors which will provide a basis for an EAP course syllabus.

Making a word list is not simply a mechanical task, so judgements based on well-established criteria need to be considered in the development of such word lists. Therefore, the present study chooses 98% text coverage as the primary aim, since 95% is perceived to be a relatively low threshold, considering the academic needs and demands of this particular group of students. In light of what has been said so far, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What percentage of the running words in the university textbook corpus is the UVL required to cover in order to help the students to attain 98% lexical coverage, including proper nouns?
2. Which high-frequency words beyond the 2,000 most-frequent word families make up a University Vocabulary List?

This study takes into account both the students’ and stakeholders’ (faculty members, heads of department and teachers) needs, for example, to be able to read and comprehend subject-specific textbooks, sit examinations, earn credits, adhere to the conventions of the Bologna process and bring in well-trained specialists. It is suggested that the outcome product of this study will, therefore, serve as a basis for a lexical syllabus that will be useful, in terms of text coverage and frequency distribution, to Azerbaijani English majors who have nothing like mastery of the 2,000 most frequent word families.

With these ideas in mind, current study discusses recent studies on vocabulary size, lexical coverage, types and lists in the Literature Review, describes the research methods, settings and participants in the Methods, introduces the major findings and discusses them in the Results and Discussion sections relatively, before summarising them in the Conclusion part.

Literature Review
Vocabulary Size and Lexical Coverage

Vocabulary is an essential component of language use, and something that anyone involved in the learning process can agree on is that learning vocabulary is an essential part of mastering a second or foreign language (Schmitt, 2010a; English, in the current study). Since we use language
to communicate, an important issue in vocabulary studies is therefore the extent of vocabulary necessary to enable communication. Vocabulary is also a good predictor of reading comprehension and other language skills (see Milton & Treffers-Daller, 2013; Qian, 2002 for further discussion). The number of words or the amount of vocabulary necessary depends on one’s learning goals. The available literature suggests two thresholds. For example, it has been estimated that, if 98% coverage of a text is needed for unassisted comprehension, then an 8,000–9,000-word family vocabulary (including proper nouns) is required. Lexical coverage here refers to the “percentage of running words in the text known by the reader” (Nation, 2006, p. 61). A vocabulary knowledge of 4,000–5,000 word families resulting in the coverage of 95% (including proper nouns) is needed for comprehension of a written text (Laufer & Ravenhorst-Kalovski, 2010; Laufer, 2020; Nation, 2006; Schmitt, 2008, 2010a; Schmitt & Schmitt, 2012). Researchers has stated that there is a lexical knowledge threshold that marks the boundary between having and not having sufficient vocabulary knowledge for “adequate reading comprehension”. Laufer and Ravenhorst-Kalovski (2010) has also stated that the term “adequate reading comprehension” (p. 16) has no clear definition since it may refer to different levels of comprehension in other contexts. A lexical threshold, therefore, depends on the predetermined lexical coverage.

The above-described two putative coverage percentages (95% and 98%) signal the possible basic and optimal lexical thresholds necessary for reading comprehension. These figures may appear daunting to both teachers and learners since each word family includes several individual forms, including the root form, its inflections and regular derivations (Nation, 2006). For example, a vocabulary size of 8,000-word families (enabling wide reading) entails knowing 34,660 words (Schmitt, 2010a). Learning and knowing this number of word families can naturally be a challenging task for those learners with limited vocabulary knowledge. It has been suggested, however, that some words deserve more attention and effort than others in different stages of learning for varying purposes (Coxhead, 2011; Nation & Waring, 1997). In other words, if learners have specific lexical gaps in and challenges with reading comprehension, then increasing the lexical coverage through targeting a more restricted vocabulary with a relatively high frequency of occurrences may be a more practical solution (Hsu, 2013).

**Vocabulary Types**

Over the past 20 years, much has been done in the field of vocabulary in the context of acquiring foreign or second languages (Bogaards & Laufer, 2004). Among other things, this interest has been characterized by the attention paid to the role of word frequency in vocabulary learning, for instance, the cost-benefit of learning frequent, infrequent, and specialized words (see, among others, Coxhead, 2000, 2011; Nation, 2011). For example, Wang, Liang and Ge (2008) believed that not all words are equally important and therefore they agree with Nation’s (2011) division of vocabulary into four categories:

1. high-frequency or general service vocabulary;
2. academic/sub-technical vocabulary;
3. technical vocabulary, and
4. low-frequency vocabulary.

This division points to the fact that in different phases of language learning some vocabularies need more attention than others. High-frequency word families, for example, are the words necessary to achieve basic functionality in a language and constitute the majority of all the running words in all types of text. The classic list of high-frequency words is West’s (1953) A
General Service List of English Words (GSL), which contains approximately 2,000-word families. High-frequency word families appear so frequently in the texts that sufficient time should be spent on learning these words. Academic vocabulary – also called “sub-technical vocabulary”, “specialised non-technical lexis” and “frame words” (Nation, 2011, p. 187) – is the vocabulary type that occurs with medium frequency. It is common to a wide range of academic texts, and accounts for a substantial number of words (~10%) in academic texts.

Unlike academic vocabulary, technical vocabulary contains some words that are very closely related to the topic and subject area of the text. Nation (2011) categorized the degrees of “technicalness” (p. 198) depending on how restricted a word is to a particular area. He, therefore, has classified four categories, depending on the criteria of the relative frequency of form and meaning. According to this classification, words in Category one are technical and they are unique to a particular field in both form and meaning, whereas words in Category two are technical words because the more general sense of the word when used outside the field does not provide ready access to its technical use (see Chung & Nation, 2004 for further discussion). Categories three and four are less technical because they are not unique to a particular field neither in form nor in meaning. They differ from subject area to subject area. For example, in Applied Linguistics, words such as morpheme and lemma fall in the first category, whereas words such as sense, reference, type and token (running word; see below) will be placed in the second category. Technical vocabulary comprises content-bound, frequently occurring words in a given field. In contrast, low-frequency vocabulary includes all the words that are not high-frequency words, excluding the academic words and technical words for a particular subject (Nation, 2011).

Word Lists

Nation and Waring (1997) suggest that language teachers and instructors need to have clear, sensible goals for vocabulary learning. Frequency information provides a rational basis for ensuring that learners obtain the best return on their vocabulary learning effort by ensuring that any words studied will frequently be met with. Vocabulary frequency lists that take account of range – that is, the occurrence of a word across several subsections of a corpus – play an important role in curriculum and syllabus design and in setting learning goals. This does not necessarily imply that learners must be provided with large vocabulary lists as the primary source of their vocabulary learning. However, it does mean that course designers and materials developers should have lists to refer to when they consider the vocabulary component of a language program (Nation, 2004).

Word lists are essential in language teaching for various reasons; they include lists of the words or lexical phrases found in a discourse domain, often including frequency information about the use of particular words (Miller & Biber, 2015). A more recent example of a word list comprising the 2,000 most frequent words in general English is the GSL (West, 1953). The words in the GSL are primarily, but not entirely, chosen based on frequency (Nation, 2004; Schmitt, 2010a) and the list provides 75–80% text coverage. With the advances in corpus-based studies and computational techniques, developing newer and up-to-date word lists has been facilitated. For example, for general English, these include the compilation of the British National Corpus (BNC) word lists (Nation, 2004) and the recent new GSL developed by Brezina and Gablasova (2015) based on an analysis of 12 billion words taken from four general corpora. The authors state that the practical usefulness of the new GSL shows its effectiveness in covering approximately 80% of
the texts in the corpora with only 2,494 lemmas (a word and its inflected forms), with a significant reduction compared to the 4,100 lemmas that West’s GSL needs to reach that coverage.

Corpus-based word lists have also been compiled for more specialized domains. There have been several studies (for further discussion, see American University List (AUL) developed by Praninskas, 1972; University Word List (UWL) devised by Xue & Nation, 1984; Academic Word List (AWL) developed by Coxhead, 2000; Academic Vocabulary List (AVL) developed by Gardner & Davies, 2013) that have investigated the vocabulary needed for academic studies at the university level. Among these lists, Coxhead’s (2000) AWL, which provides approximately 10% coverage of tokens, has played a crucial role in setting vocabulary goals for language courses in most EAP programs. In practice, it means that the 570-word family AWL and the GSL mentioned above give the coverage of 85–90% of the tokens in the text. Nation (2004), on the contrary, states that “beginner learners at the tertiary level would be better off using materials based on the BNC lists, because of the slightly better BNC coverage” (p. 12) than the GSL + AWL text coverage. Moreover, researchers such as Hyland and Tse (2007) question the validity and utility of AWL. They argue that language instructors should instead develop lists of the most important words used in specific academic disciplines. Following this discussion, several word lists have been developed for particular disciplines, for example, for medicine by Wang, Liang, and Ge (2008), Hsu (2013), for engineering by Ward (2009), and for agriculture by Martinez, Beck, and Panza (2009).

All in all, word lists play an indispensable role in designing courses, setting learning goals, guiding the creation of simplified texts, analyzing the vocabulary in texts, analysing lexical richness, guiding the construction of vocabulary tests and, more importantly, creating specialized word lists (Nation & Webb, 2011).

Methods
Participants

The present research targeted undergraduate second-year subject-specific university textbooks for English majors in use in the year of 2015-2016 at the Faculty of Education at AUL, because university entrants (first-year students) at this university start following subject-specific courses taught through the medium of English in the second year of their tertiary education. This corpus, therefore, encompassed the subject-specific courses the second-year lecturers and students used in their classes.

For this study, a University Textbook Corpus (UTC) covering 11 textbooks for the courses Study skills (SS), Critical reading and effective writing (CREW), Communication and Social Interaction (CSI) and Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) was developed (for a complete description of the steps involved in the corpus compilation see Hajiyeva, 2015b). These are elective courses offered to students in the second year of their tertiary education, and all of them have to take any two of the courses mentioned above. Students are accredited with seven credits – covered in 105 academic hours – for each course, if they pass the final written examination. The subject areas included in the UTC are versatile; the texts are of different lengths and are intended for students with different backgrounds. All the textbooks were downloaded from internet databases or scanned using the software ABBYY Fine Reader 11 Portable. Consequently, after excluding all the bibliographies, tables, indexes, appendices, and proper nouns (which were gathered in a separate file for further analysis), a corpus of 508,802 (Table one) words comprising four sub-corpora files was created. The UTC was, therefore, not large by contemporary standards, since corpus-based research studies usually consider the representativeness of the corpus highly.
In other words, researchers have traditionally focused on two general factors while creating word lists based on corpus studies: the kinds of discourse included in the corpus (whether general or academic) and the size of the corpus, that is, its representativeness.

An analysis of the studies done by Brezina and Gablasova (2015), Coxhead (2000), Gardner and Davies (2013), West (1953), and Xue and Nation (1984) has shown that vocabulary investigations based on larger corpora do produce different results. The versatile nature of these word lists shows that by analyzing larger corpora, we discover word lists that are different from previous studies. It is assumed that these lists are more valid since they are based on more representative corpora. However, a recent study done by Miller and Biber (2015) has shown that corpus design considerations have usually focused on “issues of external representativeness” (p. 30) (representing the target domain in terms of its size), while “disregarding the issues of internal representativeness” (whether a corpus allows us to achieve reliable and stable quantitative results concerning the use of linguistic features). They, therefore, have suggested that researchers should consider the evaluation of “internal representativeness” in quantitative corpus-based studies. Of course, larger corpora will include a larger set of words in a discourse domain. However, since the aim of the study is to develop a tailor-made word list that meets specific students’ specific academic needs, it is claimed that the UTC represents all the core subject matter of second-year university textbooks needed for study at AUL. As Ward (2009) puts it, “other corpora, while considerably larger, do not address the specific needs of our students” (p. 173). Therefore, the product of this study—a word list for English majors—is likely to reflect the corpus from which it was derived, no matter how large it is.

Table 1. Tokens (running words) of the university textbooks used at AUL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>CREW</th>
<th>CSI</th>
<th>TEYL</th>
<th>UTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tokens (running words)</td>
<td>94,563</td>
<td>121,428</td>
<td>141,637</td>
<td>155,992</td>
<td>508,802</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Instruments**

The instrument used to serve the purposes of this study is Range software developed by Heatley, Nation, and Coxhead (2002). The present corpus was run on the Range program to obtain frequency and dispersion data for all the words over four sub-corpora representing each of the university textbooks for English majors. This program breaks texts down by word frequencies into the 1st to 20th BNC and even to 25th BNC word families. The Range is installed with BASEWRD lists (each BASEWRD list contains 1,000-word families up to and including 20,000 or 25,000 BNC word family lists). These lists include proper nouns, marginal words, and word families.

The criteria used in the Range program to make word families are based on Bauer and Nation’s (1993) Level 6 word-building processes, which include inflections, the high-frequency, and regular, productive and transparent derivational affixes. These affixes can only be added to free forms. This means that the stem of each word must be able to stand as an independent word. For example, *patient* and *patience* cannot be members of the same word family since the suffix -*en*ce is not added to a stem that can stand as an independent word. Researchers (Nation & Webb, 2011; Nation, 2016) suggest that word families should be regarded as an important counting unit regarding the learning load in receptive (that is for reading and listening) corpus-based studies. The rationale behind this counting unit is that the concept of a word family represents a group of words whose meanings can be inferred when the meaning of the base form in the group is known.
to the learner. For instance, the headword *appreciate* is grouped with its family members such as *appreciable, appreciably, appreciated, appreciates, appreciating, appreciation, unappreciated* and if learners know the meaning of the headword, they are likely to infer the meaning of its family members. Therefore, for this study, word family is used as a counting unit.

**Research Procedures**

As has already been mentioned above, the ultimate goal of this study is to produce the list – a list of the most essential words in the particular tertiary context of AUL. Regardless of the specific approach, vocabulary studies usually consider two “distributional properties” to identify the “important words” in a corpus: frequency and range (Miller & Biber, 2015, p. 43). Frequency is how many times readers encounter certain words, whereas range identifies words that are distributed widely across the corpus, in addition to occurring with high frequency. To explore the issues of frequency and range further in the corpus and to develop the list of the most important words, some selection principles are followed. First, the word families included have to be outside the most frequent 2,000-word families of English. Secondly, according to Miller and Biber (2015) “a word was considered “important” if it occurred with high frequency at least 20 times per million words” (p. 44). Taking this criterion for uniformity of frequency into account, then, in my 508,802-word corpus, the benchmark for uniformity of frequency for the word occurrences is a minimum of *ten* times in the entire corpus. Finally, members of a word family have to occur at least in *three* sub-corpora and at least *twice* in each sub-corpora.

**Results**

**RQ1 What percentage of the running words in the university textbook corpus is the UVL required to cover in order to help the students to attain 98% lexical coverage, including proper nouns?**

The university textbook corpus – the UTC – contains 508,802 running words (tokens), and 17,320-word types (individual words) and involves 6,734-word families listed in the BNC 20,000-word list. The first 2,000 word families account for 88.92% of the running words, and this shows the relatively accessible nature of undergraduate university textbooks for English majors compared to those of medical textbooks, for example, where the most frequent high-frequency word families account for 70.68% of the running words (see Hsu, 2013 for further discussion). Proper nouns give extra text coverage of 1.40%.

Taking into account the results of the previous studies (Hajiyeva, 2014; 2015b, c) which tested Azerbaijani university entrants’ receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge during a period of one year, it is evident that a vocabulary size of 2,000-word families plus the knowledge of proper nouns students can obtain a cumulative text coverage of 90.32% which is inadequate. Since the present study has chosen 98% text coverage as the primary aim for reading comprehension, then the goal for the establishment of the university vocabulary list for English majors is 7.68% lexical coverage based on what is left after the 2,000 BNC word families and proper nouns are counted (7.68% = 98% – 88.92% – 1.40%).

**RQ2 Which high-frequency words beyond the 2,000 most-frequent word families make up a UVL?**

Having identified the target cumulative text coverage of 7.68% (to help reach 98% text coverage), the next step involved selecting the most frequent word families according to the BNC 20,000-word families until the intended text coverage is attained. It is impossible to present all the data and Table two aims merely to give a sense of the results – just the most frequent words outside the BNC 2,000-word family lists.
Table 2. *Selected frequency data from the university textbook corpus for English majors used at AUL*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>BNC scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gesture</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>task</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discourse</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocabulary</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grammar</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>literacy</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrase</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluate</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genre</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theme</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbal</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After having sorted word frequencies in descending order and doing some mathematical calculations, 396-word families were ultimately chosen and formed the UVL for English majors (Appendix A, the list of words is given in an alphabetical order), whose cumulative coverage arrived at 6.96% and contributed to reaching 97.28% together with the rest of the word lists.

**Discussion**

As can be seen from the results, the cumulative text coverage of the UVL for English majors are slightly lower than the intended coverage of 7.68% to help to reach 98% text coverage. This is because word families that did not appear across more than half of the four sub-corpora (three or four out of four) were not included in the list, even though they had high frequency indicators. For example, words such as *compliment (123), clench (45), assurance (45), posture (42), suspicion (32), disclosure (13), broadcast (13), gobbledygook (12), apprehensive (11)*: although they had a high frequency of occurrence, they were not included in the UVL since they are lexically idiosyncratic to a specific sub-corpus (CSI sub-corpus, for example). Therefore, all the word families that appeared in three sub-corpora out of four with a frequency of occurrence of at least ten times were included in the UVL (Appendix A displays a complete list of the high-frequency word families.)

Apart from the frequency of occurrence and range, Table two also displays the word levels along the BNC scale. An interesting observation should be emphasized at this point: some of the most frequent words included in the UVL for English majors were listed among the words that belong to the 1,000 or 2,000 BNC word family lists, although they have not been included in the BASEWRD 1 or BASEWRD 2 lists in the *Range* program. For example, *achieve* belongs to the BNC 1,000 word band, but it is not included in the BASEWRD 1 list. The same applies to *absence*, which belongs to the BNC 3,000-word level, but, surprisingly, is placed in the BASEWRD 2 list.

All in all, there were 40 such word families from the BNC 1,000 and 49-word families from the BNC 2,000-word families that were categorized by the *Range* program as the word families falling beyond the 2,000-word families and these word families were, therefore, included in the UVL vocabulary list. This outcome shows that there is inconsistency in the classification of the word families in terms of the BNC scale and *Range* BASEWRD lists. Researchers should take into account this inconsistency in future studies.
Referring back to the vocabulary list of word families listed in the UVL for English majors, which includes 396-word families dispersed among the BNC word lists, it covers 6.96%. It contributes to reaching 97.28% text coverage, including proper nouns. It should be noted that there were some words such as to brainstorm, wiki, and the Internet outside the BNC lists that occur frequently across the UTC texts included in the list. Analysis of the most frequent word families in the list showed some examples of technical vocabulary based on Nation’s (2011a) classification of words in terms of their technicality. For example, words such as discourse, semantic, synonym, linguistic, pedagogy, coherence, subordinate, and syllabus were identified as Category one technical vocabulary, according to Nation’s (2011a) classification.

It should also be noted that, compared to the results obtained in the previous study (Hajiyeva, 2015c), which observed the frequency distribution of academic words in the university textbook corpus and identified 127 most frequent academic word families, in this study, there was an overlap of 168-word families with Coxhead’s (2000) 570 AWL family members. Since in this study, the frequency of occurrence of the words to be included in the list was set at those occurring at least ten times compared to the previous study, which set this criterion at 16 times, this outcome seems rather logical. Decreasing the number of occurrences from 16 to 10 has resulted in the inclusion of an additional 41 academic word families from Coxhead’s AWL (2000). Ward (2009) states that it is the frequency criterion that determines the length of the resulting word list, but he also emphasizes that “there is no reliable way to determine exactly how long it should be” (p. 177). Schmitt (2010b) states that if a student could learn 50 words per week, then in 40 weeks of school, basic vocabulary (2,000 words) could be introduced. Bearing in mind that the target students in this study are “familiar” with most of the 2,000-word families (based on the vocabulary size test results) and they have 120 face-to-face hours of instruction at their disposal, then teaching and learning 396-word families is a relatively modest target vocabulary for a semester’s work (25-26 word families per week). Of course, it should be noted that 396-word families include approximately 2,522 individual words and demand extra work in that sense.

Referring back to the points raised in the literature section of this paper in terms of the ‘internal representativeness’ of the corpus as suggested by Miller and Biber (2015, p.34), the Researcher decided to evaluate the reliability of the results as a prerequisite to considerations of their validity. The UTC already comprises four sub-corpora based on various course textbooks, although the topics, subject areas, and texts in the sub-corpora do not share common ground. The main objective of this study is to cater for the needs of both the students and the stakeholders and the underlying concern now is this: Does the word list that is developed allow teachers to achieve stable quantitative findings concerning the text coverage across the four sub-corpora?

The answer is straightforward. If the same quantitative findings across those four sub-corpora of CSI, CREW, SS and TEYL are obtained, then it can be stated that confident that the corpus and the list reliably represent the linguistic patterns of variation. This issue is further explored by running the Range program against the UVL for English majors with the four sub-corpora. The results show that the UVL gives a cumulative text coverage of

- 8.63% in the sub-corpus of Critical Reading and Effective Writing (CREW);
- 7.68% in the sub-corpus of Study Skills (SS);
- 6.89% in the sub-corpus of Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL), and
- 4.65% in the sub-corpus of Communication and Social Interaction (CSI).

Given these findings, it can be stated that the UVL provides some reliable estimates of the number of different word families in this limited-size but a versatile corpus of university textbooks
for English majors. In terms of the sub-corpus of CSI, though, the results show a deviation from the suggested pattern of 6.96%. The main reason for this pattern is that, as Miller and Biber (2015) state, some words might be very frequent in a corpus because they are extremely frequent in a single text or chapter, reflecting the specific topic and content of that text. These usually tend to be technical terms related to a particular topic and are not so essential or frequent in the corpus in general. Including these lexically idiosyncratic words in the list might make the list overwhelmingly long for students.

The UVL is intended for a specific context, though, where both secondary and tertiary education (early stages) have failed to bring students near to the kind of lexical threshold needed to succeed in an academic context (Hajiyeva, 2014; 2015 b, c). In their study, Miller and Biber (2015) could not “achieve a reliable word list” from their corpus of three million words derived from psychology textbooks within a restricted domain and they concluded that there is not a single, reliable list of the most important words in a discourse domain.

With these constraints in mind, it can be stated that, although the University Vocabulary List still leaves students some way short of the lexical knowledge required of them to read textbooks in the sub-corpus of Communication and Social Interaction with understanding, it is a modest, but reasonable lexical target for a semester’s work.

Conclusion

This paper aimed to develop a University Vocabulary List for students to meet their academic needs. In this paper, observations of the vocabulary content in a series of second-year university textbooks for English majors at the Faculty of Education at AUL are presented. A University Vocabulary List of the most-frequent 396-word families, which gives an additional 6.96% coverage of a variety of English-medium university textbooks beyond the BNC most frequent 2,000-word families was developed. The UVL represents a relatively frequent and relevant vocabulary load for English majors whose secondary educational background and first-year general English textbooks could not equip them for the linguistic challenges they face at the initial stages of their tertiary education. It is, therefore, concluded that, should they master the most frequent 2,000 high-frequency word families and also the UVL with a text coverage of 6.96%, students can attain a text coverage of 97.28%. As described in the literature review part of the study, 98% coverage provides adequate comprehension of a text, with coverage being dependent on the level of difficulty of a text. In other words, 98% coverage is sufficient for unassisted comprehension of a relatively easy text. The cumulative text coverage of 97.28% obtained in this study falls only marginally short of the suggested coverage of 98%. The results show that there are some words in the corpus which occur very frequently; however, these words were not included in the final list since they are extremely frequent in a single text or chapter and merely reflect the specific topic and content of that text or chapter. Miller and Biber (2015) argue that these words usually tend to be technical terms related to a specific topic and not as important or frequent in the corpus as a whole. The inclusion of these lexically eccentric words in the list might therefore make the list overwhelmingly long for these particular students. However, it is believed that this list will fulfil Azerbaijani students’ need to have a command of the vocabulary required of undergraduate students for whom English is a foreign language to be able to read for and internalize their subject-specific courses.
From Needs Analysis to the Establishment of a University Vocabulary

Hajiyeva

About the Author:
Konul Hajiyeva is a post-doc researcher in Applied Linguistics and senior lecturer at Azerbaijan University of Languages. Her research interests include hybrid teaching, vocabulary development, and continuing professional development. She is also involved as a head of the unit State language and foreign languages at State Examination Center of the Azerbaijan Republic.

https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5748-0189

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The Role of Universal Grammar in Second Language: English Adjective Phrase by Saudi Learners

Shatha E. Alanazi
Department of English, College of Science and Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj, Saudi Arabia

Haroon N. Alsager
Department of English, College of Science and Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj, Saudi Arabia
Correspondence Author: h.alsager@psau.edu.sa

Abstract
English is the primary second language learned in Saudi Arabia. Many Saudi students are learning English as a second language for several reasons. Still, almost all English second language learners in Saudi Arabia are willing to learn English proficiently as English natives. Chomsky’s Universal Grammar is one of the primary theories that has discussed the idea of learning a second language. The primary purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the role of Universal Grammar in second language acquisition by investigating how Saudi Learners of English use the English Adjective Phrase Structure. This research adopts the Full Transfer/Full Access Model as its model. This study used an online questionnaire method design and both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze data. This study assigned 118 participants from undergraduate students in Level Two and Level Five at English Language and Literature Department at Prince Sattam bin Abdul-Aziz University. The primary findings of this study indicate that native-like proficiency can be reached due to the fact there is full access to Universal Grammar when learning a second language. This study also found that Arabic as a first language plays a significant role in the beginning stages of learning English as a second language. Furthermore, the findings reveal that the effect of the first language on the second language can be overcome with more input the learner gets.

Keywords: Adjective phrase, Full Transfer/Full Access, Second Language Acquisition, Universal Grammar

Introduction

English is an international language that is learned by many non-natives. In Saudi Arabia, English is the most popular language taught in schools, universities, and institutes. It is essential to understand the process of learning English as a second language by Saudis. For teachers, understanding how a second language is learned helps them understand their students’ abilities, time of learning and challenges students may face. Also, learners benefit from understanding the way they are learning because it helps them overcome their fear of failure, motivates them and answers the big question in their minds while learning: Will it be possible for me to learn English proficiently as a native since English is different from Arabic in many ways? To understand the process of learning a second language, two significant linguistic fields should be tackled: second language acquisition and syntax.

One of the primary syntactic theories that have addressed the notion of learning a second language is Chomsky's Universal Grammar. Universal Grammar is a modern theoretical concept that claims there is a systematic mechanism in all human brains that allows them to acquire the syntax of different languages (Chomsky, 1995). Chomsky has been developing this theory for ages. Minimalist Program is the latest version of Universal Grammar (UG) that has been developed to involve all languages. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that many researchers have come up with different models to explain the role of Chomsky’s Universal Grammar on second language acquisition (Clahsen & Muysken, 1986; Meisel, 1997; Flynn & Martohardjono, 1994; Vainikka & Young-Scholten, 1994; Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996). Full Transfer/Full Access is one of these models that this research paper is concerned with (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996). It applies to adult learners. It states that there is full access to UG and full transfer of the first language at the beginning stages of learning a second language.

This study mainly centers its focus on the acquisition of adjectives. This research paper mainly aims to answer the following questions: (1) To what extent does the UG operate in second language learning the same as it does in first language acquisition? 2) Is it possible for Saudi learners of English to acquire the accurate English Adjective Phrase Structure? What is the role of UG in this case? And what is the process of learning a second language?

The structure of the adjective phrase in Arabic is different from English. First of all, in terms of structure, English adjective phrases and Arabic adjective phrases vary. An adjective is a word that appears before a noun in English. In Arabic, on the contrary, the adjective comes after the noun. Moreover, an Arabic adjective needs an agreement with the noun in all circumstances of being definite or indefinite, singular, dual or plural, and gender as masculine or feminine. However, an English adjective does not require agreement of number or gender between an Adjective Phrase and the other components of a phrase.

The overall structure of the study takes the form of seven sections, including this introductory section. The second section begins by laying out the literature review of the research. It looks at different areas related to the research, including UG in Second Language Acquisition (L2) and Adjective Phrase Structure. The third section presents the research questions that led to this study. The fourth section is concerned with the methods used for this study. The fifth section presents the results of the research. The sixth section moves to present the findings and discussion. Finally, the conclusion gives a summary of this study and identifies different areas for further research.
Literature Review

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between UG and second language learning. Literature shows various perspectives and theories related to the role of UG in second language acquisition in terms of access and transfer. Those studies have focused on a variety of languages, such as English, German, Turkish and Chinese (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996; White & Juffs, 1998; Han, 2020). Despite the many studies that have focused on the role of UG in the second language acquisition of different languages, up till now, far too little attention has been paid to Arabic native speakers in Saudi Arabia learning English. This paper addresses this gap in the literature by exploring the different theories of UG in second language acquisition. Furthermore, the paper will adopt the Full Transfer/Full Access model (FT/FA) as its model. The following review attempts to highlight such a gap with an intensive focus on the Full Transfer/Full Access (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996) model as applicable to adult learners.

Universal Grammar in Second Language Learning

The process of learning a second language is distinct from that of learning one's first. Factors of differentiation have been explored in several studies. Hawkins (2001) mentioned three significant distinctions between learning a first language and learning a second language: (1) In SLA, another language is already present; (2) other components of the mind have already matured, whereas arguably, Foreign Language Acquisition and the development of other cognitive capacities go hand in hand; (3) input is usually encountered differently, and may involve writing as well as spoken language. First language acquisition, according to Yule (2020), is the process of learning a language in a specific language-using setting when the child interacts with language users and picks up the language spontaneously. On the other hand, Yule (2020) stated that a second language could be either acquired or learned. According to him, the second language is primarily learned in an institutional setting during the teenage or adult years. Furthermore, Yule (2020) reported some acquisition barriers, such as insufficient time, already having a language to communicate, being more self-conscious than children, and lacking empathy with a lot of things going on. Furthermore, Vroman (1989) listed ten fundamental barriers adults face when learning a second language, including lack of success, general failure, variation in success, course and strategy, variation in goals, correlation of age and proficiency, fossilization, the importance of instructions, the role of affective factors indeterminate intuitions and negative evidence.

In view of those many differences holding between first language acquisition and second language learning, the question arising could be formulated as such: To what extent does the UG operate in second language learning the same as it does in first language acquisition? This section reviews the data for applying the UG in L2 learning aiming to provide a clear answer to this question.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the application of UG in second-language learning. Perspectives have varied, and many approaches/theories have been discussed in this area of study. White (2000) and Han (2020) provide an overview of the different approaches in terms of the different categories of UG access and the function of the initial state of learning L2. Each one of these approaches has its advantages and limitations. The following part discusses the four primary approaches of second language acquisition in detail: (1) Full Transfer/Partial Access, (2) No Transfer/Full Access, (3) Full Transfer/Full Access, and (4) Partial Transfer/Full Access.
First of all, the Full Transfer/Partial Access approach assumes that there is no role of the UG in L2 acquisition, and if there was access to the UG principles, it would only be via L1 (White, 2000). Meisel (1997) asserted that there is no direct or indirect access to UG for L2 learners, following Clahsen and Muysken (1986). As a result, the process of second language acquisition uses only general knowledge and abilities rather than UG (Han, 2020). However, it is impossible to state that there is no access to the UG by relying on Belly-Vorman’s (1990) Fundamental Difference Hypothesis, which assumes that there are differences between L1 and L2 but with specific UG effects on both (White, 2000). Bley-Vroman (1990) and Tsimpli and Dimitrakopoulou (2007) Alothman and Alsager (2022) stated that L2 learners have indirect access to UG in which the L1 knowledge and the UG components that are already activated in the L1 play a significant role in the second language learning process. Also, researchers like Beck (1998) and Morales-Reyes and Gómez Soler (2016) support the idea of having partial access to UG in L2 in which there is access to some individual components such as the learners’ L1 knowledge (Han, 2020). However, this paper argues that such an approach has failed to address the activeness of UG. It only shares the characteristic of full transfer, which is the constituent of the L1 grammar to the L2 initial state.

Second, for the No Transfer/Full Access, Flynn and Martohardjono (1994) state that L1 is not related to L2 at any stage and all properties of UG are available for L2 acquisition. Furthermore, supporters of this approach claim that L1 and L2 grammar are alike, and “there are no differences in developing interlanguage grammar attributable to the mother tongue of the learner” (White, 2000, p.136). In contrast with this approach, this paper attempts to show that transfer is essential in second language acquisition. Transfer between L1 and L2 is available when learning a second language, especially in the first stages of learning L2. For example, Amer (2012) asserted that Arabic learners of English face difficulties when using adjectives in constructing English sentences because of the linguistic differences between the adjective position and order in English and Arabic. As seen, this approach has failed to address the role of L1 grammar on the L2 initial state, but it agrees with the Full Transfer/Full Access in terms of the availability of UG properties.

Furthermore, Vainikka and Young-Scholten (1994) discussed the Partial Transfer/Full Access approach claiming that only lexical categories are transferred from L1 to L2 in the initial state of L2 and that functional categories are not transferred (White, 2000). As Clahsen and Felser (2006) also stated that more lexical and semantic methods are used by L2 learners than morpho-syntactic signals. The Partial Transfer/Full Access approach is based on the Shallow Structure Hypothesis which states that even though L2 learners follow a similar acquisition pattern to L1 speakers, they have "shallower" access to the target language (Han, 2020).

White and Genesee (1996) argued against this approach claiming that both lexical and functional categories are found in L2 initial state. Also, in their study, they state that older L2 learners can achieve native-like competence in L2 in which there are no significant differences between near-native learners and native speakers. Their argument is based on Full Transfer/Full Access model which is suggested by researchers such as Dekydtspotter et al. (2001), Herschensohn (2000), and Slabakova (2008) who argued that there is full and direct access to UG in L2 acquisition. Moreover, other researchers such as Bohnacker (2006) and Grüter and Conradie (2006) supported The Full Transfer Hypothesis which is “based on the premise that L2 takes all the L1 grammar, including the phonetic and phonological aspects, as the initial state” (Han, 2020).
White (2000) discussed Schwartz and Sprouse’s (1996) Full Access/Full Transfer model, proposing that the entirety of the L1 grammar is the L2 initial state which means that the UG is used in both L1 and L2 but at different starting points. Moreover, FT/FA claims that grammar differences between L1 and L2 are restructured by the UG. Also, the endpoints of different learners will usually differ.

Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) are one of the primary figures who have discussed this model. They indicate that the process of restructuring some structures of L1 grammar into L2 requires some time. In addition, some learnability factors play a significant role in the L2 process. They assume that the phonetic matrices of lexical/morphological items will not be transferred. A case study by Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) was conducted on the development of German word order and nominative case by an adult native speaker of Turkish. The focus was on the finite verb position and the type of subject and the fronting of the non-subject constituent, demonstrating the differences between the two languages. The results show that the L1 grammar does not influence L2. FT/FA claims that full transfer refers to the process of having L1 grammar as a means of characterizing the L2 data at the starting point of learning a second language while full access refers to the application of UG on L2 input to restructure the grammar (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996; White, 1989).

The primary purpose of the previous discussion is to explore the relationship between FT/FA and the adult setting of learning a second language. Previous studies have reported, based on the Critical Period Hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967), that language is normally acquired during a critical period, beginning early in life and ending at puberty. Generally, it states that adults cannot acquire native-like proficiency in L2 after the critical period. (Borovsky, 2008; Flege, 2003; Huttenlocher, Vasilyeva, Cymerman, & Levine 2002; Iverson, Kuhl, Akahane-yamada, Diesch, Kettermann, & Siebert, 2003; Kharkhurin, 2008; Krashen, Long, & Scarcella 1979).

However, the Full Access/Full Transfer Model of Schwartz & Sprouse 1996 offered evidence that adult L2 learners could acquire native-like proficiency based on their study, conducted on a Turkish adult learning German (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1994). They shed light on the different aspects of the two languages, such as word order patterns and nominative cases. This study is limited since it focused on one adult learner claiming that the sample went through stages and reached a point of fossilization. A similar study in terms of two distinct languages (Chinese speakers learning English) conducted by White and Juffs (1998) claimed that there are differences between Chinese speakers and highly proficient L2 learners of English.

However, White and Genesee (1996) conducted a study on French adults learning English as a second language to investigate the availableness of the UG principles for them. When L2 learners perform as native speakers, they will be constrained by UG. The findings of their study show that L2 adult learners can achieve native-like competence in L2 in which there are no significant differences between near-native learners and native speakers. However, based on their study, it could not be stated that L2 learners will always achieve native-like competence in L2 because their study was conducted on French learners of English. English and French share many principles, such as Subjacency and ECP; therefore L1 could have influenced and led to native-like competence.

Furthermore, the Full Access/Full Transfer Model is supported by Aldwayan (2008) who performed a study on Arabic learners of English. Aldwayan (2008) offers important insights into the acquisition of wh-movement by Najdi learners of English. Full Transfer/Full Access theory was one of the theories Aldwayan tested using a grammaticality judgment task and a self-paced
reading task. The results of Aldwayan’s study are predicted by the Full Transfer/Full Access theory, in which proficiency increases the ability of L2 learners to judge both types of test sentences. Also, L2 learners can acquire new features regardless of whether or not their presence is in the L1. In addition, our findings argue that although transfer can happen in the development stages, native-like performance can be achieved at the advanced proficiency level.

It should be pointed out that this paper adopts the Full Transfer/Full Access theory as its model. As discussed previously, Schwartz and Sprouse’s (1996) Full Access/Full Transfer model addressed the process of learning a second language from the initial state of learning until the final stage. It also takes into account rationality by claiming that the activeness of UG starts partially until it has full access. Furthermore, it discusses the role of the first language on the second language, which is significant, especially in the context of adults since they will keep using their L1 while learning L2. Therefore, this paper will adopt Schwartz and Sprouse’s (1996) Full Access/Full Transfer model to argue with or against the model.

As discussed earlier, the role of UG on adult L2 learners remains unclear. Most studies on the role of UG on adult learners have shown different results. This paper attempts to fill a gap in the literature on Arabic native speakers in Saudi Arabia learning English by investigating the function of UG in second language acquisition in the Adjective Phrase Structure.

**Adjective Phrase Structure**

The structure of an Adjective Phrase differs among different languages. For example, the Adjective Phrase Structure in English is different from it in Arabic (Alsager, 2017, 2020; Alsager, & Mahzari, 2021). Therefore, the following part mainly focuses on discussing the Adjective Phrase Structure in English and Arabic since this research paper aims to investigate the function of UG in second language acquisition in the Adjective Phrase Structure by Arabic native speakers in Saudi Arabia learning English.

In English, Carnie (2021) defines an adjective as a word that modifies a noun or noun phrase or describes its referent. Adjectives can appear between determiners such as the, a, an, these, and nouns (the big peanut). They also can follow the auxiliaries: am, is, are, was, were, be, been and being. Frequently, adjectives can be modified by the adverb ‘very’ (Carnie, 2021). Furthermore, Van Gelderen (2010) states that adjectives describe qualities typical of nouns such as “nationality/ethnicity (American, Navajo, Dutch, Iranian), size (big, large, thin), age (young, old), color (red, yellow, blue), material/personal description (wooden, human), or character trait (happy, fortunate, lovely, pleasant, obnoxious)” (p. 15).

Greenbaum (1990), discusses the main characteristics of adjectives. First of all, adjectives can occur in an attributive function in which they occur between a noun and its determiner, for example, ‘an ugly painting’. The adjective in this case is considered to be the head of the noun phrase. Second, adjectives can occur in a predicative function in which they function as a subject complement as in ‘The painting is ugly’ or they can function as an object complement as in ‘He thought the painting ugly’. Third, adjectives can be premodified by the intensifier very, for example, ‘The exam was very good.’

Dahami and Saleh (2012) attempt to explain the main categories of adjectives such as “Adjectives of Numbers, Adjectives of Quality, Adjectives of Quantity, Distributive Adjectives, Demonstrative Adjectives, Interrogative Adjectives, Possessive Adjectives and Adjectives of Comparison” (p. 85). First of all, numeral adjectives are those adjectives that identify the number of people, animals, places or things, for example, an adjective in a sentence like ‘Ali ate three
apples.’ Second, adjectives of quantity are the adjectives that tell the quantity without giving the exact number, for example, an adjective in a sentence like ‘Sameer ate some chocolate.’ Also, adjectives of quality are one of the kinds of adjectives that qualify a noun or its replacement – the pronoun, for example, an adjective in a sentence like ‘Sameer is an honest person.’ Distributive Adjectives like (each, either and neither) are adjectives when they qualify a noun instantly, for instance, in a sentence like ‘Each girl must take her turn.’ Furthermore, demonstrative adjectives are those adjectives that indicate nouns, for example, in a sentence like ‘This book is mine.’ Another kind the interrogative adjectives are those interrogatives that precede a noun, for example, in a question like ‘Whose son is that boy?’ Furthermore, there are possessive adjectives that show possession and ownership of something to someone, for instance, in a sentence like ‘We like your house.’ Finally, as mentioned in Greenbaum (1990) adjectives can be comparative and superlative forms either utilizing inflection such as adding -er (bigger, happier) or -adding -est (greatest, nicest) or by adding the premodifiers more (more expensive) and most (most beautiful).

An Adjective Phrase (Adj P) is one of the main components used to form a clause. Delahunty and Garvey (2010) explain an Adjective Phrase (AP) as a phrase containing an adjective in which it has the adjective as its head. Also, an adjective phrase can be associated with modifiers and complements as analyzed here: (Modifier) + Head + (Complement). The modifiers may be either intensifiers such as very and quiet, or degree adverbs such as particularly and extremely. The complements may be PPs, finite clauses, or infinitives. The kinds of adjectives that accept compliments are those that describe mental or emotional states, such as aware, terrified, sorry, disappointed, amazed, optimistic, or sad. In conclusion, the phrasal structure rule analyzes and AP as follows: AP ———> ((Int/AdvP)) A ((PP/S/Inf)) an adjective phrase consists of an optional intensifier or adverb phrase, an adjective, and an optional PP, S, or infinitival.

As mentioned in Van Gelderen (2010), an adjective phrase can be a daughter of a noun phrase and a verb phrase. Therefore, there is no necessary order for the adjectives; they can be incorporated by adjunction or by occupying special phrases. Here are some examples that can elaborate on the order of adjectives in the tree structure. The first shows that the adjective phrase is special while (2) is an adjunction, additional words which can be deleted.

(1) She is smart.
(2) The smart girl went to school early.

Figure 1. Syntactic tree analysis: The smart girl went to school.

The same sentence in Arabic will have the following tree structure.
(1) a. ‘al-fatah al-thakeh thahbet el-a al-madrsah’
b. The-girl the-smart went to the-school
In Arabic, an adjective is called AL NA'AT or AL SEFAH. Unlike English, an Arabic adjective comes after a noun, for instance, in a sentence like (1).

Also, Arabic adjectives agree with the noun in all cases of being definite or indefinite, singular, dual or plural, and gender as masculine or feminine. The adjective, in Arabic, is used to specify, clarify, praise, dispraise and confirm. There are two main kinds of adjectives in Arabic.

1. Real Adjective
   - (a) gara-tu ketab-an jadeda. ‘I read a new book.’
   - (b) read-I book-Acc New-Acc

   First of all, the real adjective is one of the kinds which is “a word that modifies a precedent noun and follows it in all the grammatical cases such as being definite or non-definite, singular or dual or plural, and in being masculine or feminine.”, for example, in sentences like (2) and ‘najehat at-talibah almujtahedah.’ There is an agreement in gender between the noun and adjective, masculine and feminine, respectively. In Arabic the same sentence can change to show agreement in cases of number also ‘najahat at-talab almujtahedon’ and ‘najahat at-talabat almujtahedat’ masculine plural and feminine plural, respectively (Dahami & Saleh, 2012).

2. Casual Adjective
   - (a) hatha rajul-un mahboob-un ibnhu ‘This man has a dear son.’
   - b. This man-Acc dear-Acc his son
   - c. “This man has a dear son.”

   Furthermore, those two main types of adjectives in Arabic, real and casual, can have three forms in which they can appear as a single adjective, sentence adjective, or semi-sentence adjective. A singular adjective can be demonstrative, for example, in a sentence like ‘isal hatha altalbou’ Ask this student. An Arabic relative clause is a singular adjective that usually starts with
connecting 'HAMZAT WASL' for example in a sentence like ‘Sahb alrefaq allathi n tathq bihm’
Be friends with who you trust. Also, numbers are singular adjectives. For example, in a sentence
like ‘qaratou souhfan khamasah’ I read five newspapers. There are many examples of singular
adjectives in Arabic such as ‘with’, ‘same’, ‘all’, and ‘any’, attributed adjectives and adjectives
used for metaphors. The second form is a sentence adjective which is an affirmative sentence that
takes place after a sheer indefinite, for example, in a sentence like ‘raetou rajollan thaktuhou aliya’, I saw a man who was laughing loudly. Third, semi sentence adjective is an adjective that
occurs after a sheer indefinite, for example, in a sentence like ‘hatha faras ala farseh’. This is a
knight on his horse.

After shedding light on English and Arabic adjective phrases, there are main differences
between an English adjective phrase and an Arabic adjective phrase that need to be outlined in
terms of syntax and structure. First of all, an English adjective does not require the agreement of
number or gender between an AP and the other components in a sentence. In contrast, an Arabic
adjective requires agreement with the noun in all cases of being definite or indefinite, singular,
dual or plural, and gender as masculine or feminine. Also, the English AP and the Arabic AP are
different in terms of position. In English, an adjective precedes the noun or comes after the verb.
On the contrary, in Arabic, the adjective comes after the noun.

As discussed previously, it is clear that Arabic and English have different Adjective Phrase
Structures, which means that Saudi learners of English will usually face struggles learning the
English Adjective Phrase Structure. Here’s where the question arises: Is it possible for Saudi
learners of English to acquire the accurate English Adjective Phrase Structure? What is the role of
UG in this case? And what is the process of learning a second language?

This paper aims to explore the role of UG on second language acquisition by Saudi
Learners of English in the Adjective Phrase Structure. The research questions that have guided this
investigation is as follows: (1) Is the UG activated for second language acquisition in adults’ brain?
As Chomsky claims that UG is a computational device in the human brain that helps children
acquire language naturally. Therefore, the study aims to check if the UG is activated for second-
language adult learners. (2) If yes, what is the function of UG in second language acquisition in
the Adjective Phrase Structure by Saudi learners of English? There have been many arguments on
the function of UG in the second acquisition. Some researchers argue that there is no role of UG
in L2, while others claim that there is partial access to UG in L2, and others argue that there is full
access to the UG. Therefore, this study aims to discover such a function and whether the UG has
full access to help L2 learners to reach native-like proficiency. (3) What is the role of the first
language, Arabic, on the second language, English, in the acquisition of adjective phrase structure?
Since Arabic and English are distinct languages in their grammar, the study investigates the role
of the First Language (L1) grammar, Arabic, in learning English as a Second Language (L2).
English adjective phrase structure is different from Arabic adjective phrase structure in terms of
position and agreement cases.

At last, it can be said that these three questions aim to investigate many points related to
second language acquisition. The study discusses the role of UG in processing a second language
in an adult’s brain while investigating the influence of L1 on L2 by shedding light on the
acquisition of the structure of the adjective phrase in English and Arabic. To answer these
questions, the study adopts the Full Transfer/Full Access model, which claims that there is full and
direct access to UG in L2 acquisition and L2 takes all the L1 grammar as the initial state.
Method

This study aimed to see how Arabic adult students in Saudi Arabia use English Adjective Phrases while they are learning English as a second language, identify the role of L1, Arabic, when learning L2, English, and investigate the role of UG on Saudi learners of English, based on Chomsky’s (1995) Minimalist Program (MP). MP assumes that there is a computational system in a human’s language faculty to link sound and meaning.

To achieve the aim of this study, the researcher conducted this study based on the methods discussed in this section. This section starts with an overview of the participants that have volunteered to conduct this study. It then introduces a description of the procedures for collecting and analyzing the data.

Participants

The current study employed 118 participants from Level Two and Level Five undergraduate students at English Language and Literature Department at Prince Sattam bin Abdul-Aziz University. The undergraduate students of the English department were chosen for data collection because they have a strong desire to study English. Among these two groups, group one comprises 63 students from the second level and group two consists of 55 students from the 5th level. Level two students were considered relevant for the participants as one group because they were at the beginning process of learning English so the role of L1 on L2 acquisition in the beginning stages could be genuinely identified. At the same time, Level Five was chosen to identify the role of UG in second language acquisition and check if there is Full Access to L2 syntax. Each of the participants was asked to provide their background information including their age, gender, nationality, years of learning English and if they had taken any proficiency test. The age group to which all the participants belong ranges from 18-25 years. Regarding gender, they were classified into more female respondents 71 (60%) than male respondents 47 (40%). Among the females, 35 are students of Level two and 36 are students of Level five. Of the male students, 28 are students of Level Two and 19 students are Level Five. Regarding nationality, all participants were Saudis and Arabic is their native language. Most level two students were learning English for one to two years, while level five students were learning English for three to four years. Table one (below) shows the number of students aside from their years of learning/speaking English. Regarding, the level of proficiency tests that the students have taken only 11 students have taken different proficiency tests such as IELTS with medium scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of learning/speaking English</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than a year</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than four years</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Role of Universal Grammar in Second Language
Alanazi & Alsager

Research Procedures

The data was collected by distributing an online questionnaire consisting of three written tasks to Level Two and Level Five students. The questionnaire was formulated and designed in a way that will help reveal the learner's ability to use English adjective phrases in sentences as naturally as they could. In collaboration with their instructors, the questionnaire was delivered through a link during their academic courses.

Participants were required to work on three different tasks to establish their use of an adjective phrase in English. The tasks that were designed to collect data include 1) a storytelling task, 2) a picture description task and 3) Word reorder task. At last, to achieve the purpose of the study, the data was analyzed by adopting a descriptive-analytical method. Both qualitative and quantitative analysis is performed on the data. Qualitative data, which were obtained from the storytelling task and the picture description task, are discussed to respond to the questions raised in this study. Data collected from the word reorder task is analyzed quantitatively to see the percentages of each one.

Results

This section attempts to present the results of the three tasks that the 118 students participated. First, the results of the story-telling task will be displayed in a table to illustrate what kind of adjective function the participants used and whether or not they were produced in grammatical sentences. Second, the results of the picture description task will be presented by descriptively analyzing them to show what sentences they used to describe the pictures. Finally, a chart will present an average of grammatically correct responses from the word reorder task by the two groups.

Story-Telling Task

The following Table two (below) analyzes the data of the story-telling task to illustrate which function of English adjective phrases the participants used and whether or not they were constructed in grammatical phrases. It should be pointed out that many sentences did not use any adjectives and grammatical mistakes related to other phrases were noticed. Therefore, the researcher analyzed only the sentences that fulfill the research’s aim which are the ones that were constructed using adjectives. There are three common functions of adjectives used by the participants: (1) Attributive function, (2) Predicative function and (3) Comparative/Superlative function. In an attributive function, adjectives occur between a noun and its determiner, while a predicative function is in a subject complement. Comparative and superlative adjectives are used to compare different subjects (Greenbaum, 1990).

Table 2. Number of adjectives used in Story-telling task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syntactic function</th>
<th>Number of phrases had this function</th>
<th>Grammatical</th>
<th>Ungrammatical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Level 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributive function</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicative function</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative/Superlative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above data, it is apparent that Level Five students used more sentences with adjective phrases than Level Two. It can be seen that 178 sentences were used by level five students and
only 57 sentences were constructed by Level two. Some examples that were written by Level five students can be seen in the following examples: ‘I was very excited’, ‘I met two girls’, ‘I was nervous and excited at the same time.’, ‘I felt so lost on the first day.’ and ‘my classmates are good people’. Level two students generally relayed in a few short sentences to respond to this task. Some examples that were written include the following examples: ‘It was good.’ and ‘I was very scared and nervous.’ Both levels used a few comparative sentences which can be seen in the following examples: ‘college is more different than school’, ‘The building was bigger than my high school.’, ‘a bit colder than yesterday’, ‘The first day was my happiest day ever.’.

1) Picture description task

The responses to this task varied, therefore the following part reviews each picture and its response separately.

**Figure 3. (Peakpx, n.d)**

To describe the first picture, the participants used sentences like, ‘The cold weather makes me feel frozen’, ‘The weather is cold.’, ‘The most beautiful season in the year is winter’, ‘There is a pretty snowman’, ‘This day seems colder than yesterday’ and ‘The snowflake looks fragile and soft’.

**Figure 4 (dreamstime, 2023)**

For the second picture, sentences like, ‘The mother is taller than the daughter’, ‘I see a mother and a child enjoying an outdoor activity’, ‘A loving mom and daughter feeling happy.’, ‘My mother is my role model’, ‘They are having a good time’, and ‘The love between a mother and daughter is true love.’ were written by the participants.

**Figure 5. (Stock, n.d.)**

Moreover, sentences like, ‘The food looks delicious’, ‘The food is tasty’, ‘I see healthy and unhealthy food’, ‘A table with so many different dishes’ and ‘Delicious food makes me feel happy.’ were written to describe the third picture.
Furthermore, the participants used sentences like, ‘The cottages are dark and small.’, ‘The sky is blue’, ‘The scenery is peaceful and breathtaking.’ and ‘The most beautiful place to relax is in nature’ describe the fourth picture.

In this task, a few grammatical mistakes were recorded in different areas, not including the adjective phrase structure. Also, some participants didn’t write full sentences so their responses were excluded. Generally, Level five students wrote more accurate and longer sentences than level two students. Both males and females of Level Two and Level Five used the language they were more familiar with.

2) Word reorder task

Finally, Figure one (below) shows the average of correct answers for Level Two (63 students) and Level Five (55 students) to all six questions: (1) girl / fresh / ate / the / apple / a. (2) was / exam / good / the. (3) bought / he / a / car / new. (4) I / read / book/a / short. (5) are / happy / they / a / family. (6) delicious / this / is / cake.

![Figure 7](chart.png)

Figure 7. Correct answers for Level Two and Level Five to all the six questions

Figure one (above) shows a comparison of Level Two’s correct responses versus Level Five’s correct responses in the six questions represented in the Word-reorder task. It could be identified that Level 5’s correct responses are much higher than Level 2’s. There are 53 students of Level Five, approximately 96%, who have ordered the first sentence correctly. For the second question, 52, approximately 95% of Level Five students could order the sentence accurately. There are 51 students of Level Five, and approximately 93%, were able to order the third sentence accurately. For the fourth question, 52 participants, approximately 95% of students of Level 5 could order the sentence accurately. Questions five and six showed more mistakes by Level 5 students. Question five marked 81% correct responses and 69% only for the sixth question.

The above data observes that when it comes to Level Two, more mistakes are registered. There were 43 students of Level Two, approximately 68%, that answered the first question accurately. For question two, 54 students of Level Two (86%) were accurate. Furthermore, 79%
of Level Two responded accurately to the third question, 81% responses from Level Two students were accurate to the fourth question, 70% of Level Two students responded accurately to the fifth question and only 46% of students responded accurately to the sixth question. Level two mistakes commonly involved having the noun before the adjective such as ‘A girl ate the apple fresh.’, ‘He bought a car new.’, ‘I read a book short.’ and ‘They are a family happy.’ Other mistakes involved separating the adjective and noun with an article such as ‘The girl ate fresh an apple.’, ‘I read short a book.’ and ‘he bought new a car.’ Or even adding another article before the noun and adjective, for example, ‘The girl ate a apple fresh.’ Also, the students had trouble using the adjective ‘this’ before the noun ‘cake’ such as in ‘This is cake delicious.’

Discussion

This section attempts to discuss and analyze the results presented in the previous section. This discussion and analysis are linked to the aims of this study which is understanding the function of UG in second language acquisition in the Adjective Phrase Structure by Saudi learners of English and investigating the role of L1 on L2 in the acquisition of adjective phrase. The results show that there is access to UG at different levels and L1 plays a major role in some cases in second language learning. It, therefore, argues in support of Schwartz and Sprouse’s (1996) Full Access/Full Transfer model.

The results can fulfill the first purpose, the activeness of the UG, by showing that the UG is actually activated for second language learners. This is apparent from the ability of the participants, Level Two and Level Five, to develop L2, English, with its specific properties and distinguish it from their L1, Arabic. As seen in the results that the participants can use the English Adjective Phrase Structure almost always accurately. Therefore, this shows that the human brain has an innate mental grammar that helps humans to acquire a second language and it even helps the human distinguish between the properties of L1 and L2. As the results show that the participants, Level 2 and Level 5 students, would not be able to respond to the three tasks. Moreover, it can be said that L2 learners have more access to UG as they learn more. Level Five students wrote more sentences than Level 2 students and with fewer mistakes which is because their level of proficiency is higher than Level 2 students. This reveals that L2 learners have full access to the UG as they are at the final stages of learning a language, therefore, L2 learners could reach native-like proficiency. Also, task three showed that Level 5 students did better in ordering the six sentences which is also due to their proficiency in language and the number of years they have been learning the language. It can be apparent that the UG is activated at the beginning process of learning a second language and continues to have access even at advanced stages. This is linked to the FA/FT model that claims that the more input the learners are
exposed to the more native-like performance they can achieve by overcoming the L1 transfer that occurred at the beginning of the process of learning.

To sum up, it was found that Saudi learners of English can perform grammatically well-formed adjective phrases in different functions. This provides support for UG that enables the learners to transfer from their L1 to L2 without having any clashes in the brain process at advanced levels. The results also provide evidence that there is direct access to UG in L2 acquisition even though they are adults and have passed the critical period. Most Level Two and Level Five students started learning English at an adult age, 18 and over and were able to acquire the accurate English adjective phrase structure. They started with some access to the UG as the results of Level 2 show and reached full access as the results of Level Five show. Adults who started learning English as a major are the study's participants. This shows that L2 learners can start learning a second language even if they are adults. The participants were able to acquire the accurate structure of English adjective phrases and effectively participate in different tasks in an even shorter time than expected. They were able to answer all the tasks within less than 15 minutes which means that their answers are spontaneous leading to more valid results. Therefore, the findings should make an important contribution to the Full Transfer/Full Access model (FT/FA) that is suggested by researchers such as Dekydtspotter et al., 2001, Herschensohn (2000), and Slabakova (2008). These findings confirm that Saudi learners of English acquire Adjective Phrase Structure accurately at advanced levels, even though the structure of the AdjP is different in their L1. Also, it can be said that adult L2 learners could acquire native-like proficiency.

Conclusion

To sum up, the current study investigated whether, and to what extent, the UG is involved in second language acquisition by shedding light on the syntactic structure of English adjective phrases acquired by Saudi learners of English. This study employed quantitative and qualitative research methods to recognize the role of UG that contributes to second language acquisition. Results indicated that English L2 learners in Saudi Arabia generally had full access to UG and full transfer of L1, Arabic, at the beginning stages of learning L2, English. The findings suggest that the more input L2 get, the higher chance they get to reach native-like proficiency. The findings from this study make several contributions to UG in second language acquisition literature and provide support for FA/FT model.

Further Recommendation

More information on the role of UG in L2 acquisition would help establish a greater degree of accuracy of the FA/FT model. Therefore, further research should focus on determining the role of UG in second language acquisition in other syntactic structures that have many differences between the two languages, Arabic and English, such as Wh-questions, verb phrases, agreement cases and gender differentiation. Also, it is recommended that this study should be repeated using a high number of participants from different universities in Saudi Arabia. It is also presented that this study used an online questionnaire as a method. Further research could also be conducted using semi-interviews where a group of researchers use different kinds of tasks to naturally determine the function of UG on L2 without directly explaining to the students that their use of language will be tested.
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About the Authors:
Dr. Haroon Alsager finished his PhD in linguistics from Arizona State University in 2017. His research interests include syntax, historical linguistics and computational linguistics. Currently, he is an associate professor in linguistics and applied linguistics at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3778-5801

Shatha E. Alanazi has a Bachelor's degree in English language from Sattam bin Abdulaziz University and a Master's degree in linguistics from PSAU. Her research interests are syntax and language acquisition/learning.

References
The Role of Universal Grammar in Second Language

Alanazi & Alsager


The Role of Universal Grammar in Second Language

Sunagatov, D. Mother and daughter in the park. Dreamtime. Mother and Daughter in Park Stock

[Table full of food]. IStock by getty images.
https://www.istockphoto.com/search/2/image?phrase=table+full+of+food


**Appendices**

**Appendix A**

**A Questionnaire to The Acquisition of English Adjective Phrase Structure by Saudi L2 Learners**

**Purpose of the research:**
The study attempts to investigate the function of UG in second language acquisition in the Adjective Phrase Structure by Arabic native speakers in Saudi Arabia learning English. This study will benefit to understand the role of UG in second language acquisition in the Adjective Phrase Structure on Arabic native speakers in Saudi Arabia learning English. Furthermore, the study investigates the role of L1 grammar on L2.

The questionnaire consists of background information followed by three tasks. Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Ms. Shatha Alanazi is conducting this project for her MA degree. In case you have any quires, please feel free to contact us on sh4alanazi@gmail.com

**By signing this form, you are giving your consent to participate in this study**
- Agree
- Disagree
Age

Nationality

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Years of learning/speaking English

- Less than a year
- 1-2 years
- 3-4 years
- More than four years

What is your grade in TOFEL / IELTS / STEP? (If you have write the name of the test and the grade) (If you don't have any just put 0 please)

Task 1

Please don't spend more than 10 minutes answering this task. Also, use adjectives for your description.

How was your first day at university? Write a short story describing your feelings, the building or your new classmates. Please, write it in one short paragraph.

Task 2

Please don't spend more than 10 minutes answering this task. Please, describe what you can see in these pictures using adjectives in full sentences. Please, write at least ONE full sentence. How do you feel? or What can you see?

![Image of a snowman in the snow]
Task 3
Please don't spend more than 5 minutes answering this task.
Please, reorder these words to put them in a grammatical sentence.

1- girl / fresh / ate / the / apple / a

2- was / exam / good / the

3- bought / he / a / car / new

4- I / read / book / a / short

5- are / happy / they / a / family

6- delicious / this / is / cake

You are done!
Thank you. Your participation is highly appreciated.
Investigating the Impact of Classroom Language on Moroccan High School Students’ Motivation in EFL Classes

Ismail El Byad
Applied Communication in Context Laboratory (ACC), Mohamed Premier University, Oujda, Morocco
Corresponding Author: ismailoelbyad@gmail.com

Abdelkrim Mouaziz
Cultures, Representations, Education, Didactics and Engineering Laboratory (CREDIF), Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Dhar El Mahraz, Fes, Morocco

Jaouad Moumni
Department of English, Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Mohamed Premier University, Oujda, Morocco

Maha El Biadi
Department of Languages, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Abdelmalek Essaâdi University, Tetouan, Morocco

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Abstract
Classroom language constitutes a central feature in the success of the teaching-learning process. The way language is used by teachers contributes to either the motivation or demotivation of students. When teachers carefully select positive words while teaching, learners are more likely to feel engaged and active participants in the construction of knowledge. However, when instructors give no importance to their language, they unconsciously deprive their students of productive learning and decrease their level of motivation. The present study aims to investigate how language promoted by English language teachers affects Moroccan high school students’ motivation. This study is significant since it allows us to understand how language can play an essential role in the productivity of the teaching-learning process.

To conduct this study, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted through a questionnaire and an interview, respectively. This research was conducted in Moroccan high schools in the city of Guercif with both Moroccan high school teachers and students. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the respondents hold positive attitudes toward the way language is used by their teachers. They also stated that they are pretty aware of the critical effect that their teachers’ words have on their motivation. The results obtained led us to consider many suggestions and recommendations, among which we find the necessity of carrying out continuous research to study students' needs and be able to respond to their multiple twenty-first-century needs.

Keywords: Classroom language, classes, communication, English as a foreign language, motivation

Introduction

With words, people can perform numerous functions. They can convey emotions, express thoughts, speak their minds, hurt others, or motivate others. The power of language resides in influencing people and shaping human experiences. It is a tool used by politicians, stakeholders, and public authorities to tame other segments of society and thus exert influence on them. The concept of language has triggered a tremendous debate among scholars, particularly linguists, regarding its discursive power. In this context, Foucault (1972) believes that discourse has the ability to privilege or marginalize. It follows that language plays a pivotal role in enacting various functions by the people who use it, either as a way that maintains social cohesion or as a bullet that destroys these valuable ties. Nowadays, especially within the classroom realm, language exerts a massive impact on the teaching-learning process and molds the classroom organizational patterns, including, the patterns of interaction, students-teacher rapport, and the level of motivation among students.

The classroom is a physical environment where teachers and students can enhance relationships, build social ties, and guarantee a successful teaching-learning process. Yet, sometimes teachers do not pay attention to the nature of the language they promote in dealing with students. For instance, in building a productive learning atmosphere, many Moroccan teachers are less concerned with using positive talk in their classrooms. This demotivates the majority of students and makes them less interested in classroom activities. Therefore, The focus of this paper is to investigate whether the language is a source of inspiration and motivation for students or an instrument that demotivates them and thus leads them to slack off. To carry out this study, several research instruments were employed. A qualitative method (interviews) was adopted to investigate Moroccan high school teachers' attitudes toward language use in the classroom. Also, questionnaires were administered to high school students to understand their views and perceptions towards the type of language promoted by their ELT teachers. Therefore, the present study combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine the issue from different perspectives.

The present study aims to contribute to the accumulation of knowledge in classroom discourse analysis, which is regarded as one of the most essential sub-branches within discourse analysis. It also seeks to raise awareness about the powerful functions that language can perform within the classroom realm. Simply put, it is an invitation for practitioners and teachers to pay significant attention to how they use language.

The current study attempts to raise, investigate, and answer the following research questions:

1. What are the profiles of students affected by the teachers’ classroom language?
2. What are the factors that affect high school students’ motivation?
3. To what extent does the teacher’s classroom language affect students’ motivation?
4. What are the impacts of the teacher's classroom language on students' motivation to learn English?

In this study, it is hypothesized that the linguistic terms used by teachers are more likely to enhance students' motivation and kindle their interest than to kill their zealous attitudes about learning. Furthermore, this investigation will participate in developing new teaching patterns that will change some teachers' vision by considering learners' needs and making them a top priority.
Consequently, this will change teachers' perceptions of instructing and modify their teaching philosophy.

Yet, this study will be limited only to investigating the language used by English teachers in high schools since it is the subject in which students are exposed more to communication and interaction with their teachers. Also, in this study, no attention will be given to other Arabized subjects like philosophy, history, geography, or Islamic education.

This paper is divided into three main sections. The first section provides a theoretical overview of the relationship between language, power, and communication in the classroom. The second section is devoted to describing the research methodology adopted. The third section highlights the study results and their analysis. Last but not least, the fourth section discusses the most important findings and conclusions drawn from this study.

Literature Review

Power and Communication in the Classroom

Communication is a pivotal component of people's daily lives. Without communication, nothing is meaningful; people might have ideas and thoughts to share. They may also want to express their feelings toward one another. Yet, none of this can be achieved without a channel of communication. That is to say, speaking is an inborn feature through which individuals with different interests, cultural backgrounds, and diverse religions can get to know each other and establish social ties. In the classroom context, communication is a central feature of the teaching-learning process. Teachers and students cannot successfully build positive contact if communication does not exist. Some scholars argue that communication is the teaching process itself. In this respect, Hurt, Schott, and Mc Croskey (1978) stated that there is a "difference between knowing and teaching, and that difference is communication in the classroom" (p.3). Communication is conceptualized as a bridge between what the teacher knows about the subject matter and the learners’ needs. It is a means that allows for transmitting knowledge in the classroom. In other words, teachers can be knowledgeable in various fields and disciplines, but if communicative competence is missing, this knowledge is useless. The ability to communicate in the classroom can be of great help for both teachers and learners to agree on the classroom rules and establish routines. Hence, the above quote emphasizes the idea that communication is synonymous with teaching and that success in maintaining the teaching-learning process is determined by the ability to communicate and exchange ideas.

The relationship between communication and power in the classroom resides in defining both the teacher's and the learners' roles. It is the nature of power promoted at school, which determines the types of interaction and communication between the teacher and students. For instance, if the focus is on the development of a learner-centered atmosphere, the teacher is more likely to adopt a shared sort of power that revolves around putting the learners’ needs as a top priority. In so doing, the teacher is required to adopt a democratic and horizontal attitude toward his students. However, if the teacher follows a more traditional approach to teaching, they will be highly concerned with claiming a different degree of power in which learners have minimal power.

To elaborate more on this point, Mc Crosckey and Richmond, (1983) pointed out that: power and communication are closely interrelated. The power that is not used is a power that does not exist. The use of power requires communication. In the absence of communication, therefore, the teacher in the classroom is powerless. In the same vein, the
way(s) the teacher communicates with her/his students to a major extent determine the type and extent of the power he/she exerts over those students. Similarly, the type of power exerted will have a major impact on the quality of teacher-student communication. (p. 1).

The above statement confirms the idea that there exists a bidirectional relationship between communication and power in the classroom. It is thanks to communication that this power is conveyed and established. In return, the way power is manifested at school shapes the nature of the interaction between teachers and their learners. As a result, this would affect students' perception of learning and influence their attitudes toward what goes on in the classroom. This impact resides either in motivating learners to perform better or demotivating them. Similarly, Sadler & Mogfors-Bevan asserted that “due to the asymmetry of power relationships between teacher and student in such context, the range of conversational acts displayed by the pupils may well be more restricted” (as cited in Maftoon & Shakouri, 2012, p. 1212). The issue of power relations is strongly present in the context of the classroom. Students with minimal degrees of freedom might be unable to express themselves the way they like. This is because of the inferior position they occupy with their teacher. Simply put, the overuse of power can lead to an unhealthy teaching-learning atmosphere which results in students' inability to reach their learning objectives. Hence, one would say that the teachers' stance regarding their performance and classroom practices exerts, in one way or another, an influence on learners’ motivation to learn. In addition, it can be noted that power and communication are two interrelated features in the classroom that need more consideration from teachers.

Language and Power in the Classroom

Hurt et al. (1978) pointed out that "power refers to a teacher's ability to affect in some way the student's well-being beyond the student's control" (p. 124). This view emphasizes that in the classroom, teachers can shape their students' behaviors and attitudes without taking their opinions. This means that learners have no control over the way power is used, the thing that leads them to assume the role of “the controlled”. This might be the case in certain contexts. In some others, students have no objection regarding the way they are monitored and they willingly accept their teacher’s power to affect their behavior. Other general views about power are advocated by other writers (e.g. Cartwright & Zander, 1968; McClelland, 1975; Zaleznik & Kets de Vries, 1975). These writers see power, generally, as an individual's ability to influence another person's or group of people's behaviors. This suggests that power refers to the ability to push others to do something. In other words, the recipients display a certain change in their attitude or opinion due to the power exerted on them.

In the classroom, learners are either encouraged or neglected based on the way power is used by their teachers. In this context, Dangel and Durden (2010) mentioned that the teacher’s talk has a powerful function and while using the language, the teacher, unconsciously, reveals his thoughts. The teacher's language is what gives meaning to classroom interaction. It is through language that all classroom practices are maintained. Also, language is a medium that allows for the communication of ideas and makes the teacher-student rapport meaningful. That is to say, the teaching-learning process cannot be carried out without the teacher's talk. What is more, Dangel and Durden (2010) pointed out that the way teachers’ language is manipulated in the classroom affects students’ perception of learning. What makes a difference in the attitudes of students is the way language is used by teachers. When words are used carefully in the classroom, they certainly encourage a meaningful context for students where they can interact positively. Simply
put, classroom language has a substantial impact on learners’ achievement. Moreover, the channel of fruitful communication in the classroom between teachers and students will be broken if no attention is given to the choice of words. Undoubtedly, teachers are required to assume responsibility for the comments they give their students.

In investigating the relationship between power and language in the classroom, several studies have been conducted. Podobinska (2017) explored the impact of teachers’ positive words and the integration of humor on Polish students’ interest in learning. The study’s findings revealed that students’ motivation increased in the classroom when the teacher used positive talk. Her examination of the literature review also showed that teachers need to use encouraging language to successfully improve their classroom practice and meet the needs of learners. Similarly, Saka et al. (2022) studied the connection between the teacher’s talk and students’ motivation in six high schools of Watang Pulu in Sidrap. Data were gathered through observation and a questionnaire survey. The results showed that there is an interplay between the teacher’s talk and students’ motivation in English learning. Based on our literature review, no studies have been conducted to address the present issue in the Moroccan context. Therefore, this paper aims to examine the impact of Moroccan high school teachers’ classroom language on students’ motivation.

Method

To answer the research questions and meet the research objectives, quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. The purpose behind choosing the quantitative approach is to get statistics and numerical findings about the perceptions of Moroccan high school students towards the language used by their English language teachers in the classroom. The results obtained were beneficial in identifying the extent to which the teachers’ language motivates students in English learning. Moreover, implementing this approach allowed us to know more about the nature of the relationship teachers develop with their students. The qualitative approach was also necessary since it paved the way for the understanding of the issue based on the personal views and experiences of the participants. To achieve this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with ELT teachers to reflect on the way they use language in dealing with their students. Therefore, the research tools employed in the present study were the questionnaire and interview.

Participants

For the use of questionnaires, a simple random sampling technique was adopted. In this type of sampling, every participant has the chance to take part in the study (McCombes, 2023). The population targeted was high school students from different levels in the delegation of Guercif City, Morocco in 2022. The number of participants was about 400 students from five high schools. Yet, only 380 students filled in the questionnaires administered to them, while 20 of them did not give them back. Opting for this large number will ensure the generalization of the findings. The rationale behind targeting high school students is that they have got familiar with the English language and they are in a position to voice out their opinions about what goes on in the classroom. As for the interview, the participants were high school ELT teachers. They were ten teachers from five high schools in the same city. The figure below illustrates the questionnaire’s respondents' background information:
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Figure 1. Distribution of gender, age, school level, and period of studying the English language among students

A close analysis of the graph reveals that female students constitute the majority at 61.6%, while males formed 38.4%. In addition, this figure demonstrates that students between the age of 17 and 19 years old formed 57.1% of the whole sample; students aged between 15 and 17 years old made up 30.5% of participants, whereas students aged between 19 and 21 constituted 10.5% and students from 21 years above made up 1.8%. As far as the level of students is concerned, the results prove that 42.6% were second-year baccalaureate students, 30% of the respondents were first-year baccalaureate students, and 27.4% were common core students. Finally, the above figure indicates that 71.3% of the respondents have been studying the English language for more than three years, 27.6% of them have been studying it for two years, while 1.1% have studied English for only one year.

Research Instruments
Questionnaire

The questionnaire is considered the most important technique for gathering data from large numbers of respondents quickly. Conway (2006) defines the questionnaire as follows:

A questionnaire is an internal research tool and is one of the means of eliciting the thoughts, feelings, beliefs, experiences, and attitudes of a sample group of individuals. It is a concise, preplanned set of questions designed to yield specific information about a particular topic from one or more groups of people. (p. 3)

The questionnaire is meant to investigate the respondents' attitudes and beliefs toward an issue; it helps researchers to collect data in a standardized way. Questionnaire surveys have a predetermined purpose that is related to the main objectives of the study. That is to say, the questionnaire should be used as a tool for collecting data when the researcher believes it has added value to the research.
The questionnaire is chosen in this study to identify the attitudes of Moroccan high school students towards the language used by their English language teachers in the region of Guercif (a city in the oriental region of Morocco). Data were collected from students belonging to five high schools in the city. The questionnaire consists of four sections. In the first section, the participants were asked to provide some background information that can help interpret the results, including age, sex, and level. The second section was devoted to investigating of students’ attitudes toward the language used by their English teachers. As for the third section, questions were designed to determine the impact of teachers’ language on students’ motivation in Moroccan EFL classes.

**Interview**

Interviewing is a method used to collect data in qualitative research, particularly in social sciences. There are three approaches to interviewing: structured approach, semi-structured approach, and unstructured approach. The present study adopts a semi-structured interview. It is between structured and unstructured models on a formality continuum; elements of structured and unstructured methods are used. Moreover, the list of questions used by the interviewer can include open-ended or close-ended questions (Kothari, 2004). In the context of our investigation, interviews were used with high school English language teachers, who were invited to share their views about what they consider relevant in their classroom. This type of interview paved the way for more details regarding the views ELT teachers have about the power of words on students’ motivation. Besides, the rationale behind applying the interview was to determine the type of rapport teachers have with their students and whether it affects their interest in English learning.

**Research Procedures**

The research procedure followed in the present study differs based on each research instrument. For example, the questionnaire was designed in a way that serves both the research objectives and questions. It was administered to a limited number of students to complete. The rationale was to spot the questionnaire's weaknesses and strengths to make the necessary changes. Later on, questionnaires were distributed to reach the intended population (high school students). After collecting data from the respondents, an SPSS program was utilized to turn the findings into statistics like graphs and tables. The interviews were conducted face-to-face with Moroccan ELT teachers from the same high schools. The participants’ answers were transcribed and used as evidence to support the statistical findings.

**Results**

The present section discusses the significant findings obtained from the questionnaire and interview. Mixing both results was necessary since it allows us to compare students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards the issue. It also gives a chance to crosscheck the results by describing the numerical findings and using the interviews as testimonies to support the analysis.

**Students’ English Level and Their Attitudes Towards the Language**

After having described the background information of the participants, the following subsection is an analysis of the respondents' answers about their English level and their attitudes toward the language. The graph below demonstrates the distribution of the respondents' answers:
A close statistical analysis of the graph reveals that 92% of the respondents like the English language and have a positive attitude towards its learning, whereas only 8% of students do not like it, and thus, have negative opinions about it. The following graph gives a clear idea about the respondents’ English level.

As can be seen from the figure, 53% of the respondents have an average level, 27% claimed that they have a good level of English, 10.5% of the students have a weak level while the number of students who said to have a very weak level constitutes only 2.6% of the population. Furthermore, the graph above demonstrates that 6.6% of the students display an excellent level of English.
**Teacher-Students Relationship**

To investigate the nature of the relationship that students have with their English language teachers about its impact, students were asked about the way they perceive their contact with their teachers in the classroom and its importance in their learning. Both items 7 and 8 of the questionnaire asked students about their relationship with their instructors and whether they consider it crucial in their learning. The figure below shows that 63.7% of the respondents have a very good relationship with their teachers, whereas only 1.8% of the students have a bad one with them.

![Figure 4. Teacher-students relationship](image)

Therefore, it is evident that many respondents develop a healthy rapport with their students, which is a good start for a successful teaching-learning process.

**The Impact of English Teachers’ Language on Students’ Motivation**

To investigate students’ attitudes toward the way their teachers use their language in the classroom and its impact on their motivation in English language learning, several questions were asked. For instance, in item nine of the questionnaire, students were asked: How do you find the language used by your English teacher? The figure below shows the distribution of the results:

![Figure 5. Students’ attitudes towards the language used by their English language teachers](image)
A close analysis of the above findings reveals that 55.8% of the respondents claim that the language used by their English language teachers is very motivating. This is evidenced in their answers, as respondent 248 (Common Core Student) stated: “My teacher motivates me and encourages me to speak English in the classroom and I feel very happy”. This statement was reported not only by common core students but also by second-year baccalaureate students, as one of them argued: “My teacher makes me love English very much and I do love him; he encourages me a lot to participate in the classroom. he says to me you are my best student”. Similarly, respondent 16 expressed: “My teacher’s language has a great impact on my learning because he is the one who makes me love this language unlike other teachers of other subjects, I don’t like them; I feel bored in their classes”. Language is not only a tool for teaching and giving instructions but also an instrument that kindles learners’ interest and motivates them to study. Moreover, this figure shows that only 2.1% of the learners considered their teachers’ language demotivating. They simply think that their teachers do not encourage them to speak and voice out their opinions and they humiliate them. For instance, respondent 301 (Second Year Baccalaureate Student) claimed: “My teacher does not motivate me at all; he always insults me in front of my classmates and I feel very sad. He treats well only those who are good at English”.

Furthermore, to get more details regarding this aspect of the present study, a question was devised to have an idea about the extent to which teachers motivate their students through their language use. The following figure illustrates the distribution of the respondents’ answers:

![Figure 6. The extent to which students are motivated by their English language teachers](image)

As it is clear from this figure, the discrepancy between students’ answers is clear-cut. A significant proportion of 56.1%, answered that they always receive motivating remarks and encouraging words from their teachers. The obtained results are very compatible with the findings of Figure nine, in the sense that most of learners find their teachers’ language motivating. This idea is confirmed by respondent 42 (First Year Baccalaureate Student) when he stated: “My teacher always motivates me and he tells me that you are a good student and I like him so much”. In the same vein, respondent 104 (Second Year Baccalaureate Student) declared: “My teacher always does encourage me to speak and communicate in English”. The figure also shows that only 3.9%
of the students do not receive any kind of motivation in the classroom from their teachers.

So as not to make any biased generalizations based on these results, the resort to qualitative
data is inevitable. The interviews conducted show that most of the teachers do motivate their
students through the use of very engaging and motivating words. To illustrate, teacher nine stated:
"I think definitely yes! I would go as far as saying that the words' choice, language use, and
teachers' attitude towards the language itself can determine the students' interest and motivation
towards the target language". This quote stresses the idea that the way instructors behave and
perceive teaching has a great impact on learners' motivation., the teacher is seen by students as an
important element that can make them enthusiastic about learning and achieving better results. Other
teachers mentioned that the words used in the classroom have a substantial effect on
learners' intellect and emotions. To clarify this point, Teacher 10 pointed out:
Ah… I believe that our words have a great influence on people in general... in our context,
our language, as teachers, influences our students in a way that leaves an impact on them
intellectually or emotionally. I mean, there is a big difference when you say, for example,
"Do this exercise" and 'Do this exercise, please'. It also makes a tremendous difference
when you say such a great answer rather than saying yes. So, I believe that our word choice
and use of language affect students in one way or another.

(Teacher 10, Ezzarktouni High School)
This shows that the discourse promoted and the linguistic choices made by teachers play a
significant role in motivating or demotivating students to learn. Teachers are aware of the power
of language in their teaching and the way it can push students to study or hinder their interest.
Besides, teachers do not only perform their roles as language knowers but also as human beings
who can feel their learners' cognitive as well as affective needs. For this reason, they are very
selective in how they use their words in treating students. In every discourse, there is an embedded
power that is echoed to the public through cautious and intentional linguistic choices. In the context
of teaching, power is voiced out by teachers in a way that either encourages learners to study or
alienates them and thus demotivates them, as Teacher 5 stated:
Yes, of course. I would say that the language of teachers or English language teachers is
potent and every teacher has his or her way of motivating his students. Sometimes the
teacher resorts to very negative words to control the classroom sometimes they try to use
very sweet words very encouraging words very motivating words to encourage their
students to take part and to have their say in the classroom and of course, this is going to
affect positively their motivation in the classroom and for example if I would say that the
teachers most of the teachers nowadays should reconsider the way they deal with their
students.

(Teacher 3, Ennahda High School)
This answer makes it clear that the teacher’s discourse in the classroom is not to be neglected.
Language is a double-edged- sword and its power resides in the way teachers perceive it and
manipulate it in carrying out their classroom practices and their interaction with their students.

To get into more detail about this aspect of the study, teachers were required to provide
some examples of expressions or words they make use of to motivate their students. For example,
teacher 1 stated: “Yes like excellent, you can do it, good, great, try”. In the same vein, Teacher 4
expressed: "Ok… sometimes I tell them good, good job, excellent, I trust you, you can do better,
and so on… like that". Hence, these expressions are believed to encourage learners to be more
productive in their studies and adopt a positive attitude towards both the English language and
teachers themselves.

Moreover, students were asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with a set of statements. The following graph gives a clear idea about their answers.

This figure demonstrates that the majority of respondents (72.9%) extremely agreed that their teachers do encourage them and tolerate their mistakes in the classroom while only 2.6% extremely disagreed. Also, a large number of students which constitutes 65.8% of the population, claimed that their teachers have never used negative words to insult them, whereas 2.6% of students argued that they are ill-treated in the classroom. This graph also reveals that 63% of learners strongly agreed that the teachers’ feedback is essential in increasing their self-confidence. On the other hand, 38.8% strongly agreed and 35.5% agreed that power is needed sometimes in the classroom because it helps them control the classroom.

Additionally, the success of classroom interaction would not be achieved if teachers ignore their linguistic choices and attitudes toward their students. Thus, this section was an attempt to analyze the extent to which the language used by teachers of the English language affects their students’ achievement and interest in learning.
Discussion

The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data revealed that classroom language plays a pivotal function in promoting a successful teaching-learning process. The way the teacher monitors his classroom talk dramatically affects students’ motivation and interest in the subject matter. The study also showed that the respondents hold very positive attitudes toward the language used by their teachers. This means that the linguistic choices made by ELT teachers do motivate students and create positive interaction among them. In an attempt to answer the research questions mentioned earlier, it can be stated that students’ motivation in English language learning is strongly linked with the nature of classroom language employed by teachers. For instance, the majority of students mentioned that the teacher’s encouraging words make a difference in their learning and boost their self-esteem to perform well in the classroom. Similarly, Podobinska (2017) found that teachers’ positive words had significant impact on Polish students’ motivation and performance. Besides, Saka et al. (2022) studied the relationship between the teacher’s language and students’ motivation in Sidrap high schools and concluded that there is a strong connection between the two variables. In line with these findings, the discussion of the teachers’ interviews revealed that most of them have a positive rapport with their students. In answering several questions, they strongly mentioned that they have a friendly relationship with their students based on respect and mutual understanding. This implies that a stress-free teaching environment is necessary to make students feel comfortable and willing to improve their learning. Therefore, Moroccan high school teachers are pretty loyal to the humanistic approach that prioritizes the students’ affective and cognitive needs.

Conclusion

The present paper aimed to investigate both Moroccan high school teachers’ and students' perceptions of the language promoted in EFL classes. It also aimed at determining the significant impact that this language has on students’ motivation. One of the major conclusions drawn from the current study is that the linguistic choices made by high school English language teachers play a very significant role in instilling self-confidence in students and cultivating a sense of achievement among them. This means that students’ motivation to learn depends mainly on the way language is manipulated by instructors. Furthermore, teachers confirmed that they believe in the power of words in the type of classroom discourse maintained by teachers and the extent to which it affects the teaching-learning process and the learning atmosphere in general. Moreover, this investigation showed that 21st-century language teachers hold a positive attitude toward the needs of learners. They firmly admitted that meeting the needs of every student is a key feature of learner-centeredness and it needs exceptional care on the part of all teachers. To sum up, language is a crucial tool in carrying out classroom practices and making the teaching-learning process meaningful. It is through communication that social ties and different types of classroom interaction are established. It is also a powerful means that can be used by teachers to exert influence on students and make them adopt either a positive or a negative attitude toward learning. In other words, teachers’ words can either encourage learners and involve them in what they do in the classroom, or demotivate them and decreases their interest in the subject. In this regard, teachers should be aware of the nature of the classroom discourse they encourage because it is considered of great importance for students. That is to say, they have to be very selective concerning the linguistic choices they make because they mean a lot to students. Hence, the present study was an attempt to investigate the extent to which the language used by English language...
teachers impacts high school students' motivation.

Acknowledgment
This work is an original collaboration between Applied Communication in Context research laboratory (Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Mohamed Premier University, Oujda, Morocco). And the Cultures, Representations, Educations, Didactics and Engineering laboratory “CREDIF” (Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Dhar El Mahraz, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Fes, Morocco).

About the Authors
Ismail El Byad is a Ph.D. candidate conducting his research on the impact of ICT-oriented games on Moroccan high school students’ classroom interaction in EFL classes. He is also a Moroccan high school ELT instructor. He participated in many conferences and workshops on a wide range of topics. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7052-9909

Abdelkrim Mouaziz is a Ph.D. candidate conducting his research on the impact of the humanistic approach on EFL students’ learning skills. He is also a Moroccan high school ELT instructor. He participated in many conferences and workshops on a wide range of topics.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6584-8369

Dr. Jaouad Moumni is a university professor, at the Department of English, Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Mohamed Premier University, Oujda, Morocco. He is a member of the ACC research laboratory: Applied Communication in Context Laboratory.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7857-4758

Dr. Maha El Biadi is a university professor, at the Department of Languages, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Abdemakek Essaâdi University, Tetouan, Morocco. She was a member of the CREDIF research laboratory: Cultures, Representations, Education, Didactics and Engineering Laboratory. She participated in many conferences and workshops on a wide range of topics.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4134-2675

References
Rhetorical Strategies for Teaching Essay Writing: A Case Study Involving Saudi ESL Students

Haytham Bakri
English Language Department,
College of Language Sciences, King Saud University
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Email: hbakri@ksu.edu.sa

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Abstract
The use of rhetorical strategy in teaching writing has been a topic of discussion in ESL training programs since most teaching methodologies do not give the mother tongue a substantial role. This article presents findings from research on the rhetorical techniques pre-service teachers employ in writing both before and after receiving process-based writing instruction. The study focused on determining the writing techniques student teachers employ to complete an argumentative essay, and finding out how much pre-service teachers' usage of writing methods is improved by using a rhetorical process approach to writing. The significance of the present study lies in the fact that it examines the writing abilities of Saudi students with different levels of language abilities and evaluates how rhetorical strategies help them in writing English easily and with little or no flaws. The fundamental question to be probed through this study is to what extent rhetorical strategies can help teach successful writing to Saudi ESL learners. The data was obtained via the performance of an essay task utilizing two think-aloud protocols and based on a sample of 98 student teachers from Saudi Arabia. The findings of this study show rhetorical strategies such as generating ideas and rewriting are very essential in writing final essays by students. It is clear from the results that after students have mastered the choosing ideas process, they may include concepts that are relevant to the text. Professors should spend time, particularly teaching this kind of approach to help students become competent method users and writers generally, regardless of their audience. In concluding writing an article, it seemed like the strategy of translating from the native tongue to a foreign language was being utilized.

Keywords: rhetorical strategies, Saudi ESL students, teaching essay writing, think-aloud protocol, writing strategies

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Introduction

Because of its essential and numerous distinctive features writing appears to be the most demanding of all the language skills in English as it is true, perhaps, for other languages. The ability to clearly and cogently express ideas through written words involves appropriate mechanics and grammatically correct, plausibly expressed, written content which delivers meaning correctly and comprehensively. It has always remained the most challenging skill for language learners, more so for second language learners, as compared with the other skills, such as listening, reading and speaking (Thonus, 2020).

It has been observed that essay writing as a subject is one of the abilities that pre-service teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) have the lowest proficiency in. They often lament their lack of knowledge about how to pursue this talent (Bui, Nguyen, & Viet, 2023). Making the right decisions to transmit meaning, reacting to a communicative aim, and considering the readership are all parts of learning to write. Writing requires a particular kind of mental activity, one that includes planning, pondering, preparing, practicing, making errors, and coming up with other answers (Sinaga, Hutabarat, Panjaitan, & Saragih, 2022)

Writing is thought of as a circular process since the author must spend time reviewing and thinking back on his or her work. Recursive writing enables one to reconsider all writing phases. The model developed by Coffin et al. (2005) provides proof that the sociocultural component is important while writing. According to a sociocultural viewpoint, writing is not merely a cognitive activity but also a skill that involves intricate and interconnected linguistic, social, cultural, and cognitive processes. A paradigm shift that sees writing as a process of building an organization that involves strategies, numerous revisions, and formative feedback is known as a process-based approach.

This study takes a process-oriented approach to writing, which includes many steps such as prewriting, planning, drafting, reflection, feedback from peers or the instructor, proofreading, and editing. The process approach views all writing as a creative endeavor that needs time and encourages criticism to be completed successfully. While teaching process writing, the instructor veers away from assigning topics to students and receiving their final drafts for review without participating in the writing process. Process writing studies have provided insight into various approaches to writing instruction as well as the creation of tools and resources to support students in overcoming their writing challenges (Jensen & Dean, 2022). Researching writing issues is consequently a difficult task that has to be addressed with care.

These results undoubtedly shift the emphasis of writing instruction from what we write to how we write. This study adds to the body of knowledge on writing tactics in a university setting for English language learners.

The present study aims to investigate two main problems, a) teaching mechanisms adopted by ESL writing instructors which is the core concern of this paper, and b) students’ preferences and treatments of given written feedback. Ferris and Roberts (2001) lay great stress on error feedback and the teachers’ awareness of the attitudes and preferences of ESL students. They also observed that the attitudes and preferences of ESL learners have been mostly overlooked in many earlier studies. The researcher in this paper looks into ESL students’ beliefs and preferences concerning the feedback on their writing performances and how they manage them in their subsequent writings. Besides, the outcome of the feedback will be analyzed with emphasis on various methods that are generally believed to be indirect feedback with a focus on their clarity and their usefulness in making students retain the suggestions given and improve their writing. To
engage with this problem convincingly and analytically, some Saudi university-level ESL students have been selected and investigated through a structured questionnaire. Based on the aim of the study, the research question is: How do ESL writing instructors' teaching mechanisms impact Saudi university-level ESL students' preferences and treatment of written feedback, and how does this affect their writing performance and retention of feedback suggestions?

**Literature Review**

**Writing Strategies**

These days, learning and teaching to write are thought of as a work that proceeds via a process with many phases (Sarzhoska-Georgievska, 2016), as shown in Figure one.

![Figure 1. The process of writing (Díaz, Ramos, & Ortiz, 2017, p. 88)](image)

In addition to refining and amending this content, these steps often entail preparing and drafting a written draft, as seen in Figure one. As this procedure is cyclical, a shift back for review and editing must constantly occur. Yang (2019) asserted that for students to write well, they must express their previous knowledge of the linguistic contents (conceptual knowledge) and the general application of different actions to address several writing challenges. Several writing methods are used by transferring these two sorts of information (Huh, 2022).

The employment of writing methods by students is another significant factor examined in this research. According to Sinaga et al. (2022), a strategy is any tool, particular action, or behavior used to address a problem. As a result, when authors write, we presume they are using strategies to complete their work (Huh, 2022; Khairuddin, Rahmat, Noor, & Khairuddin, 2021). Connor (2011) stated that good writers use rhetorical techniques in their writing. Rhetorical strategies deal with text types and their structures, while metacognitive strategies are connected to writers' self-regulation related to cognitive procedures when producing a text (Huh, 2022; Sarzhoska-Georgievska, 2016)

**Rhetorical Strategies**

According to Jensen and Dean (2022), rhetorical techniques are "the methods the writer arranges to express his thoughts acceptably. The arrangement of an essay, using the home tongue to order paragraphs and sentences, and presenting ideas using writing norms that are acceptable to
native speakers of that language are all examples of rhetorical tactics, according to the author (Hosseini, 2016; Jensen & Dean, 2022; Sarzhoska-Georgievka, 2016). Rhetorical techniques are "tools that authors employ to organize and express their thoughts in writing norms acceptable to native speakers of that language. In the context of language learners, Moon (2012) argued for various essay-writing techniques. This research largely revealed that language learners utilized distinct writing methods, classed into different categories except for Hosseini (2016), who categorized the different writing strategies from a theoretical standpoint. Nonetheless, Connor (2011) suggests that the numerous classifications might extremely likely be confusing, especially for language learners. Connor (2011) also proposes that successful writers apply the taxonomy of ESL writing methods: rhetorical, meta-cognitive, cognitive, communicative and social/affective strategies. To emphasize, students must grasp appropriate writing skills fit for varied types of writing (Connor 2011; Hosseini, 2016).

Rhetorical techniques are connected to Aristotelian conceptions of Logos, Ethos and Pathos. These three parts often concentrate on how a speech should be done (Berger, 2020). According to Aristotle's notion of Logos, Ethos and Pathos in a speech, Logos focuses on the message that speakers would want to communicate. Speakers need to ensure that the message is clear and simple to grasp by the audience. Ethos plays the same crucial part when speakers make their speeches as they need to establish their role and credibility in providing the information or knowledge. Speakers need to guarantee that the audiences believe in what they say. They need to develop trust and connection with the audience. Finally, Pathos plays a crucial job for presenters since they need to attract the audience’s attention to understand the content provided (Berger, 2020).

Four sub-strategies for rhetorical devices are put out by Huh (2022): organization, use of an L1, formatting/modelling, and comparison. L1 is described as “translating produced concept into ESL,” by Mu (2005, p. 4). He characterizes an organization as being in several stages of growth. Modelling is therefore described as 'genre consideration,' and 'various rhetorical norms' is the notion of comparison. The sub-strategies of organizing ideas, code-switching, and translating are also included by Larenas et al. (2017). Also, they discovered that study participants used various tactics both before and after a process-based writing intervention (thinking aloud protocol). Again, the three rhetorical devices of Logos, Ethos, and Pathos may be employed while writing argumentative essays. According to Yang (2019), Pathos is an emotional appeal, Ethos is an ethical appeal, and Logos is a logical argument. The interconnectedness of the triangle's three primary components, Logos, Ethos, and Pathos, suggests that if one is absent, the triangle may not be whole.

According to Dunn (2022), learning rhetorical techniques would improve authors' ability to persuade and convince readers. Choosing material for argumentative discourse units, setting up the structure, and phrasing the style are the three components, that authors use to synthesize the text (Dunn, 2022). Despite not employing the elements of Logos, Ethos, and Pathos, Khaırudden et al., (2021) demonstrate the significance of understanding and applying rhetorical techniques in academic research writing because academic research has a structure resembling that of argumentative essays. A writer may lose focus or lose sight of the reason they are writing an argumentative essay if they concentrate too much on one technique (Jensen, 2022; Kuzborskka, 2019). As a result, while writing argumentative essays, students must use all three key components and tactics (Fife, 2010; Moon, 2012).
According to Ramage, Bean, and Johnson (2016), when the writer explains their work, the Logos, or the message, has to be consistent and logical. The concepts must also be backed up by substantial evidence; this will allow the concepts to indirectly address the demands of the readers. Aziz and Abdul (2022) indicate that to guarantee that the aim or purpose of writing essays is met, most assertions must be clearly stated, expounded upon, and backed up with reliable evidence. According to Kuzborska (2019), students should use convincing arguments and evidence to support their arguments in their writings. For instance, Cerku (2015) discovered that writers who cite more often use more rhetorical devices than authors who cite less frequently. In other words, authors may be able to convince readers to agree with their views and arguments when they include more citations. In doing so, they may implicitly use the rhetorical device known as logos to appeal to the readers' understanding and agreement with the arguments made. Since authors want readers to be drawn in and agree with the arguments stated, they propose that the rhetorical device logos are utilized in argumentative essay writing (Hussain et al., 2011; Aziz & Abdul., 2022).

Barton (2020) also found that students were unable to employ the notions of coherence and cohesion because they were unable to comprehend the argumentative essays' logical progression. Thus, they recommend that students will require some work, particularly in integrating the ideas to use the notions of coherence and cohesiveness. According to Sinaga et al. (2022), the message is the most significant component of creating an argumentative essay, hence authors should utilize 70% Logos rhetorical technique. They must convey the information logically and through sound thinking techniques.

Method

A process-based writing intervention was used as the main writing intervention in this qualitative and descriptive research study, and the goal was to elicit participants' writing techniques at two distinct times. This study's main objective is to utilize the think-aloud methodology to track the tactics teacher candidates use while writing the essay.

Participants

The study was conducted during the academic year 2022-2023 in five Saudi universities. The sample for the study was selected using a stratified random sampling technique. The population of interest was pre-service teachers who were enrolled in ESL training programs at the selected universities. The stratification was based on the level of language proficiency, with participants grouped into two categories: intermediate, and high proficiency. From each stratum, a random sample of participants was selected, resulting in a total of 98 student teachers (63 males & 36 females, aged below 25- above 35) who participated in the study (Table one). The participants were evenly distributed across the five universities, ensuring that the sample was representative of the population of pre-service teachers enrolled in ESL training programs in Saudi universities.

Research Instruments

A think-aloud approach was utilized to examine students' writing techniques while they created an essay-like piece. The think-aloud methodology was developed by Ericsson and Simon in 1993 as a method to document the Rhetorical processes that participants go through when they complete a task. Using this method, the participants must speak their ideas out loud while creating a text without the researcher's assistance.
Research procedures

Students were exposed to sixteen sessions of an academic writing course that is a component of the curriculum for EFL teacher preparation. Throughout these sessions, they produced four essays using a process-based approach and went through numerous versions. The writings addressed a variety of subjects, including athletics, technology, and campus life. Students composed essays that were audiotaped using the think-aloud methodology before the first session, or before the intervention. Students produced another essay just after session 16, which marked the conclusion of the intervention. The same think-aloud approach was used to assess how the participants used their writing techniques. While the two argumentative essays covered distinct subjects, they adhered to the standard format of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Researchers analyzed the number of writing methods that were evident during before and after intervention think-aloud procedures.

Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed and presented in the form of figures and Tables and the interpretation was made based on the calculated frequencies and percentages.

Results

Demographic Information

Results concerning key demographic characteristics of the selected respondents are presented in Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age bracket</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 25 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-30 years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35 years</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 35 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years spent teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 5 years</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 15 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1. Survey (2023)

The majority of the selected study participants (63.3%) were male, and only 36.7% were female. Most teachers (46.9%) were 31-35 years old, and only 9.2% were below 25 years. The majority of the teachers (38.8%) had spent 11-15 years teaching, and only 19.4% had spent below five years in teaching. This indicates that the participants had a great experience in school and knowledge of the different rhetorical strategies for teaching writing.
Descriptive Analysis

The participants were requested to provide their opinions on the common strategies utilized in writing a draft of an essay and the results are in Figure two:

![Figure 2. Strategies used in writing a draft of an essay](image)

Results in Figure two show that the most used strategy in writing a draft is reasoning (34.7%) followed by organizing (28%), then elaborating ideas (22.7%), code-switching (9.3%) and finally revising (5.3%).

The participants were requested to provide their opinions on the common strategies utilized in finalizing the writing of a complete essay and the results are in Figure three:

![Figure 3. Common strategies utilized in finalizing the writing of a complete essay](image)

Results in Figure three show that the most used rhetorical strategy in finalizing writing an essay is contrasting (42.7%) followed by rereading (22.7%), then expressing opinion (14%), rewriting (12.7%) and then connecting ideas (8%).
The participants were requested to provide their opinions on the major category of rhetorical strategy utilized in writing and the results are in figure four.

![Pie chart showing percentages of major rhetorical strategies]

*Figure 4.* A major category of rhetorical strategy utilized in writing

Participants revealed in figure four that the major category of rhetorical strategy utilized in writing is organizing ideas (56%) followed by Code-switching (26%), and then Translating (18%).

**Discussion**

Based on the research question "How do ESL writing instructors' teaching mechanisms impact Saudi university-level ESL students' preferences and treatment of written feedback, and how does this affect their writing performance and retention of feedback suggestions?" The research findings indicate that in the process of writing a draft, reasoning is the most frequently employed strategy, accounting for 34.7% of the responses, followed by organizing at 28% and elaborating ideas at 22.7%. Code-switching was used by 9.3% of the participants, and only 5.3% reported using revising as a strategy. When finalizing an essay, the dominant rhetorical strategy was contrasting, with 42.7% of the participants employing this technique. Rereading was the second most commonly used strategy at 22.7%, followed by expressing opinion at 14%, rewriting at 12.7%, and connecting ideas at 8%. In terms of the overall usage of rhetorical strategies, organizing ideas was the most commonly used category, accounting for 56% of the responses. Code-switching was the second most commonly used strategy, reported by 26% of the participants while translating was used by 18% of the participants. The results showed that the writing techniques that were most commonly utilized before the intervention were not those that were most frequently employed after it. In other words, although certain writing techniques were used less often after the intervention, others were used more frequently. Good writers spend more time organizing, outlining, and editing their ideas. Conversely, less accomplished authors devote less effort to planning and rewriting (Mu, 2005; Sinaga et al., 2022). Rhetorical writing strategies helped in organizing the essay; however, after participants underwent the process of writing-oriented intervention, they concentrated on actually writing the argumentative essay, connecting ideas, rereading, and rewriting them as they wrote the essay (Larenas et al., 2017; Hosseini, 2016). After the process of writing intervention, students spent more time completing their essays by using a wider range of tactics, such as linking and comparing their thoughts to generate a quality piece of writing (Connor, 2011; Jensen & Dean., 2022).

Several participants used techniques including summarizing, translating, and reinforcing that had not been noticed before the intervention. This may indicate that students' cognitive activity throughout the essay-writing process became much more fruitful and focused on completing a
high-quality piece of work. Students are likely more conscious of the necessity to apply these new tactics while writing an essay or other academic content if they are employing them. Also, it may be inferred that employing a process-based approach to writing four essays in a row promoted the usage of other strategies that hadn't been previously used. This 16-session intervention subsequently encouraged the use of a wider range of writing methods, as seen in the data analysis section above with the strategies of picking ideas, summarizing, and reinforcing, which participants only began to employ in the post-intervention argumentative essay. This may have been influenced by the fact that respondents had to work on several versions and modify a lot. It's possible that the writing process' two phases of drafting and editing call for a variety of techniques that, in a chain-like effect, prompt participants to apply further techniques (Huh, 2022).

Prior to the final essay writing process, one of the writing techniques was picking ideas. No matter what language they use, selecting concepts is a difficult method because pupils must learn to disregard unimportant information. Both in the native language and the second language, choosing concepts might be difficult. Students may incorporate concepts that are pertinent to the text after they are adept at using the picking ideas technique. To assist students to become good method users and writers overall, regardless of their audience, professors should spend time specifically teaching this form of approach. In finalizing writing an essay, it looked that the approach of translating from the native tongue to a foreign language was being applied. As most teaching strategies do not give the mother tongue a significant role, the usage of this tactic has been a debate point in ESL training programs. Translating is seen to be a trait of less experienced authors, who often concentrate on single words (Dijk et al., 2022; Roach-Freiman, 2021). Because of this, a lot of the methods and procedures employed in the classroom don't entail speaking in the student's native language (Roach-Freiman, 2021). This suggests that pupils, particularly those with superior English proficiency did not employ this method very often. Translation became a method that students used while engaging in L2 writing for these study participants since the intervention did cause them to employ it when they were finishing their essay.

On the other hand, there may be other reasons for using or not using a technique (Khairuddin et al., 2021). First off, while writing a document in a short amount of time, certain tactics could seem easier to use than others. This might account for why, among other things, why only rhetorical, techniques were identified when the two think-aloud procedures were used. Since the participants had little time to complete the task, there were no indications of communicative or socio-affective strategies (Hussain et al., 2011; Sinaga et al., 2022). Certain writing tactics employed by participants may require more cognitive effort from students when utilized by them, which may eventually cause students to be unwilling to use some of them (Huh, 2022; Jan et al., 2022). For instance, it is obvious that linking concepts while writing an essay requires a larger cognitive load than self-evaluating what is being written. The fact that participants had to speak their opinions openly in a scenario they were unfamiliar with is an essential issue. Also, the need that you voice your thoughts makes a difference since not everyone is able to focus on a job at hand without being distracted (Hussain et al., 2011; Sinaga et al., 2022). Children may employ writing tactics well, but they may not always be able to explain how they are being used. The fact that the circumstance is forced rather than natural or spontaneous adds additional dimension (Khairuddin et al., 2021; Korshunova & Bastrikova, 2019).

It is essential to remember the techniques pupils need to write well, regardless of the audience they may be writing to (Connor 2011; Moon, 2012). This makes it impossible to mandate that students be exposed to predetermined pedagogic sequences of writing methods since the
participants' usage of strategies is a personal and subjective endeavor. Next, it is the responsibility of the instructor to provide language exercises that may improve students' rhetorical writing processes and encourage the use of a broad range of communication styles (Sarzhoska-Georgievkska, 2016). When students have a variety of writing techniques in their toolbox, they can switch between them when there is a communication breakdown and become effective English writers (Larenas, et al, 2017).

**Conclusion**

The main aim of this study is to investigate the teaching mechanisms employed by ESL writing instructors and the preferences and treatments of Saudi university-level ESL students towards written feedback. The study found that reasoning, organizing, and elaborating ideas were the most commonly used strategies in writing a draft while contrasting, rereading, and expressing opinions were the most commonly used strategies in finalizing an essay. Organizing ideas was the most commonly used category of rhetorical strategy in writing. This study adds to the body of knowledge on writing tactics in a university setting for English language learners. In this sense, it can be said that the think-aloud protocol enabled the observation of many mental processes that take place while a writer creates a text for an exam. In light of this, it may be said that if the different writing processes are more commonly observed, it may be able to pinpoint how the students approach a writing assignment, particularly when they are greatly under pressure. Based on such information, instructors need to be able to assist students in their writing processes by using various methods and imparting the necessary principles for creating academic texts. Also, this research gave us the chance to see students' writing techniques both before and after an intervention. As a concluding observation, ESL education programs in Saudi Arabia and worldwide need to consider the results of this study. It takes a lot of practice to teach ESL and pre-service teachers need even more experience. Thus, future English teachers of English must develop an understanding of how the teaching and learning of writing are developed as well as which the other writing strategies (such as cognitive ones) other than the rhetorical processes are involved in it. Teachers must then come to see writing as a process involving various stages that result in the use of various writing strategies to become effective.

**About the Author:**

Haytham Bakri holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics and is a dedicated Faculty Member at the College of Language Sciences, King Saud University. With a fervent enthusiasm for research in language learning, the author's expertise encompasses an extensive array of topics. Key areas of interest include second language writing, corrective feedback, second language acquisition, and the implementation of efficacious language learning and teaching methodologies. ORCid ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0001-8727-9790

**References**


Students’ Attitudes towards Learning English Grammar: The Case of the English Department Students at the University of Raparin.

Rizgar M. Ameen

English Language Department/ College of Basic Education
University of Raparin, Rania, Iraq
Email: rizgar.muhammadameen@uor.edu.krd

Abstract
This research paper investigates the students' attitudes toward learning English grammar and the possible factors that may affect the learning process. The significance of the study is revealing the attitudes of the English department students of Raparin University towards English Grammar. For this, some questions were raised to identify the students' perspectives, methods, and techniques used by the instructors. The research was carried out at the English language department in the College of Basic Education at the University of Raparin. The study involved 40 second and third-year EFL learners who participated in an online questionnaire that included 20 items and the mixed method used to gather the data. The results present that while students recognize the importance of grammar in language learning, they find it challenging to learn. Also, the researcher discovered that the technique instructors use to teach grammar is unsuitable, and students find grammar complex because of its numerous rules. Finally, the study illustrates the significance of encouraging and nurturing positive attitudes among learners toward learning the language's grammar to enhance teaching effectiveness.

Keywords: Basic education, EFL students' attitudes, English grammar, instructors, positive attitudes, students' perception

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Introduction

Attitudes and students' foreign language learning achievements are interrelated. Fakaye (2010) stated that positive attitudes toward a second language enhance learners' motivation to learn. Additionally, Gardner and Lambert (1972) identified motivation and attitudes as the main factors that affect language learning.

Grammar as a system and structure plays a decisive role in language learning, and it is considered an important segment for effective communication in the target language. Regarding the importance of grammar in foreign language learning, Lightbown (1991) describes grammar as a "hook" for learners, providing a foundation to develop proficiency in the target language.

Learners' perspectives can be affected by some factors, which may impact the process of learning English grammar. Therefore, to enhance the efficiency of teaching English, teachers need to exert a positive mindset among learners toward learning the language's grammar.

While previous studies on students' attitudes toward learning English grammar were conducted, they have yet to target students of the English department at Raparin University. This study adds to the resolution of the issue and provides explanations for the possibility of such matters among English department students. It seeks to show the students' attitudes and uncover their viewpoints about English grammar and find out factors affecting their attitudes.

The study aims to investigate EFL students' attitudes toward English grammar as a language element, and it also examines factors that can either positively or negatively affect the process. It is significant because it presents how English department students deal with grammar inside and outside the classroom.

The research aims to realize the attitudes of English department students at the University of Raparin towards English grammar and factors that may impact the process. This paper tries to answer the following research questions:

1- What is the attitude of students in the English Department towards English grammar at the University of Raparin?
2- To what extent do the English Department students of Raparin University see the process of grammar learning as enjoyable?
3- How well do the teaching methods or techniques employed by the teachers of the English Department at the University of Raparin fill the needs of students?
4- What is the perception of grammar among the English Department student of Raparin University?

This study includes a relevant literature review that provides the historical background on students’ attitudes toward English grammar. The method section presents how the research was conducted at the University of Raparin. The findings section illustrates the results, and the discussion section interprets and summarizes the finding. Finally, the list of references includes all the references cited throughout the text.

Literature Review

Grammar consistently recognizes as the essential segment for learners to communicate effectively in the target language. Krashen (1982) highlighted that grammar is a skill acquired naturally within meaningful situations and rejected designing grammar-based language curricula. For Hedge (2000), grammar and the ways of teaching it stimulate the acquisition process. Similarly, Ellis (2006) states that explicitly teaching grammar helps develop implicit knowledge and supports language development. Also, Ur suggested that the grammatical forms taught could
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be used automatically in written and spoken communication if the learners give enough chance to practice (Ur, 1996).

Furthermore, acquiring knowledge of grammar in the primary language and secondary language are correlated. Both Hudson and Walmsley (2005) outlined that understanding one's first language, particularly its grammar, actually supports understanding a second language.

Borg (2003) asserted that students’ attitudes play an influential role in many issues and activities that teachers use. Still, it is mostly ignored in the language learning process in the most previously conducted research. For Fakeye (2010) learner's attitude is one of the most critical factors that impact foreign language learning. According to Straaijer (2016), the attitudes they might have to reflect not only their personal opinions but also the social order that individuals are a part of. Similarly, Aceron (2015) presented that the way to help students improve their performance in grammar is by changing their attitude toward English grammar learning. Zhou (2009) revealed and stated that it is mainly related to the beliefs of educators and administrators because the learners do not know what they need.

Schulz (2001) and Loewen et al. (2009) conducted studies on the role of grammar in language learning. They both revealed that grammar for most participants is recognized as a basis on which they can build up the information they learn about the language, and it helps them develop their writing, reading, and speaking skills. Furthermore, Bernat and Lloyd, as cited in Chali et al. (2020), believe that there is always a place for grammar, as it is an essential part of learning a language.

Connecting grammar to speaking ability Hoge (2014) illustrated that grammar kills your speaking ability and can overload the mind. He also believes that focusing too much on grammar makes you speak slower and tentative or, in other words, makes you feel anxious and anxiety.

The goal of studying grammar can differ among students; for some, it is a tool to avoid errors. For example, Zhou (2009) stated that students want to learn grammar to avoid making mistakes while writing. Similarly, İncecay and Dollar (2011) revealed that students regard grammar as a crucial segment of language learning and recommended teaching more communicatively.

Grammar is a necessity of language learning, but it is not interesting to study. Jean and Simard (2011) found that both students and teachers regarded grammar instructions as highly beneficial but not very entertaining. They also asserted that students feel that grammatical materials are complicated or confusing for them to understand due to having a massive number of rules in grammar. Conversely, Andrew (2021) highlighted that complexity is not an inherent quality of grammar; it can be either straightforward or highly complex and hinges on how it is presented.

Method

A research approach is a strategy for organizing and carrying out research. The researcher uses a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) for conducting this research. These methods allow the necessary data and material collection for subsequent statistical processing and analysis.

English Department in the College of Basic Education at the University of Raparin was the site of this study. Second- and Third-year students in the English department taking English for academic purposes make up the population of this research. Forty students participated in the study. The students are preparing to become English instructors in the future as they are learning
Students’ Attitudes towards Learning English Grammar

the English language. Their viewpoint could provide a fresh perspective on the problems associated with students' attitudes toward English grammar.

The researcher used a survey to collect data about the students' attitudes toward English. The survey is an online Likert scale questionnaire that consists of two sections. The second section includes 20 items and is distributed to each participant using Google Forms.

An online questionnaire was used to collect data, with the questions carefully crafted to be appropriate for the participants, context, and research topic. The survey was completed by the university's second and third-year EFL learners, with 40 participants selected for data collection. The participants were evenly split between male and female Kurdish EFL students, with 60% in their third and 40% in their second years. Once the data was collected from all 40 participants, it was analyzed and interpreted to draw the research findings.

Findings

To assess the students' attitudes toward English Grammar, a series of statements were designed to probe their motivations and sentiments regarding the subject. The students were given a set of twenty statements, each accompanied by four response options: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, or strongly agree.

The findings presented in Figure One depict the results of a seven-item survey. Item (1) reveals that around 72% of the students recognize the significance of grammar in language learning and acknowledge its crucial role, while the remaining 28% express dissent. Item (2) indicates that 70% of the participants agree that their mother tongue facilitates understanding English grammar, while 30% disagree. The majority of students (70%) believe that their grammar has improved after completing several courses, as shown in item (3), whereas a minority (30%) holds a contrary opinion.

Concerning the connection between grammar and communication skills, item (4) suggests that more than half of the students (60%) believe there is a connection between the two, while 40% do not agree. Item (5) demonstrates that a significant proportion of the students (67.5%) believe that grammar courses enhance their confidence in learning English, while 32.5% hold an opposing view. Learning grammar is not enjoyable for (55%) of students, as presented in item (6), while 45% find it enjoyable. Finally, item (7) reveals that 45% of the participants study English grammar to feel more comfortable when communicating with native speakers, while 55% do not consider helpful grammar for communication with them.

Figure 1. Students’ attitudes towards the English grammar

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The findings presented in Figure two show the results of various items, including (8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13). Item eight indicated that 50% of the students believe grammar is functional when traveling abroad, while the other half disagrees. Item (nine) shows that 75% of the students find grammar applicable daily, while 25% do not. Item (10) reveals that the majority of the students (72.5%) are interested in pursuing additional grammar courses, whereas 27.5% of the students are satisfied with their current level of grammar education. According to the item (11), 52.5% of the students prefer to study grammar independently, while 47.5% do not. Item (12) displays that 60% of the students feel that the grammar teaching techniques used by their instructors are insufficient, while 40% approve of the methods employed by the English language department. Item (13) suggests that 62.5% of the students support eliminating grammar classes from the program, while 37.5% oppose this decision. Lastly, item (14) shows that a significant portion of the participants (67.5%) do not believe grammar to be crucial as long as their communication is effective, while 32.5% hold the opposite view.

Figure 2. The use of grammar among the English department students

The findings presented in Figure three demonstrate the outcomes of six items (15-20). Item (15) shows that 57.5% of the students feel that enhancing their grammar abilities is crucial to improving their English speaking skills, while the remaining 42.5% do not share this belief. As for item (16), most students (70%) find it mentally challenging to focus on grammar rules while speaking in English, but 30% feel differently. Item (17) indicates that 85% of the students associate grammar with rules, systems, and structures, while the remaining 15% do not make this association. Concerning item (18), 40% of the students believe that grammar is intended for linguists, scholars, and nerds, while the remaining 60% consider it significant for language learning. Additionally, item (19) shows that 67.5% of the students find communicative classes more significant than grammar, while 32.5% disagree. Finally, according to the item (20), 65% of the students feel nervous and irritated when they hear "grammar," whereas 35% do not experience any particular reaction.
Students’ Attitudes towards Learning English Grammar

Discussion

This study aimed to devise a tool for appraising students’ attitudes toward learning English grammar. For this, a series of inquiries are posed, and the answers to these questions are provided below.

1- What is the attitude of students in the English Department towards English grammar at the University of Raparin?

Grammar is considered an essential component of language learning; in this study, most participants acknowledged that grammar is crucial for them and have an attitude toward it. This finding ultimately supports the findings of Schulz (2001) and Loewen et al. (2009), who revealed that grammar is a foundation for learners to build their knowledge about the language and enhance their reading, writing, and speaking skills. İncecay and Dollar (2011) also agree that students regard grammar as a critical aspect of language learning. And the results agree with the words of Fakeye (2010), who illustrated that a learner's attitude is one of the most critical factors that impact foreign language learning. Correspondingly, Aceron (2015) presented that the way to help students improve their performance in grammar is by changing their attitude toward English grammar learning. This finding also matches the words of Borg (2003), who asserted that students’ attitudes

Figure 2. The necessity of grammar for the students of the Department of English

Overall, the study findings illustrate a variety of attitudes among the students of Raparin University toward English Grammar. While a substantial part recognizes the importance of grammar and thinks it contributes to language skill development, some students show disinterest or doubt its relevance. The findings further indicate differing perspectives on the connection between grammar and communication skills, teaching methods, and the necessity of grammar in different contexts.
play an influential role in many issues and activities that teachers use. Still, it is mostly ignored in the process of language learning in the most previously conducted research.

2- To what extent do the English Department students of Raparin University see the grammar learning process as enjoyable?

However, a minority of students find learning grammar enjoyable, as revealed by Jean and Simard (2011), who argued that both students and teachers find grammar instruction useful but not entertaining.

3- How well do the teaching methods or techniques employed by the teachers of the English Department at the University of Raparin fill the needs of students?

More than half of the participants believe that their instructors' grammar teaching techniques are inadequate, and these results match the assertion of Andrew (2020), who said that complexity is not an inherent quality of grammar but depends on how it corresponds with the result.

4- What is the perception of grammar among the English Department student of Raparin University?

The term "grammar" makes about two-thirds of the participants feel anxious and irritated, which corresponds with Hoge's (2014) argument that grammar makes one's speaking slower and tentative, causing anxiety. Lastly, most students associate grammar with rules, systems, and structures, as Jean and Simard (2011) noted, who found that students consider grammatical materials complicated or confusing due to the abundance of rules involved.

Conclusion

To conclude, the main aim of this investigation is to examine students' perceptions and attitudes towards English grammar. There is a significant variation in the attitudes of students towards English grammar. While some students see grammar as critical for language learning and communication improvement, others consider it unimportant or challenging. Interestingly, most students believe their native language facilitates their understanding of English grammar. Furthermore, students generally see grammar courses as beneficial for building confidence in English learning. Still, they also show dissatisfaction with the teaching methods employed by instructors in the English Department of Raparin University. While most students believe that grammar is not essential as long as communication is impactful, many also recognize the practical use of grammar in their daily lives. It is noteworthy that a vast majority of the student associate grammar with rules and structures, and some of them find the term "grammar" nerve-wracking. These findings indicate the significance of acknowledging and addressing students' diverse attitudes toward grammar to develop language instruction effectiveness.

About the Author

Dr. Rizgar M. Ameen specializes in sociolinguistics, with a particular interest in TEFL and education. He has a Master in ELT and a Doctorate in Linguistics. Head of English Language Department - College of Basic Education/ University of Raparin. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8419-388X
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The Effect of Universal Design for Learning on the Proficiency of English as a Foreign Language Students’ Acquisition of Reading and Vocabulary Skills

Rashed Zannan Alghamdy
College of Education, Al-Baha University, Al-Baha, Saudi Arabia
Email: rz000@hotmail.com

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Abstract
A mixed-method study was conducted for six weeks during a preparatory year at Al-Baha University in Saudi Arabia to investigate the influence of Universal Design for Learning on the competency and proficiency of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students’ acquisition of reading and vocabulary skills. The participants were 45 male students from Al-Baha University’s preparatory year, aged 18–21. The participants were subjected to standardized interviews and English achievement tests to gather qualitative and quantitative data respectively. The study’s results showed significant statistical variances between the post-test scores and the average scores of the EFL students using the Universal Design for Learning and the traditional method to acquire reading and vocabulary skills. This shows that the use of UDL has a statistically significant impact on students’ competency and proficiency in acquiring English reading and vocabulary skills. The findings of this study also revealed that UDL serves all needs of learners, boosts their motivation to gain more English skills, assists the students to break the barriers between themselves and the teacher, makes positive relationships among all students, provides varieties of materials for teaching, and gives options for the assignments.

Keywords: Academic achievement, reading skills, Saudi students, Universal Design for Learning, vocabulary skills

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Introduction

The majority of educational institutions, workplaces, and other environments are diverse in terms of background, culture, gender identity, first language, socioeconomic status, age, talents, learning preferences, and a variety of other traits (Burgstahler, 2021). Each individual has a multifaceted identity that intersects with a number of these distinctive aspects. According to Burgstahler (2021), blind people, those who are deaf or have hearing issues, autistic, have mobility issues, attention deficit, learning challenges, and other health impairments are just a few examples of those who have traits that are referred to as ‘disabilities’.

The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) was developed in the neuroscience sector to ensure diversity in the classroom. The program was created to help a diverse group of students with various language, motor, cognitive, affective, and sensory abilities (Hitchcock & Stahl, 2003). The UDL program considers the adaptability of online platforms, educational research, and neuroscience research to provide a design framework for instructing different groups of students. Therefore, according to Meyer, Rose, and Gordon (2014), the UDL program for learning is mainly persuasive for the virtual teaching of the English language to international students.

The purpose of UDL is to create structures devoid of barriers, according to the Center for Excellence in Universal Design’s (2012) description of the idea. In the United States (US), UDL is acknowledged in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004). Mandlawitz (2007) posits that the program is also referred to as a concept or idea used to design and deliver usable products and services by people with the broadest range of functional capabilities. This comprises both directly practical services and products and those made practical with technology.

How can teachers create lessons, so every student learns as much as possible? How can businesses design workplaces that encourage everyone’s productivity? How can IT specialists find and develop products that anybody can use and access? A broad audience is considered during design approaches via some practical methods addressed in the literature. The approaches entail inclusive design, universal design, design for everyone, barrier-free design, accessible design, and functional design. Among those in existence, there are no practical design approaches that address user diversity more than Universal Design (UD).

The study's primary purpose is to identify how applying the universal design provides and enhances more lessons enjoyable by learners while significantly increasing English EFL outcomes in vocabulary and reading skills acquisition. Therefore, applying the method of Universal Design learning may be the solution since students can learn and acquire English vocabulary everywhere, whether inside learning institutions or outside, aiding them in learning English quickly. In these studies, the researcher is entitled to seek new methods to assist learners in increasing their goals and achievements, making them quickly learn English skills anytime, anywhere. This research addressed the following research questions:

1- What is the impact of the Universal Design for Learning English vocabulary on Saudi university students’ achievements?
2- What is the impact of the UDL English reading skills on Saudi university students’ achievements?
3- What are the experiences and perceptions of Saudi university students in applying the UDL English skills?
Literature Review

Because it considers the adaptability of online platforms, educational research, and neuroscience research to provide a design framework for teaching a diverse group of students, the universal design for learning framework is specifically persuasive for the virtual teaching of English to international students (Meyer et al., 2014). According to Segura-Castillo and Quiros-Acuá (2019), the universal design for learning UDL was developed in the neuroscience sector to enhance diversity in the classroom. It was created to help a broad spectrum of students with various verbal, sensory, motor, cognitive and affective skills (Hitchcock & Stahl, 2003).

To be able to provide people with structures free of barriers, the Center of Excellence in Universal Design (2012) described the idea of universal design within architectural models. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) and the Assistive Technology Act (1998) refer to universal design for learning as an idea or concept used to design and deliver practical products and services for people with a diverse range of functional competencies. The functional competencies include directly practical products and services and products and services made usable with technology (Mandlawitz, 2007). Burgstahler (2021) defined UDL as an approach used to teach and learn about products and environments, which are to be used by all persons, to the maximum degree probable, without the need for any distinct accommodations.

Because it offers flexible ways of representation, expression, and participation, a universally designed curriculum is accessible to the broadest range of students (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Even while UDL is well-known in architecture and other industries, it is still relatively new in education (Rose et al., 2006). It generally focuses on removing obstacles through early designs that consider the needs of varied persons instead of overcoming hurdles afterward through individual adaptation (Rose, Harbour, Johnston, Daley & Arbarbanell, 2006).

In 2009, the National Center on Universal Design Learning outlined a flexible approach that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs. The approach is designed to generate instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for all students. Rose and Meyer (2002) indicated that a universally designed curriculum is approachable to the widest range of students because it offers adaptable platforms for representation, expression, and participation.

The definition of UDL is based on the idea that some students find it challenging to access the regular curriculum because their learning preferences and needs differ from those of the typical learner (Meyer et al., 2014). As a result, it is acknowledged that individuals come in a wide range of abilities, skills, interests, needs, and physical and mental prowess. Researchers McGuire-Schwartz and Arndt (2007) discovered that a model for curriculum design known as universal design for learning underpins learners by giving teachers various options for presenting information and content in the curriculum that maximizes student learning among diverse students.

According to the universal design theory, everyday objects should serve a range of users. Additional examples comprise word processing programs, closed captioning on televisions, and icons for restrooms and other public amenities, which are accessible to the most significant number of people. The universal design of learning and the digital divide are two distinct ideas that do not seem to have anything in common. However, a strong demonstration of a variety of curriculum and instruction delivery methods is required before the UDL can be seen in action in schools. One way of taking a varied approach to teaching is through the use of technology.

The ideas of universal learning design are based on Vygotsky’s (1978) work on apprenticeship learning, scaffolding, and zone of proximal development. Additionally, the concept
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of UDL is also based on Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligence (1993). Theoretical support for universal design for learning principles also includes learner differences discovered through brain research (Rose et al., 2008). Understanding how learning is distributed among the three interrelated brain networks of learning will help us better understand different learners’ distinct strengths and limitations (Rose & Meyer, 2002). The National Center on Universal Design for Learning (2019) acknowledges the recognition networks (the ‘what’ of learning), strategy networks (the ‘how’ of learning), and affective networks (the ‘why’ of learning) as the brain networks.

The UDL is a branch of universal design. UDL becomes a framework that aims to provide instructional material in a variety of ways that embraces a diversity of learning styles and educational needs. UDL addresses the main barrier to fostering expert learners within instructional environments. Center for Applied Special Technology [CAST] (2011) outlines three guiding concepts: the rules’ foundation. The first principle is to give students various ways to represent what they are learning. Principle two offers students various ways to behave and express themselves (the ‘how’ of learning), and principle three provides a variety of interaction opportunities (the ‘why’ of learning).

Multiple Means of Representation

The standards for different modes of representation place particular emphasis on how the teacher presents the subject and how the students take in and understand it: What exactly do students learn? According to UDL, it is ideal for providing course material in some methods, including through written words, teacher-spoken speech, and video, as this will enhance the possibility that students will understand what is being taught (Clark & Shastri, 2021). Identifying learning difficulties in the English language necessitates an educator’s sensitivity, knowledge, and expertise to recognize the many ways in which English language learners may absorb and process information (Harry & Klingner, 2014; Macswan & Rolstad, 2006).

Language components, including signs, words, and grammar, need explicit explanations. Students should be encouraged to use decoding techniques that help them improve their language abilities. Students will be able to internalize the course material through comprehension techniques such as activating existing knowledge, identifying patterns, and optimizing transfer (Clark & Shastri, 2021). When many representations are employed, recognition learning happens because it enables students to connect ideas both within and between topics (Rose & Meyer, 2002). By making sure that important information is perceptible, clear, and understandable to all learners, CAST (2011) argued for the lowering of learning barriers among English language students. Giving learners options for representation is crucial, especially for those learning the English language for the first time.

Multiple Means of Engagement

The recommendation for diverse forms of interaction encourages observing students’ motivation and self-control. According to Clark and Shastri (2021), teachers should consider why this task is being given to students and provide context for the solution. Because students’ attention spans and areas of interest vary, it is crucial to have multiple approaches to pique students’ interests that consider inter and intra-individual variances. A starting point for engaging students is choosing authentic and relevant content while reducing dangers and distractions (CAST, 2011).

Once the fundamentals are implemented, encouraging partnerships, offering pertinent feedback, allowing student managing mechanisms, and repeating objectives and goals can help...
sustain and increase engagement (Clark & Shastri, 2021). Learners have a higher chance of developing abilities and maintaining interest and understanding when engagement ties background information with strategic or recognition tasks (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Teachers can set prospects or expectations that inspire students, encourage student reactions, and assist students in developing personal coping mechanisms, helping learners self-regulate and adopt their participation (Clark & Shastri, 2021).

Multiple Means of Action/Expression

The National Center for Universal Design for Learning (2012) indicates that students behave and express themselves differently in a learning environment, necessitating a lot of planning, practice, and organization. Multiple modes of action/expression, the last category in UDL, focus on the issue of how students learn. Teachers can promote student-centered active learning by extending student access to resources and technologies of creation, communication, and composition by offering numerous methods of expression or action such as visual or audio, written, or picture-based (Clark & Shastri, 2021). Differentiating the methods by which students can convey what they know through strategic learning involves multiple forms of action and expression (CAST, 2011). Due to each learner having a unique optimal learning route for developing strategic abilities, teaching methods and resources must be modified for each student. In English language education, the three main concepts of UDL are intriguing. UDL rules are readily available to teachers from a practical aspect. Clark and Shastri (2021) provided that the three phases of typical ELT lesson plans are mirrored by the vertical flow, from access to build to internalization: teacher presentation, guided practice, and individual practice.

UDL also aims to change the way teachers see students’ difficulties. UDL proposes that the course design contributes to student failures rather than presuming that a shortfall is the students’ failing, as standard non-UDL course designs might. For instance, if students cannot comprehend the instructions for an assignment, this may be due to poor course design (Clark & Shastri, 2021). The UDL seeks to create a more comprehensive, varied, adaptable, and focused curriculum, encouraging removing obstacles to learning and involvement within the student body. In that regard, higher education institutions welcome students with varied points of view, experiences, talents, backgrounds, interests, histories, and socioeconomic levels, to name a few, and the fact that the population of university students is becoming more diverse (Buzzard et al., 2011).

Method

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The instruments used to gather data included pretest and posttest English tests as well as interviews with English as EFL learners.

Participants

The whole process of this study implied forty-five male university students with ages ranging from 18-21 in the preceding year 2022 at the University of Al-Baha. This practice was done by randomly assigning different classes to one of two conditions, in which one class was identified randomly and assigned to the experimental group. In contrast, another class was again chosen randomly and assigned to the control group. Thus, there were twenty-three University students in the experimental and twenty-two in the control conditions. Lastly, two male English
teachers from the prior year were summoned to take part and experience the study process. English teachers were local speakers who have attained bachelor's degrees in teaching English.

**Research Instruments**
The research included ten students randomly chosen from practical classes for practical classes. The researcher interviewed them to identify how they responded to incorporating Universal Design learning experiences concerning the English language environment. The researcher then sorted out to gather the EFL students' perceptions about the English skills promoted by Universal Design learning. This also was done by the research to formulate the various semi-structured interview questions. The researcher also recorded the video as each participant did the interview alone.

The researcher used an inductive data analysis approach, in which themes were identified through coding and transcription (Creswell, 2020). It was also possible for the researcher to review the data and determine whether such themes accurately represented the data interviewed. The themes were identified by their sentences, phrases, and keywords during the interview. The researcher then pre-examined, separated, and categorized the phrases into different themes from the data analysis.

**Research Procedures**
The lecturing material for both the control groups and experiment was textbooks from the University of Al-Baha. Learners handle various tasks like vocabulary tasks, and reading exercises. The researcher concentrated on three lectures where the EFL students learn different English skills. Both teachers of the control and experimental classes trained one class each and delivered the same content in both classes for a stipulated time.

The researcher arranged two workshops, one for the teacher training Universal Design learning skills and the second for the teacher handling the traditional classroom. The students undergoing traditional learning skills were not able to receive training on implementing Universal Design Learning.

The researcher welcomed two English teachers from the University of Al-Baha to take part in the research at the start of this study. The researcher persuaded two classes from the prior year to participate in the research, in which one class was set for Universal Design learning. At the same time, the other was designated for traditional learning. They used the English skill test that was achieved as both pre-test and post-test investigating the effect of Universal Design learning which was on the EFL students, yielding thirty-six multiple-choice questions. The test has two parts, one for vocabulary skills and another one for reading skills (18 items for vocabulary, other 18 items for reading skills).

The pre-test evaluated the previous achievements of the participating learners in English, which was distributed to experimental and control groups before the start of the study. The pre-test intended to access the backdrop of the learners’ knowledge considering vocabulary and grammar English skills. The test's reliability was top, achieving an Alpha-Cronbach of eighty-four. The same pre-test was accorded after the research study as a post-test, helping in the evaluation of the achievements of participants in English skills. The post-test purpose was to assess the effect of both the experiment and the control conditions on the achievement of the students.
Results and Discussions

Findings of Quantitative Data

To determine whether there were differences in the students’ achievement marks in English tests in the two conditions, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed. The means and standard deviation of the English achievement pretest total score and posttest total score are shown in the following table one:

Table 1. Means and standard deviation for the total pretest and the Total post-test Scores for the experimental and control conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.1739</td>
<td>3.0845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14.3182</td>
<td>3.28614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14.2444</td>
<td>3.14899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20.6087</td>
<td>3.05613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17.8636</td>
<td>5.05489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>19.2667</td>
<td>4.33485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine the differences between the pretest and posttest total score results, one-way ANOVAs were conducted. As illustrated in Table two, although there were no significant differences between the experimental and control conditions at Time one, there were significant differences at Time two.

Table 2. Tests of between-subject effects for pretest and posttest total scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest Total</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>17.200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>572.779</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>10.141</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>589.979</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest Total</td>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>364.320</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>84.731</td>
<td>4.910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>247.492</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17.257</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>611.813</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table one highlights that there are no statistically significant differences, $p = 0.88$ ($p > 0.05$), between the mean scores of the EFL learners who were taught English in the UDL environment (the experimental group) and those who were taught English using the traditional method (the control group) in the pretest.

However, Table two reveals certain differences, $p = .03$ ($p < 0.05$), between the mean scores of the EFL learners who were taught English in the UDL environment (the experimental group) and those who were taught English using the traditional method (the control group). Thus, the posttest is in favor of the experimental conditions.

To determine if there were differences between the conditions on the reading skills questions and the vocabulary skills test at Time Two, one-way ANOVAs were conducted. Table three, which follows, presents the means and standard deviations of the student’s scores on the reading skills and vocabulary skills separately at Time Two.
Table 3. Student mean score and standard deviations on the listening task test and the vocabulary task test at the posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12.913</td>
<td>2.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.227</td>
<td>.7975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Experimental</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.087</td>
<td>2.295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Control</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8.0455</td>
<td>2.567</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine if there were differences between the conditions on the reading skills questions and the vocabulary task test at Time Two, one-way ANOVAs were conducted. As can be seen in Table four, there were significant differences in reading skills questions in favor of the experimental condition. Moreover, there were significant differences in the vocabulary skills questions between the experimental and control conditions. The results are shown in Table four as follows.

Table 4. Tests of between-subject effects for two different scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DV</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>81.110</td>
<td>8.431</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46.864</td>
<td>9.045</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table four, the condition predicted significantly larger differences in scores for reading skills questions responses, $p = .006$ ($p < .05$). Furthermore, there were significant differences in scores with the vocabulary skills, $p = .004$ ($p < .05$).

**Findings of Qualitative Data**

**Benefits of UDL**

The first of the themes that emerged from the data was the benefits of UDL. In UDL, there are many options for the assignments, whereas in traditional learning there is only one choice with which to do the assignments. One student revealed that “I am very happy with my assignments, I have many choices to select and also to answer it.” Another student declared that:

In traditional learning, we have only one way to complete the homework and it is so boring to us. As we use UDL, we have lots of choices to do the assignments. We can make a video or a podcast to show the assignments or we can draw a picture. Moreover, in the UDL classroom there are many varieties of materials and presentations. For example, students have many options for reading. One student highlighted that “we have many methods to read a text such as digital text, audiobooks, printing books, and we have text to speech.” Another student added, “For example, there are many options in digital text. We can have enlargement for the text, transcripts for the audio, captions for the videos, and screen color.”

Furthermore, UDL serves all needs of learners. It is a teaching method that aims to reach all needs of each learner in the classroom. Some students have attention issues or difficulty in hearing or seeing, and others have problems moving or participating in classroom activities. One
student claimed that “UDL assists me to hear all lessons clearly; it has different materials that can suit each one of the students.” Another student confirmed “To be frank with you, the previous time I did not hear and understand my teacher very well. Now, I can hear the lessons because they provide me headphones at the same time the teacher writes on the smartboard.”

As an additional goal, UDL seeks to alter educators’ perspectives on students’ challenges. Rather than assuming that students’ shortcomings are their fault, which is a key weakness of the non-UDL course design, UDL suggests that the course design adds to student failures rather than their intrinsic limitations. Inadequate course design could be to blame if, for instance, students are struggling to understand the assignment’s requirements (Clark & Shastri, 2021). Furthermore, UDL provides comprehensive design ideas to meet the demands of a diverse student population. A student-centered approach takes into account individual differences in cognitive ability, linguistic proficiency, and cultural background, as outlined in the universal design for learning principles (CAST, 2011). Teachers can encourage student-oriented learning by providing students with a variety of opportunities to express themselves through multiple mediums, including but not limited to oral, written, and visual presentations (Clark & Shastri, 2021). Additionally, UDL provides detailed design ideas to meet the demands of a diverse student body. UDL principles provide a student-centered approach that takes into account linguistic, cultural, and cognitive diversity (CAST, 2011).

Learning Outcomes

The second of the themes that emerged from the data was that of academic achievement in UDL. Many students highlighted that they learned more through the new teaching method and that they were satisfied with their grades. When the students were involved in UDL and followed its principles, their opinions were so positive that UDL increased their learning outcomes. One student declared that the “UDL method assists us to gain more English skills.” Another pupil added that “Shifting to UDL increased my achievement of the curriculum.” A third student stated, “UDL helped me to develop my speaking skills and also assisted me to improve my communication skills, it was very useful for all my colleagues.”

Additionally, another EFL learner highlighted that “I have a chance to communicate with my teacher and my classmates at any time, even outside school time, as a result, I noticed my English is getting better.” Another student revealed, “It was a fantastic method because it enabled us to communicate with the teacher outside the school and let us contact our classmates, share different ideas, answer the assignments together, and make our projects.”

The students revealed that using the UDL method increased their comprehension and assisted them to gain a better understanding of the curriculum. One student highlighted that the “UDL method linked us to the English book.” Another one added, “This method increased our desire to learn English skills and to read the different topics of the lesson.” A third student stated, “Definitely, this teaching method enabled us to learn more and assisted us to get new English skills.”

Learning is substantially enhanced when there is an environment of support and cooperation in the classroom. As demonstrated by Kimani (2014) in her research, both the experimental and control groups of library students outperformed their classroom counterparts. As a result of these findings, designers of educational materials should give classroom layouts serious thought, perhaps even as a universal design component. More research is needed to establish whether or not certain classroom features should be incorporated into the UDL framework.
According to Rodrigo et al. (2021), students instructed in UDL have higher mean values compared to their peers. Preschoolers, training recipients, and women in general report higher levels of confidence in their UDL skills than their male peers. Based on these findings, it is recommended that initiatives and instructional materials be developed to alter negative perceptions of UDL, especially among males.

**Motivation**

The third theme that has been seen from the data was the motivation of the students when learning English via UDL. Most students expressed the belief that implementing the new UDL boosted their motivation to gain more English skills such as writing, reading, speaking, and vocabulary; one student commented, “I prefer to learn English via this method, it was new to me but it was the best.” Another student highlighted: “Many years ago, I didn’t like to learn English because my teachers used boring methods. Now I like to learn and speak English because of this new method.”

Moreover, most students claimed that they were enthusiastic to learn different English skills via UDL. One student declared: “UDL was a great method, now I can study at my home and contact either my teacher or my classmates so that we can study together, write paragraphs, and learn new vocabulary.”

Teachers can help students learn to self-regulate and become more engaged in class by establishing goals and expectations that motivate them to respond and learn to cope with challenging situations on their own (Clark & Shastri, 2021). Once the basics are in place, sustaining and increasing engagement can be achieved through fostering relationships, providing relevant feedback, and restating goals and objectives (Clark & Shastri, 2021). Students’ self-control and motivation can be observed more easily if they are given a variety of opportunities to connect.

Clark and Shastri (2021) suggest that to help pupils solve this problem, teachers should explain the purpose of the assignments given to them. To engage learners who have widely varying interests and attention spans, it is important to employ a variety of strategies that take these differences into account. When students are actively involved in the learning process through the integration of contextual knowledge with recognition or strategic activities, they are more likely to acquire and retain knowledge (Rose & Meyer, 2002).

**Positive Relationships and Friendship**

The fourth theme to occur from the data was that of positive relationships among all students and their English teachers in the classroom. Many students confirmed that using the UDL method helped them to make excellent relationships with their classmates. One student claimed: “I am a shy student and do not like to participate with my classmates and my teacher. Now, I feel very comfortable to discuss with them many topics.” Another student revealed that the “UDL teaching method gives us a chance to answer the homework together with our classmates and gives us assignment choices.”

Some learners stated that they gained useful social skills while learning English skills via UDL, such as confidence and accepting others’ suggestions. One student revealed that “through time, I feel more confident and like others’ ideas.” Another one added: “I totally agree with my friend, now we accept different ideas and feel more comfortable during our discussions.”

UDL promotes the elimination of barriers to learning and student engagement to develop a curriculum that is more extensive, flexible, and targeted. As a result, universities encourage and celebrate the increasing diversity among their student bodies, which includes differences in
ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, family structure, socioeconomic status, and geographical location (Buzzard et al., 2011).

Comfortable and Confident

With time, the pupils became familiar with the new approach and understood their roles in the classrooms, which made them more comfortable and confident as a result of UDL. After implementing UDL for weeks, the pupils noticed a number of changes in the classroom, and they welcomed them. One student declared that “I noticed a big change in my learning. I can feel comfortable learning new skills at any time either at school or home.” Also, Khalid stated that “I and my classmates are now more confident because our teacher gives us many choices to do the homework and classroom activities.” A third student stated that “the teacher role has changed from giving lectures to working as a facilitator, as a result, we feel more confident and comfortable.”

The EFL learners showed their happiness with the new method of UDL. They have learned different English skills, such as writing, speaking, and, particularly, presenting many topics in front of their classmates and teachers. One student highlighted: “I faced difficulties in presenting new topics in front of others and strangers, now I can present many topics without hesitation.” Another student declared: “The most important advantage that I learn from UDL is the ability to present topics either in class or outside the class via my iPhone.”

EFL learners were generally of the view that UDL assists them to be more confident to talk to the teacher and breaks down the barriers between themselves and the teacher. Also, they can meet the teacher online from their houses. One student related that “our teacher gives us more chances to correct the assignments and our mistakes, we can discuss many issues with him and we do not feel shyness.” Another student added: “I can contact my teacher via my iPhone from my house and ask him some questions about the lessons.”

Meyer et al. (2014) argue that the UDL learning framework is most compelling when applied to the online instruction of English to non-native speakers. The field of neuroscience pioneered the UDL to accommodate students with a wide range of learning styles and needs. UDL was created to support a wide range of students' linguistic, physical, sensory, affective, and cognitive skills.

Universal Design for Learning and Traditional Learning

Using a UDL approach in the classroom allowed the students the opportunity to see the differences between teaching methods. Many students complained about the previous teaching methods, particularly the traditional learning method, and they preferred to use UDL rather than traditional learning. One student revealed: “I do not like the traditional learning method, teachers keep talking all the time and we feel bored. Another student added: “During the traditional method we do not have the chance to participate or move in the classroom.” Another pupil revealed: “I totally agree with my friends. Teachers give the lecture and they do not give us a chance to talk.” Another one highlighted: “Giving the students a chance to select the teaching methods in the classroom would be great and more interesting for them.”

The students welcomed the new teaching method of UDL. One student highlighted: “The UDL method was very excellent for me because we have many choices and freedom for learning.” Moreover, one student revealed: “I prefer UDL rather than traditional learning, the teacher uses many ways to present new lessons and it is very enjoyable and interesting.” Furthermore, a third student stated: “I want my teacher to use UDL all the time and quit traditional learning because
UDL gives us equal opportunities to learn new skills and enables us to learn either inside the school or outside.”

Recent studies show that UDL training improves university students' opinions about themselves compared to their untrained peers. This suggests that acquiring knowledge and being able to put it to use allows one to manipulate their environment through self-developed pathways (Kohler-Evans et al., 2019). Consequently, future educators may find it useful to advocate for accessibility in UDL-related content to help students reach their academic potential (Laurian-Fitzgerald & Fitzgerald, 2017). The UDL program takes into account the malleability of digital and research resources (Hitchcock & Stahl, 2003).

Discussion

The goal of the research was to determine whether incorporating Universal Design into EFL instructions improved students' ability to acquire reading and vocabulary skills. The post-test results demonstrated statistically significant differences (p =.03, thus p < 0.05), between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups. The experimental group demonstrated remarked improvement in post-test means scores. The results of the Pre-test showed no statistically significant differences between the experimental and the control groups. There are a variety of factors that can cause the UDL to change (Schreffler et al., 2019). Retrospectively, variations in UDL may be modulated by factors such as the form and character of the courses offered, the nature of instruction, the setting in which lessons are delivered, and the evaluation methods used (Al-Azawei et al., 2016). A corpus of studies shows that preschoolers experience multiple variations of the UDL compared to other groups. It has been suggested that the higher level of development in UDL learners is because the inculcation of UDL principles can lead to more accessible and inclusive educational environments for all students (Dez-Villoria & Fuentes, 2015). Recently, numerous authors including Nieminen and Pesonen (2020) have pointed out that UDL is commonly utilized to foster accessible learning settings in higher education to enhance the efficiency of students' continuous training.

Students gain from this in several ways, including knowledge development, social skills, change of mindsets, and acquisition of values of diversity and inclusion. They also benefit from better training, improved workplace conditions, improved student competencies, and guidance for professional and vocational development (Alba et al., 2014). University students who have received training in the UDL demonstrate higher learning abilities compared to non-UDL-trained peers, suggesting that such instruction is beneficial for students. According to Kohler-Evans et al. (2019), individuals can manipulate newly learned skills/knowledge via their mechanisms of understanding after successful knowledge acquisition and application. In light of this, it seems that future educators may find it useful to advocate for accessibility in UDL-related content to help students reach their academic potential (Laurian-Fitzgerald & Fitzgerald, 2017).

Vygotsky (1980) highlights that interacting with others is crucial to the development of cognitive skills. He further opines that knowledge acquisition is a social process that begins in a social context and then moves to a personal level. Moreover, the period of intrapersonal development in which knowledge is internalized occurs during this period. Individuals’ current degree of development is the result of their respective efforts, while future development depends on the amount of knowledge acquired with the help of other people (Vygotsky, 1980). In contrast to the prospective development level, which is attained through problem-solving in collaboration with others or with adult supervision, Vygotsky contends that the distance from the current
developmental level is dependent on independent problem-solving.

Since the nature of the contemporary classrooms necessitate not only educated and trained staff, but also the relevant infrastructure to meet the demands of current education, higher education institutions must emphasize the UDL. The underlying premise is that the design of processes, elements, products, and spaces should be optimized to allow as many people as possible to utilize them with minimal or no accommodations. Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to accommodate students from all backgrounds by providing equal access to educational opportunities (Villoria & Fuentes, 2015). As a result, UDL has to be embraced by practitioners, policymakers, and researchers in the field of education to adequately provide the diverse student population with culturally responsive education (Israel et al., 2014).

**Study Limitations**

One important limitation of this experimental study was that the sample size was small (25 learners for the experimental group and 23 learners for the control group). Furthermore, the research was applied in the context of only one learning unit in the Al-Baha preparation year course, so it is necessary to use it with a full course.

**Conclusion**

To sum up, the findings indicated that significant statistical variances exist in the post-test when comparing the average scores of the EFL students who learned vocabulary and reading English skills using the Universal Design for Learning method and those who were taught English using the traditional method of learning, thus favoring the group under the experimental strategy environment. Further, the results of this research showed that Universal Design for Learning is a highly useful teaching method and has many benefits for learners. Universal Design for Learning increases the students’ motivation and assists them to break the barriers between themselves and the teacher. It gives different materials for teaching and options for the assignments.

**About the Author:**

**Dr. Rashed Zannan Alghamdy**, is an associate professor at Al-Baha University in Education College, Saudi Arabia. His research focuses on Applied Linguistic, Teaching English as Foreign Language, Mobile language learning, Verbal Interaction, discourse analysis, learning process.  
**OCCiD ID:** https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8891-0679

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Alghamdy

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Mindfulness-based Classroom Intervention: Boon or bane to ESL Teachers in Malaysia?

Puteri Zarina Megat Khalid
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Languages and Communication
Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia
Corresponding author: puteri.zarina@fbk.upsi.edu.my

Haddi @ Junaidi Kussin
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Languages and Communication
Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

Mazlin Mohamed Mokhtar
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Languages and Communication
Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

Mohd Haniff Mohd Tahir
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Languages and Communication
Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

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Abstract
Teachers as well as pupils may experience stress during the process of teaching and learning a second language in a classroom setting. Mindfulness-Based Interventions are an effective way to manage stress issues in language classrooms. This study aimed to explore the perception of selected English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers on implementing MBIs during their online lessons regarding their understanding of and challenges in its execution. The perceptions of Malaysian English language teachers of this intervention have not been adequately evaluated, despite being one of the most important stakeholders in academia. Seventeen English language instructors from two secondary schools in Perak were interviewed using a semi-structured format. The subjects were chosen using a convenient sampling method. The goal was to determine what the teachers thought about the intervention in general. In addition, their readiness and acceptance of the method are also investigated. The interview was also conducted to elicit their thoughts on the potential inhibitors and facilitators to the introduction of MBIs in their lessons. The findings indicate that the idea of mindfulness is still new to the teachers since they do not understand it collectively. The challenges associated with executing the plan are also emphasized, along with recommendations for mitigating them. Despite possible obstacles, the teachers exhibit a generally positive attitude and a strong desire to implement Mindfulness-based Interventions in their classrooms.

Keywords: ESL teachers, Mindfulness-based classroom, intervention, perception, students

Introduction

The concept of mindfulness involves intentionally directing one's focus towards a specific objective in the present moment, while maintaining a non-evaluative and observant mindset (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). This concept is expanding in popularity in the fields of educational psychology and teacher education (Altan, Lane, & Dottin, 2019). Teacher mindfulness is a complementing component in education. There are three primary methods for incorporating Mindfulness-based Intervention (MBI) program in schools: directly through student training programs; implicitly through teachers who have a personal mindfulness practice and so interact and teach with mindfulness qualities (e.g., open, non-judgmental attentive consciousness and acceptance); or both (Khng, 2018). The presence of teachers in the classroom is reinforced by the implementation of these deliberate behaviors. The presence of such aid would be beneficial to the professional development of academicians, as it would facilitate the academic and personal growth of their students (Sharp & Jennings, 2016).

The teaching profession has long been linked to high levels of anxiety which affects both academicians and students. Malaysian academicians were found to have symptoms of misery or depression (43.0 percent), anxiety (68.0 percent), and stress (32.3 percent) (Othman & Sivasubramaniam, 2019). To improve teacher well-being, schools may introduce MBI to teachers. Stress and burnout are prevalent concerns in the field of education, and educational institutions can offer support by empowering educators with strategies to cope with job-related stressors, such as mindfulness practices. MBIs are being implemented in educational institutions to address the concerns surrounding stress among academic staff (Schussler et al., 2018). This conclusion is consistent with the findings of a union poll conducted among academic staff in the United Kingdom (NASUWT, 2016) which found that 83 percent of academicians in the UK experienced workplace-related stress, with 60 percent reporting mental health issues. All these mental depression symptoms in academic staff may affect their interactions with students since they will be unable to focus during class (Shapiro, Rechtschaffen, & de Sousa, 2016).

To benefit students’ learning, “faculty members need to incorporate mindfulness into each second of the class, not like something extra” (Xue, 2023, p. 5). It has been demonstrated that teachers’ mindful approaches to pedagogical thinking, student sensitivity, and instructional innovation have a positive impact on students' mental health and general well-being. Students also suffer from these appalling mental and psychological illnesses (Ghatol, 2017). School pupils are also affected by stress and depression (Ishak, Ahmad, & Omar, 2020). Students’ emotional well-being must be competent for them to thrive intellectually (White & Kern, 2018). As a result, there is an increasing need for schools and teachers to develop strategies to promote students’ holistic well-being. Implementing the MBIs method is one way to go about it. MBIs have been shown to reduce levels of perceived stress (Halladay et al., 2019). The objectives of this study are to assess English Language teachers' comprehension of MBI in their language classes and to examine their perceptions of the implementation of the MBI program as well as the possible difficulties and facilitators of MBIs in their language classrooms. The following research questions were asked:
what is the English Language teachers’ comprehension of Mindfulness-based intervention in their language classes and how do the teacher view the implementation of the MBI program as well as the possible difficulties and facilitators of MBIs in their language classrooms. Over the last decade, mindfulness education has risen to prominence in several nations worldwide. Unfortunately, there is a lack of research on this in Malaysian schools. To fill this gap, this study aims mainly to explore the perception of selected English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers on implementing MBIs during their online lessons regarding their understanding of and challenges in its execution. The results of this study would be significant for the various stakeholders in the education sector, including the relevant ministry, regional education offices, as well as school administrators and teachers, to consider integrating mindfulness-based classroom approaches as a way to facilitate teaching and learning.

Literature Review

Mindfulness can raise the consciousness of students, teachers, policymakers, material designers, and other field researchers (Song & He, 2021). Language teachers often face challenges, stress, and trauma and they can learn mindfulness techniques to improve themselves as teachers (Derakhshan, 2021). Few schools now provide structured Mindfulness-Based Programs (MBPs) to students within the curriculum, where school personnel have both completed an MBP and been further educated to teach mindfulness to their pupils (Wilde et al. 2019), however this number looks to be growing. Kim et al. (2019) conducted a study in Korean pre-schools to evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of a programme called OpenMind (OM-K). OM is a mindfulness-based SEL program for pre-schoolers that was just established. The educators who participated in the study displayed notable enthusiasm regarding the advantages of the OM-K program. The teachers noted that after being introduced to the mindfulness aspects, the program helped to produce a general sense of serenity among the kids, without placing anybody at risk. According to the participants, the mindfulness-centered program yielded favorable outcomes, leading them to advocate for it among their peers.

The benefits of mindfulness-based interventions in schools are extensive because they are advantageous to the entire school population, including teachers and students. Teachers’ stress levels were reduced, and their management and self-esteem improved, in addition to addressing student stress. Teachers who actively participate in a mindfulness program to improve their personal well-being, according to Paulsen (2018), may experience increased teaching quality which will benefit their students. Mindfulness-based practices are also helpful for teachers to design and build new pedagogical techniques to create effective learning for their students (Zeilhofer, 2023).

Matsuba, Schonert-Reichl, McElroy, and Katahoire (2020) undertook a longitudinal feasibility study to assess the effectiveness of a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) mindfulness-based school program (MindUp) for children in Northern Uganda following the war. The results suggest that the implementation of the mindfulness-based programs in schools throughout Uganda...
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and beyond would be beneficial. The children who engaged in the programs exhibited decreased levels of aggression and hostility, as well as improved academic performance.

Mindfulness practices may help new secondary teachers manage stress and enhance classroom teaching as part of their professional development (Roeser et al., 2022). Academician mindfulness was associated with lower levels of job stress, occupational disengagement, and depressive and anxiety disorders. Academicians were also observed to be more emotionally supportive in their interactions with students in their most stressful classrooms. The statement suggests that in order to improve occupational health and well-being, elevate the standard of teacher-student interactions within the classroom, and enhance student engagement and learning, it is imperative to implement intervention measures that focus on cultivating teacher mindfulness through training.

MBIs are found to have been of great help to educators in the United Kingdom in improving their personal mindfulness practice. Norton and Griffith (2020) stated that the teachers in their study were more attentive to others, had more compassion for themselves and their pupils, improved their emotional control, and were more resilient to stress due to the exercise. Several advantages to having a personal mindfulness practice for school personnel and giving MBIs at school might boost feelings of personal success have been identified. School leadership is one of the critical factors in the effective implementation of MBIs (Hudson, Lawton, & Hugh-Jones, 2020). They discovered the elements that contributed to the early success of a mindfulness whole school approach (M-WSA) to wellness program in Cumbria, the United Kingdom. M-WSA. They addressed the aspects of a mental health intervention's implementation in a school environment using the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR). Their findings showed that the CFIR was helpful in assessing the implementation of mental health programs in UK schools, with school administrators and policymakers as crucial components.

According to Huang (2022), educators' mindfulness and compassion reduce students' negative emotions, boost their positive feelings, and create a harmonious teacher-student relationship. Vetter (2020) supported the benefits of teachers’ adoption of mindful qualities as the participating teachers in her research admitted to being more flexible with their students in the classroom which directly created a positive classroom environment for more conducive teaching and learning processes. Second-language learning lessons can be unnerving as teachers are expected to create a meaningful and fun class environment for the students (Nguyen, Le, Nguyen, Hoang, & Hoang, 2020). In the realm of English Language learning, Charoensukmongkol (2019) found that mindfulness is also helpful for EFL students in Thailand to reduce their anxiety during oral presentations in English. The study revealed that students with lower levels of anxiety achieved higher grades on their presentations compared to those who reported higher levels of anxiety.

In the context of higher education, excessive stress and anxiety are huge concerns on today's college campuses (Friesen, 2022). Because awareness was seen as the most beneficial result by students, mindfulness-based treatments for college students, like those for the general
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population, should primarily focus on awareness. Several types of meditation might be used to bring consciousness during MBIs, including awareness of breath meditations, thinking meditations, walking meditations, shower meditations, and/or eating meditations (Bamber & Schneider, 2020).

Developing more mindfulness programs for teachers in the school is an essential step of professional development that benefits both teachers and students (Vetter, 2020). Among such programs are Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE), Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques (SMART), Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), etc. Nevertheless, MBI deployment in schools is not without its difficulties. The challenges of implementing MBIs in schools are numerous. Wigelsworth and Quinn (2020) identified some obstacles regarding instructors’ perceptions of the approach. Religious problems, a lack of time, a lack of space, and a lack of grasp of the concept were all mentioned by the professors in their study. Nonetheless, the ten teachers who took part in the study agreed that MBIs helped reduce stress among their pupils as well as their own. In addition, MBIs were able to improve the academic achievement of their pupils. Despite the obstacles, the teachers were eager to implement MBIs in their classrooms.

MBIs possess the capacity to be implemented within educational institutions due to their ability to cultivate favorable attributes and skills such as attentiveness, cognitive awareness, emotional management, and adaptability in stressful scholarly attention towards MBIs in educational settings worldwide, there exists a dearth of research initiatives pertaining to its implementation within Malaysian schools. This study was thus conducted to address this vacuum in the literature particularly regarding ESL teachers’ perceptions of MBIs as actors in their implementation in Malaysian schools.

Method

This study was underpinned by a pragmatic epistemology approach (Morgan, 2014). As very little is known about the implementation of MBIs in Malaysian schools, the study focused on determining the language teachers’ perceptions concerning the existing literature. The data collection procedures included organizing regular meetings among the authors of this paper to discuss pertinent issues, adapting an interview frame from the literature, active and attentive listening to the interviewees during the interview, and adopting a suitable analytical method called Thematic Analysis.

Participants

The seventeen English Language teachers who participated in this study were chosen based on the convenience sampling method. Six teachers taught in the mainstream secondary four and five in two daily schools in the sub-urban area of Perak, a state in the northern region of Malaysia. Six others taught in the mainstream secondary six while the remaining five taught in lower secondary three and two in the same schools. All of them were females with more than five years
of teaching experience. The data were collected during school sessions in October 2022. The potential candidates were contacted through a written correspondence addressed to the school administrators. Subsequently, the letter was disseminated among all English Language instructors to identify individuals who expressed interest in the opportunity.

**Research Instruments**

The tool with which the data were collected was a semi-structured interview. It was adapted from Wigelsworth and Quinn (2020). The interview items were arranged according to three significant themes namely understanding of mindfulness, teachers’ perceptions of MBIs in language classrooms, and teachers' perceptions of MBI obstacles and facilitators. Braun and Clarke have categorized theme analysis into six distinct stages (2006). We completed the first stage of the analysis which entailed familiarizing ourselves with the data. The analysis was done by reading and revisiting each of the interview transcripts, as well as making notes on first thoughts on the data and probable codes. The second phase involved creating initial codes throughout the whole body of data by choosing and collecting data extracts that seemed to speak to a particular feature or fascinating element and then labeling them. Third, by looking for broader patterns of meaning throughout the data set, we began organizing the initial codes for each interview into more prominent themes. After sketching a larger thematic framework for meaning and patterns, the fourth stage entailed reviewing these ideas again and polishing them: we set out theme tables for each major subject. The process entailed the aggregation of comparable themes and subthemes, while also eliminating initial codes and themes that did not align with the overarching framework. Fifth, the themes were chosen by fine-tuning each feature such that each one could tell a story while still fitting within the overall data narrative. To illustrate the themes using data extracts and to explain how each data extract captured a different aspect of the subject, the themes were added at the end of the report. Several proposed tests were utilized throughout the research to investigate and enhance the plausibility and coherence of the principal author’s viewpoint (Levitt et al., 2018). These included keeping a reflective notebook, re-reading the transcripts after the first drafting of data themes, and conducting a "member check" with all subjects, with four saying the themes matched their own experiences. The data was additionally triangulated with the aid of the third author, who evaluated the various steps of analysis for theme identification and emergent themes by reviewing one original transcript.

**Research Procedures**

**Data Collection Protocol**

Semi-structured interviews were used following Wolf’s (1978) conclusion that research on the social validity of treatments should include the social relevance of the intervention goals, the social appropriateness of techniques, and the acceptability of the intervention. Interviews in this study were conducted over the telephone and digitally recorded. This method of data collection was chosen due to the movement restriction order caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Each participant underwent a brief member check after the interview to increase trustworthiness. The
process of verification was undertaken in order to ensure that the responses provided by the teachers were accurately interpreted.

**Data Analysis**

The confidentiality of the interviewees was guaranteed as all the recordings were made anonymous and carefully transcribed before being analyzed. In the first phase, the data was deductively analyzed using the Thematic Analysis. The interview items and coding were explicitly designed to address the following structures:
- teachers’ understanding of mindfulness,
- their perceptions about mindfulness in schools, and
- their perceived barriers and facilitators to their implementation

In the second phase, an inductive method of data analysis was performed to highlight issues and pertinent points of interest which had not been unearthed in the extant literature. The codes were later organized according to themes through an exhaustive search for possible repetitions and consistencies. The codes and themes were then examined, and a list of the most pertinent ones to the study questions was created. The semantic encoding procedure was used to record the participants' distinct and shared views regarding the use of MBIs in their language classrooms.

**Results**

Below are the interviewees' responses, which were grouped into three categories based on Wigelsworth and Quinn's (2020).

**Theme One – ESL Teachers’ Understanding of Mindfulness**

All the teachers in this study emphasized the use of mindfulness as a form of emotional support. Consensually, they realized that being mindful meant being conscious of one's thoughts and emotions in the present moment as well as in the past and future. They also agreed that being non-judgmental was crucial to achieving the state of mindfulness. All associated mindfulness with their ability to control their emotions as seen from one of the responses – ‘one must be aware of the need to have control over one’s emotions.’ However, three respondents made a connection between mindfulness and being open to accepting one's emotional condition (s). Unfortunately, a few of the respondents were still unclear about the concept of mindfulness. Several respondents acknowledged that they had not previously utilized Mind-Body Interventions (MBIs) throughout their teaching years of service, despite being aware of its existence. These individuals expressed reservations regarding the integration of MBIs into their instructional practices. Nevertheless, most felt that MBIs would be helpful for them to deal with their own stress at work. It can be generally deduced here that the definition and concept of MBIs were still elusive among language teachers.
Theme Two – ESL Teachers’ Perceptions of MBIs in Language Classrooms

The general benefits of MBIs were acknowledged by all seventeen language teachers in this study. They unanimously agreed that MBIs would benefit both teachers and students particularly in a second language classroom where frustrations were often experienced by both parties if implemented with proper planning and execution. The respondents also believed that MBIs could help reduce teachers’ stress levels and increase a positive and encouraging teaching experience. MBIs would also be advantageous to the students by assisting them in managing their stress and anxiety, especially in connection to learning a second language. In addition, with reduced stress levels, the students would then enjoy improved academic attainment. More than half of the participating teachers described MBIs as a possible way to help them handle difficult emotions. All of them agreed that the ability to handle stress would make them more resilient and dynamic. Fifteen out of the seventeen respondents also believed that reduced stress and depression would create a healthy sense of calmness and joy or happiness at the workplace. Some of the recorded responses are shown below:

Teacher 4 - I truly believe that when you are in tune with yourself, you will be satisfied, calm, happy, and contented with what life has to offer. MBIs in class would make me more relaxed.

Teacher 12 – When you are happy, you are more focused on your work and thus be more productive. MBIs is a great tool to create that feeling in me, especially when I am in class, handling difficult students.

Positive Teaching Experience

The respondents agreed that MBIs had a high possibility of allowing teachers create a positive and tranquil classroom ambiance for students. With everyone in the classroom being mindful of their existence and purpose for the assembly, the lesson would run more smoothly with fewer hiccoughs or disruptions regarding attentiveness and focus. Almost all respondents said that cultivating a personal mindfulness practice helped them cope with the fast-paced nature of their jobs.

Reduced Students’ Stress and Anxiety Levels

Teachers also believed MBIs could be used by students in their everyday lives to help them deal with stress and anxiety related to language learning. In addition, the students would also develop greater resilience to any changes taking place in the learning. To students who are usually overly worried about examinations, MBIs could be the possible answer to calming them down, according to the teachers in this study. In a study by Schwind et al. (2017), the participating teachers in their study reported students feeling more relaxed and less anxious after participating in their study. According to the teachers, the brief mindful breathing exercise at the beginning of...
class helped students feel more focused and balanced before working with the course material. Most students thought the lovingkindness meditation was a great approach to end the lesson. The positive impact of MBIs on students is also reverberated by the responses from the teachers in this study. Two responses from two teachers are shown below.

Teacher 2 - Students in Malaysia need this mindfulness technique to help alleviate their stress due to exam pressure. They need to be assisted in channeling the anxiety elsewhere. MBIs can surely help them to tackle the pressure. Once they are capable of coping, their lives will be less stressful.

Teacher 11 – MBIs would be great for students to help them overcome stress related to their academics. I believe this is a good way for us teachers to help our students by exposing them a simple method to relieve stress particularly during the challenging language lesson in schools.

**Theme Three - Teachers' Perceptions of MBI Obstacles and Facilitators**

Presented below are the obstacles to the implementation of MBIs in Malaysian English Language classrooms, as perceived by the respondents in this study after which the solutions to the challenges are discussed.

**Time Constraint**

Every one of the respondents claimed that heavy workload was the biggest hurdle to their implementing personal interventions such as MBIs. Their failure to include MBIs in their lessons indicated that it was also a barrier to the implementation of MBIs for their students as the teachers did not have the luxury of time to prepare and execute the intervention. The teachers also mentioned onerous administrative tasks and demands for completing the curriculum and syllabus as obstacles to implementation. In addition to this, the teachers were also concerned about the amount of time taken away from their lessons should MBI be implemented. This is because completion of the syllabus was commonly a priority particularly for classes taking major examinations.

**Conflicts of Faith**

Thirteen out of the seventeen respondents felt somewhat unsure about the religious aspect of Mindfulness. Thirteen of the teachers were Muslims while the other four were Hindus. A conflict with religion was more prevalent among the Muslims after being told that Mindfulness originated in Buddhism. Five participants expressed doubts regarding parental consent as most of the students were also Muslims. However, they relented after being given some explanations concerning the universalities of mindfulness. The Muslim teachers were also assured that meditation was a long-time Islamic practice through daily dhikr or mantra which is essentially a repeated expression of gratitude to God. The elaborate explanation managed to enhance their understanding of mindfulness.
Lack of Understanding

Another obstacle to the possible use of MBIs in Malaysian language classrooms was the teachers' and students' lack of comprehension of the concept. Some of the teachers mentioned the possible skepticism among society regarding MBIs being associated with mental illness. The stigma of being labeled as incapable of coping with life’s stressors was also cited by several teachers as a factor that inhibited the use of MBIs. They feared the stigma of someone being labeled insane or of an unsound mind. What this entails is the need for the relevant authorities to raise awareness of MBIs in education.

Teacher Upskilling and Training

The participating teachers strongly believed that educators need to undergo comprehensive training and development programs for their mindfulness practice before executing MBIs in the classrooms. Several were given proper training. A few of them admitted that they would seriously consider using MBIs in their classroom if the benefits outweighed the setbacks. They also felt that the knowledge and skills to be attained in training would help them build their confidence in the intervention process. According to Jennings (2015), to ensure a positive environment for teaching and learning, teachers and other pertinent school or faculty staff should receive the appropriate education and training on mindfulness. Parents, stakeholders, policymakers, and educators have all expressed the need for the educational agenda to be expanded to include social and emotional learning for both teachers and students.

A Whole-school Community Approach to MBIs Execution

The respondents were insistent that a comprehensive directive from the federal, state, and school administrations needed to be communicated to the entire school population. The whole school community must be engaged to ensure that MBIs would be implemented with proper planning and solid execution basis. No one party is to be singled out in the MBIs implementation. Seven of the seventeen respondents felt that the holistic approach to the MBIs was crucial to mitigate stigmas surrounding the concept itself.

Dissemination of Information to Stakeholders

The final point to facilitate MBIs is the awareness of all the stakeholders in the learning process of students. All teachers, students, and parents should be adequately informed of MBIs and their benefits. Most of the teachers in this study also admitted that they did not know that even teachers could benefit from MBIs. Proper dissemination of relevant information regarding MBIs to parents would particularly help ease any form of misunderstanding with regard to the religious connotations of MBIs. Furthermore, accurate distribution of information would ensure parental support for the implementation of MBIs at home. This is apparent from the recorded response of one of the respondents shown below.
Parents who are concerned with the well-being of their children would welcome this idea of MBIs in school. This is even more so in a second language learning environment which can be frustrating at times to the students. What teachers and school administrators need to do is to consciously approach the parents with the proper explanation given to them concerning the manifold benefits of MBIs for their children.

The findings indicated that some respondents were unfamiliar with MBI and had never used it despite acknowledging that the approach helped ease job-related stress. Furthermore, the participants acknowledged that MBI yielded a favorable professional encounter that also had advantageous effects on their students. Notwithstanding, several impediments to the efficacious execution of MBI were also discerned, encompassing temporal constraints, religious discord, educators' inadequate comprehension, and insufficient MBI instructions. Numerous facilitators to the potential execution of MBI were also presented in the findings such as a whole-school community approach and adequate information sharing with all the stakeholders.

Discussion

This study attempted to explore the perception of selected English Language teachers regarding Mindfulness-based interventions in their language classrooms. They were mainstream secondary teachers in two daily schools in the sub-urban area of Perak. The teachers had not received any prior exposure or training in the implementation of Mindfulness-based Interventions (MBIs) prior to the commencement of the study. The participants' perspectives on the implementation of MBIs were captured through semi-structured interviews which explored their comprehension, perception, and the various factors that influence the feasibility of MBIs. This discussion will be guided by the three research questions as follows:

RQ1 What do ESL teachers understand about the concept of Mindfulness-based intervention in their classrooms?

Mindfulness is indeed an intricate concept as reflected in the teachers’ responses concerning their understanding of what mindfulness necessitated. The teachers defined the concept as an emotional support and a self-help device for managing stress in their language classrooms. However, several respondents admitted that they never heard of MBIs before being approached for the current study. This implies that there is a lack of consensus for an exact operational definition of MBIs among the teachers which may affect the execution of the intervention in schools. A vague understanding of the definitional operation may engender differing expectations of the outcomes. Another issue of concern in the teachers’ understanding of MBIs is the ‘introspective awareness’ (Hyland, 2016) which forms the fundamental aspect of a mindful practice. This missing perspective from the teachers may have stemmed from their treatment of methods as mere commodities. A lack of proper understanding among the teachers will make them reluctant to implement MBIs in language classrooms. The onus is thus on the school administrators to inform their academic staff about the purpose and the multiple benefits of
MBIs.

**RQ2: What are ESL teachers’ perceptions regarding MBIs in their classrooms?**

Despite the teachers’ limited and convergent understanding of MBIs which engendered their apprehension in the implementation, they displayed optimism about the possible success of MBIs in their language classrooms. Such a response could have been triggered by the urgent need to address the stress- and anxiety-related issues that afflicted members of the education fraternity (OCED, 2020). Teachers must make a meaningful and fun classroom for second language learners which can be unsettling to the former (Nguyen, Le, Nguyen, Hoang, & Hoang, 2020). School is where students are given numerous opportunities to develop their self-regulatory practices and personal attributes. This makes schools an ideal platform to introduce them to various strategies for their mental and psychological well-being (Virtanen, Vasalampi, Torppa, Lerkkanen, & Nurmi, 2019). School authorities have the responsibility to promote both teachers’ and students’ social and emotional well-being by ensuring that a conducive setting is provided to all (Hwang et al., 2017). Schools can assist teachers in MBIs by organizing mindfulness-based training programs like MBSR or programs designed particularly for teachers like Mindfulness-Based Wellness Education (MBWE), Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE), and Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques (SMART) in Education (Khng, 2018). Almost all respondents said that cultivating a personal mindfulness practice helped them cope with the fast-paced nature of their jobs. This corroborates the findings by Norton and Griffith (2020) who confirmed the benefits of MBIs for teachers.

**RQ3: What potential barriers and facilitators do language teachers perceive in implementing MBIs in their classrooms?**

The respondents in this study cited several barriers that could impede the successful implementation of MBIs in their language classrooms. The most prominent barrier to MBIs was lack of time. The allocation of time is necessary for the scheduling of MBIs within pre-existing, busy timetables, as well as for the completion of syllabus and curriculum requirements. The teachers were under pressure to incorporate additional components into their already busy schedules. The teachers also mentioned the need for them to be adequately trained with skills and knowledge as implementers of MBIs. Comprehensive training and upskilling were thus necessary to ensure that the teachers are competent in delivering MBIs in their lessons (Humphrey et al., 2016). The results of the study suggest that inadequate understanding of Mindfulness-based Interventions among teachers posed a barrier to the prospective effectiveness of the intervention. Along the same breadth was the concern of MBIs being grounded in Buddhism which posed the predominantly Muslim teachers with religious conflicts. Any doubts about MBIs causing religious conflicts among the stakeholders may jeopardize their acceptance of the intervention. All of this requires a structured and organized execution of MBI through appropriate distribution of pertinent information about the intervention programme in a real-world setting. Participants in this research generally had mixed feelings about the implementation of mindfulness training in educational...
settings. These opinions were linked to their desire to promote student wellness since they deemed that mindfulness exercises were indeed helpful despite feeling inadequately prepared to execute the technique (Jefferies, 2021).

**Conclusion**

The study examined the perception of selected ESL teachers in two schools on implementing MBIs during their online lessons regarding their understanding of and challenges in its execution. A lack of understanding and awareness of the intervention among the MBI implementers may threaten the success of the program. To prevent failure to the execution of any MBI program, proper and detailed groundwork is necessary before its implementation (Duggan & Julliard, 2018). All parties involved, including school officials, teachers, students, and parents, should be fully informed. All problems that pose a threat to them should also be resolved, with special attention paid to the MBI’s universal nature, purposeful process, and benefits. Aligned accountability between the relevant authorities i.e. district education departments, schools and teachers would lead to an enhanced performance of any program implemented in school (Soleimani, 2020). It is also recommended that teachers be trained and given ample time to prepare for effective implementation. Mindfulness is a promising mechanism as a school-based intervention that helps promote a favorable school environment for both teachers and students. Schools should be aligned and accountable to ensure the success of MBI programs. Qualitative findings from the study should be triangulated with expert informants and third-person cognitive behavioral measures to investigate improvements in staff pro-social dispositions. Further research with schools that are effectively integrating mindfulness may be conducted to evaluate what provision was made available to staff or explore other organizational supports.

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**About the Authors**

**Puteri Zarina** is a senior lecturer currently attached to Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia. Among her research interests are TESL, discourse analysis, TVET, ESP, and Systemic Functional Linguistics. She received her Ph. D. in English Language from University of Glasgow, Scotland. ORCID: [https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9296-8662](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9296-8662)

**Kussin** is a lecturer from the Faculty of Languages and Communication, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia. His research interests are language acquisition, language learning strategies and language policies, among many. Currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Language Policies. ORCID: [https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0103-8150](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0103-8150)

**Mokhtar** is a Senior Lecturer in UPSI and an experienced TESL lecturer who has taught previously in schools and polytechnics. She graduated with Ph.D. from the University of...
Mindfulness-based Classroom Intervention

Puteri Zarina, Kussin, Mokhtar & Tahir

Auckland, New Zealand. ORCID id: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8231-2678

Tahir is a Senior Lecturer and internationally recognized researcher from Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia. His focus areas include materials development and evaluation, and digital learning. ORCID ID https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5411-1000

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An Analysis of Master 2 Students' Exam Copies in Research Methodology and Written Expression: The Case of Department of English at Batna 2 University

Djelloul NEDJAI
Department of English
Batna 2 University – MOSTAFA BENBOULAID, Batna, Algeria
Email: d.nedjai@univ-batna2.dz

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Abstract
Experts in writing, most notably in writing research reports, papers, and theses, emphasize both the utility and the complexity of writing in the academic context. The development of an ability to write effectively needs time and practice. It was observed that Second Year EFL Master’s students at Banta 2 University face difficulties in respecting academic writing features despite a good deal of instruction in written expression. Hence, the paper analyzes Master Two students' exam copies in two subjects, written expression, and research methodology. This study seems appealing because its primary purpose is to investigate the natural causes behind students’ failure in academic writing. It aims to identify students’ lacunas in writing research reports, papers, and theses. To address these objectives, the current study inquires: “Why do so many students fail to write correctly?” To consider the research query as mentioned earlier, an explanation is attempted through content analysis of 196 students’ exam excerpts of research methodology and 191 copies in the exam of written expression. Besides, the research proposal is looked at in a step-by-step chronological order. The combination of good writing and good thinking is presented as the key to academic success. Results indicated that students failed to demonstrate a good command of academic writing norms.

Keywords: Academic writing, content analysis, research methodology, research proposal, written expression

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Introduction

Experts in writing, particularly in writing research reports, papers, and theses, emphasize the utility and the complexity of writing in the academic context (Strong, 2001; Russell, 2000). The development of an ability to write effectively requires time and practice. Nonetheless, what is observed among second-year EFL students in the English department is that many difficulties were faced in respecting academic writing elements despite a great deal of instruction in written expression and academic writing. EFL students demonstrated a lack of competency in mastering features of academic writing. They failed to write appropriate research papers, reports, and theses that meet academic standards. Henceforth, this study attempts to look at students' copies in the modules of research methodology and written expression. It encompasses the identification of students' difficulties in presenting a sound and coherent research proposal and their obstacles in academic writing and style. The aim is to showcase the extent to which students can respond to the requirements of the research proposal and to those of writing for academic purposes. The far-reaching aim is to see, first, whether students have developed a clear understanding of research methodology principles and, second, if they can nicely relate these principles one to the other and to the topic under study. This study inquires into the following research queries “Why do so many students fail to write correctly?” and “Why do so many students lack the ability to write a sound research proposal?” Accordingly, it could be hypothesized that causes could range from lack of language abilities, the relation between thought and writing, and inability to conceptualize, to the topic newness, students’ motivation, and lack of predisposition to accept the rules and norms of research. Each of these principles is attributed much importance and emphasis by Robert (1990) and further developed by Russell (2000).

To fulfill the research objectives and to equate with the research queries asked beforehand, 196 students’ copies in the exam of research methodology and 191 copies in the exam of written expression have been analyzed, aiming to highlight students’ knowledge in these two fundamental modules. The number of students represents fifty percent (50%) of the entire Second year EFL Master’s students. This overall appraisal of the research structure is much emphasized by authors like Creswell (1994), Krathwhol (1988), and Kumart (1999). Analyzing the written expression copies is an attempt to identify students' abilities to write and structure sentences and paragraphs and organize them in a coherent text. For each item in both topics, an attempt was made to understand students’ failure in writing a sound research proposal.

Literature Review

Academic writing

Writing is a skill required in many contexts in life. However, academic writing differs in many things from personal writing. Academic writing has its own set of rules and norms. These regulations and practices may be recognized around a formal order or structure in which ideas are presented and to ensure that ideas are supported by author citations in the specialized literature. In this line, Lennie Irvin (2010) stated that “Academic writing is always a form of evaluation that asks you to demonstrate knowledge and show proficiency with certain disciplinary skills of thinking, interpreting, and presenting” (p. 3).

In contrast to personal writing contexts, academic writing is different, for it deals with the underlying theories and causes governing processes and practices in everyday life. Scholarly writing also explores alternative explanations of these events. Academic writing follows a particular tone and adheres to traditional conventions hereafter explained.
Structure
Some kinds of structure are required, such as a beginning, middle, and end. This simple structure is typical to an essay format as well as to other assignment writing tasks which may not have an articulated design. A well-thought structure helps the writer always find each element of the text in its due place. This is how he will succeed in including vital aspects of academic writing like coherence, linkage, and cohesion to make his piece of work a text which reads nicely. These aspects were explained by many authors and experts like (Murray and Beglar, 2009).

References
A significant difference between academic writing and other writing genres is based on the citation and referencing of published authors and sources of information. Whatever the citation style, a reference needs to be provided to add credibility to our ideas while also avoiding plagiarism. In addition, acknowledging the sources of information enables the reader to understand the provenance of the borrowed ideas (Murray & Beglar, 2009). Writers have to always remain faithful to other authors by properly citing them any time they use their findings, their results, and their theories.

Abstract Thought
Traditionally, academic topics have focused on abstract things, like ideas and concepts not necessarily presented in a concrete or physical form. The many theories in the literature are good examples (Harwood et al., 2008). Other academic texts are based on scientific reasoning. They tend to use a form of thinking based on fact and evidence and on results produced by research scientifically and systematically conducted. This is another aspect of rigorous and mathematical thinking used in results analysis and interpretation.

Academic Tone
Like all varieties of writing, academic writing has its tone, which dictates the choice of words, phrasing, and style. Directness, simplicity, clarity and objectivity are some aspects of this tone. Besides, the academic writer does not favor any interpretation tendency that may lead to bias. Instead, he lets his results speak for themselves. Similarly, we do not write in the same way for all people.

Method
This study falls into the realm of a mixed-method approach wherein both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analytical procedures are employed. The mixed-method approach is considered appropriate for the scope of this study because of the nature of the required data. Exam copies are conceived using content analysis which is a mere qualitative approach, and statistical data obtained through students’ questionnaires which needed quantification. In the quest to understand the subtleties of the issue, the present paper endeavors to collect data by analyzing Master 2 students’ exam copies in two subjects, written expression and research methodology, bearing in mind exam questions and answers. Content analysis has been applied as an analytical framework. In the following section, a treatise on content analysis to understand its application in the current research is provided.
Participants

The current research project considers Second Year EFL Master students during the academic year 2014-2015 to be the core population for the investigation, with randomly selected samples of 196 students for research methodology and 191 students for written expression randomly chosen.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a qualitative analysis method focusing on recorded human artifacts such as manuscripts and voice recordings through unobtrusive research. Along the same line, content analysis investigates these written, spoken, and visual productions without explicitly extracting data from participants. Within the research setting, content analysis can inform the development of surveys and questionnaires for collecting research data. It can also provide researchers with qualitative data from texts based on human thoughts, behaviors, and emotional responses, supplementing their quantitative numerical analyses for the problem under investigation (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

In other words, the content analysis attempts to compile qualitative data based on human language in written form or through cultural artifacts. Subsequently, with content analysis, the investigator seeks to understand the full context and how humans think, feel, or use language and why. Hence, the researcher does not necessarily need to interact with participants wherein the data produced can be analyzed (Huxley, 2020).

Results

Results indicate that students face severe difficulties in written expression, research methodology assignments, and dissertations. For instance, it has been noticed that Master 2 students do not respect academic writing regulations because of miscomprehension, misuse, and lack of awareness. They are summarized as follows:

Analysis of Students' Exam Copies of Research Methodology

The exam contains ten questions related one to the other in chronological order. These are also part of the research proposal. Besides, this kind of exam is one way of testing the students' abilities to properly move from step one, which is problem identification, to the last step concerning what should be done to avoid subjectivity in the thesis writing process. It is also meant to bring students to become aware of order and structure on one side, and of the interrelation of the different items, on the other. Undoubtedly, in research, a good start leads to a good finish, for precise topics lead to a better organization of research proposals. A bad start will not help the students identify the steps to come because they all relate to the topic.

Question 1: Identify a problem you would like to investigate

In problem identification, almost all students (184 out of 196) did not consider problem identification procedures. They show more ambition than needed. Consequently, they do not evaluate how much time the study will take. They tend to choose topics in which they possess neither competence nor knowledge. They do not even consider the study budget and forget to start with a first elementary bibliography to construct a theoretical background for their research. In other words, instead of choosing searchable topics, they prefer unsearchable ones which have no
relation to their field of specialization. Here are some examples of the issues suggested by the students.
1- The effect of the poison on people in the south
2- Obesity among children
3- Junk food
4- Schools suffer from the culture of students.
5- Mass media and the internet’s effect on society.

These topics do not correlate with students’ different modules at the Department of English. This wrong choice does not tune students to their field of specialization.

**Question 2: Ask appropriate questions to precise your problem**

This question expects students to move from general to specific, that is to gradually narrow down the problem to obtain an as precise issue as possible. Asking “WH” questions like where, whom to, when, and what are likely to help precise the identified problem. What students tend to do, instead, is to state irrelevant hypotheses or answer research questions that have not been asked yet. The following is one example found in the majority of students’ copies:

“Identified topic”

“Effects of large groups on learning”

**Questions to precise the topic**
1- What are the problems of the large group?
2- Are students interested?
3- Educational difficulties?
4- Educational relationship between teachers and large groups.
5- How to behave in the situation?

Each of these questions is another topic in itself. Hence, instead of asking questions about effects, large groups, learners, kind of learning, place, and learning time, students state other issues. So, even when the topic is identified and fits students’ fields of interest, good questions to narrow it down are not asked. This resulted in a large majority (180 out of 196) that failed to narrow down the problem correctly.

**Question 3: Formulate your accurate problem**

Here, the difficulty almost all students face is to state the problem clearly. One hundred seventy-two (172) students failed to move from general to specific and present a clear topic. They do not precisely know what they want to do. Even when they succeed in asking appropriate questions to precise the problem, they fail in correctly stating it. What they tend to do is to go back to the problem initially identified. They lack precision and fail to make the right decision.

The following examples demonstrate students’ inability to move from general to specific:
1- The large numbers of students and education.
2- The effect of the new educational system on students.
3- Laboratory and pronunciation.

These are other identified vague problems that are unsearchable. A Lack of logic and rationality appears right at the beginning when students attempt to specify issues.

**Question 4: State and explain your hypothesis as related to the problem**
Very few students (only eight out of 196) succeeded in working out a reasonable hypothesis nicely related to the problem. This feature of methodology stands as one of the major problems students encounter. They rarely understand what a hypothesis is. Beyond, when they do, they fail to find a hypothesis related to the problem. They instead present hypotheses that do not go along with their topics. A hypothesis is the core of the whole work, for research is constructed around hypothesis testing. Working out a rationale in the research proposal already becomes impossible when students fail to narrow down the problem and suggest a working hypothesis directly related to the problem.

**Question 5: Which method have you decided to use, and why?**

Students suggest using the method they like but not the one imposed by the nature of the case. They neither realize that each topic corresponds to one method or a combination of methods nor understand that each method corresponds to a set of data-gathering tools and one specific model of analysis and interpretation of results.

Instead of obeying research requirements, they tend to do what they favor and show some resistance to change. This is why the majority (175 out of 196) either fail to select the appropriate method or the suitable data-gathering tools.

**Question 6: Name your data-collecting tools**

As already stated, students do not select appropriate data-gathering tools which fit the method and the kind of information they need for their investigation. They very often confuse between method and approach and between procedure and tools. In a study that needs description and analysis, they select the experimental method. When choosing the experimental method, they suggest interviews to collect information. They do not possess a clear perception of research methodology to help them use, in a rational way, the appropriate methodology design for their investigation.

When asked to account for the choice of data-gathering tools, they tend to give reasons concerning simplicity of use instead of rationality. They use incoherent and nonsensical forms of thinking and reasoning. Consequently, 181 students did not select data-gathering tools imposed by the nature of the topic and the method.

**Question 7: Identify your population**

This question is simple, primary, and elementary. They at least understand the need to work on a population and make the difference between a population and a sample. One hundred eighty students managed to identify the population of their study and suggested the need to work on a representative sample instead of a too-large population.

**Question 8: Do you need a sample?**

They also correctly account for their decision to work on a sample because the population is too large.

**Question 9: What are the limitations of your methodology?**

This question is another hurdle in students’ minds in that 170 could not be aware of the methodology design weaknesses. They do not realize that no research is perfect and that no approach, method, or tool are ideal. Best methodologies will still have limitations because of many
other aspects, such as bias, subjectivity, unknown and unidentified variables, the competence of the researcher, extraneous variables, and the like.

**Question 10: What should you do to avoid subjectivity?**

Answers obtained show that 177 students are aware enough of the mistakes to avoid in order not to have excessive subjectivity in their research. They make the difference between a research result and a personal opinion.

**Table 1. Students’ responses to research methodology exam questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers (196)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identified problems for research</td>
<td>12 (6.12%) 184 (93.87%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Narrowing down the problem</td>
<td>16 (8.16%) 180 (91.83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Formulating the precise problem</td>
<td>24 (12.24%) 172 (87.75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Hypothesis as related to the problem</td>
<td>8 (4.08%) 188 (95.91%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Accounting for choice of method</td>
<td>21 (10.71%) 175 (89.28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Choice of data-collecting tools</td>
<td>15 (7.65%) 181 (92.34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Population identification</td>
<td>180 (91.83%) 16 (8.16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Need for a representative sample</td>
<td>180 (91.83%) 16 (8.16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Methodology limitations</td>
<td>26 (13.26%) 170 (86.73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Avoidance of subjectivity</td>
<td>177 (90.30%) 19 (9.69%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table one indicates the extent to which the research problem in methodology deserves rethinking in terms of what to teach, when, and to whom. The many weaknesses in students’ exam copies already signal an urgent need for more practice in this module.

To conclude this first part of the paper, it is worth mentioning how the same students responded to the two following questions:

1- How can methodology help you perform better in your academic life?
2- What do you like and dislike about methodology?

Students' answers are interesting and raise the teacher’s awareness of two fundamental things. First, almost all students (190) know the value of methodology not only in their academic life but also in their life in general. However, what they dislike most is the effort they have to make always to be as precise as possible. Besides, students tend not to value and obey rules, norms, and the strict use of the methodology principles. Students are aware of the importance of methodology, but they, at the same time, develop a certain social resistance to meet the requirements of methodology. They resist newness and do not show enough flexibility to learn to do things differently. It is, in fact, challenging to teach someone to do differently from what he used to do in his way for a long time. The methodology may be taught early in primary school to become a habit, and part of the student's daily behavior. Naturally, it is easier to teach good patterns at an early age of schooling than to try to modify already existing negative habits at an age when habit modification sounds impossible.

**Analysis of Students’ Exam Copies of Written Expression**

There is no doubt that writing and the research proposal are intimately related. Weakness in writing for academic purposes diminishes the students’ ability to produce an acceptable research
An Analysis of Master 2 Students’ Exam Copies in Research Methodology

Proposal. To ascertain this cause-and-effect link, we have selected the following students' exam answers relevant to written expression, research style and scientific reasoning.

**Question 1: Explain the following principles/concepts**

1. Citing
2. Summarizing
3. Paraphrasing
4. Plagiarism
5. Wordiness
6. Coherence
7. Relation between thought and mind
8. Rationality
9. Abstract
10. Introduction
11. Body
12. Simplicity
13. Cohesion
14. Repetition
15. Deductive reasoning
16. Inductive reasoning
17. Research style.

No single student succeeded in accurately explaining all these principles. Moreover, in almost all cases, students confuse concepts like citing and paraphrasing, and between plagiarism and paraphrasing. They overuse repetitions because they do not possess a vocabulary rich enough to select each word for its proper strong use in the text. They also rarely make a clear distinction between an abstract and an introduction. They use too long sentences they fail to master. Additionally, they fail to write in directly using simplicity, clarity, and cohesion. Besides, they fail to structure their sentences and paragraphs. Henceforth, it is sometimes hard to understand the meaning of their texts. They are aware of the importance of methodology but fail to use it as a complete frame of behavior and thought. Similarly, they know the value of the research style but fail to succeed in writing according to its requirements.

**Question 2: Identify the weaknesses of the following paragraph**

Researchers ensure that in higher education, and in other programs, which use teaching subjects written in English, reading becomes the pioneer among all the different skills of the English language. Accepting the fact that reading is of great importance for all students, it is attached to great importance for ESP learners. But traditional methods of testing it are problematic.

The paragraph contains elementary weaknesses like the use of inappropriate words, repetitions, and redundancies. However, even these elementary weaknesses in writing have been identified only by a minority of students (17 out of 191). What is more surprising is that this paragraph was already given to the students, in one of the lectures, as an example of how to identify elementary mistakes in writing.

**Question 3: Rewrite the same paragraph using a more academic style**

Almost all students failed to rewrite the paragraph more acceptably. They have introduced other repetitions and language misuses like grammar and style mistakes. This proves, again, that
students really lack the basics of not only academic writing, but those fundamentals beginners start with like capitalization and full stop to indicate the sentence end.

**Question 4: Punctuate the following paragraph**

Research methodology is a technical topic needed by all researchers it presents and explains all approaches methods and tools in use a good understanding of methodology allows the researcher to present a sound research proposal and also permits him to successfully conduct his research.

This short paragraph needs the use of ten punctuation items to be correctly structured. It contains only four short sentences. Students did not fully succeed in appropriately punctuating it. They have proved a clear inability to identify the beginning and the end of each sentence. Furthermore, many of them have even missed to capitalize the first word of the first sentence. This is a mistake that shows a clear lack of command of punctuation, an elementary aspect of writing we learn at an early stage.

**Weaknesses in Written Expression Exam Copies**

Table Two demonstrates students’ inefficacy to write in accordance with the major rules and regulations highly appreciated in writing for academic purposes, though they are part of the written expression module. It illustrates students’ weaknesses in the written expression found in their exam copies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers (191)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explaning principles</td>
<td>00 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph weaknesses</td>
<td>117 8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph rewriting</td>
<td>12 6.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph punctuating</td>
<td>09 4.71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is indicated from the table above, the different weaknesses spotted in students’ written exam copies vary between issues in explaining principles, paragraph writing, paragraph punctuation, and rewriting, wherein students represented a high rate of paragraph weaknesses related to rewriting and explanation principles. This might be because students do not respect the norms of academic writing or maybe due to their inability to write at all.

**Discussion**

Considering the findings of the current study and to answer the aforementioned research query, it is found that students have serious problems in written expression, research methodology assignments and dissertations. Data obtained revealed that students are unable to identify a problem, they are unable to ask appropriate questions to narrow it down, and they have difficulties in formulating a precise topic with its appropriate methodology, data collection tools, identifying the population, the sample and more importantly how to avoid subjectivity in their accounts. The analysis of students’ exam copies revealed that students are unable to abide by academic norms and standards. These difficulties perceived throughout students’ exam copies are because students are demotivated, they are misoriented to the English stream and they are the result of an imposed educational system that does not equate with students’ needs, levels, and context. Within this
context, previous literature affirms that the current study’s set hypothesis which purports to the lack of language abilities relation between thought and writing, the ability to conceptualize the chosen topics for writing, the lack of previous position to accept the rules and norms of research are emphasized as it has been claimed by Robert (1990) and Russel (2000). In sum, this study confirmed that students only can write, but also, they are unwilling due to their demotivation and reluctance towards writing.

Conclusion

The issue is many-sided and of paramount importance to academic people. Consequently, it certainly needs larger and wider research conducted by highly qualified experts. The aim was to highlight some students’ difficulties in writing a research proposal. These difficulties do exist and are the direct consequence of an ill-training right at the beginning of one's schooling life. This is what appears in students' written productions and explains why only a few people succeed in writing for academic purposes. It is a complex construction of a whole cognitive and linguistic process that should start early in primary school to be continually refined. Academic writing is different from other forms of writing and a research proposal is an academic work in itself. Writing as a process does not take place all at once. This process includes planning, completing a first draft, revising and editing. It needs a good command of grammar and vocabulary. This is why it stands as the major difficulty students encounter. This study found that students do really face real hurdles in academic writing due to the lack of practice and awareness of the different academic norms, the impact of the newly devised educational system, and students' lack of awareness towards academic writing standards in general. The student has to work out a rationale for his research proposal. He will show his capacity to think rationally and to give each element its due place. Also, he has to work out a clear hypothesis well related to the topic. His objectives have to be significant, sound and worthwhile enough to make his study original research. The methodology suggested should treat the specifics of the topic and his research tools should equate with the needed information. This tied up the relationship between thinking and writing and is likely to stand as the greatest difficulty students face when writing a research proposal.

Limitations of the study

Considering the limitations of the study, one can say that this investigation is based only on one section of students, and their grades obtained in two modules. However, the only consideration of the poor grades allows for making some recommendations. The first is a call for other researchers to investigate the issue in detail and for a longer time using a wider perspective to scrutinize the problem more systematically. The second recommendation concerns the modules themselves, for it is believed that more time should be devoted to the teaching of writing for academic purposes and to research methodology. They are prerequisites to any academic activity. Besides, students need more practice to master the techniques of writing and the principles of research methodology. The overcrowded sections and groups do not permit this form of teaching. This is why the need to introduce tutorials is urgent, though we know that the great numbers of students remain a major obstacle. Undoubtedly, the need to learn how to think differently to meet the requirements of research methodology principles and norms is urgent. Similarly, learning to form new habits stands mandatory, yet there is an aspiration to see future generations of students enter the university with already existing abilities to write correctly and to think rationally. This is, and this should be, the main task of the school and, maybe, its unique task. Prior to these
changes, we would probably begin with a clear philosophy of education and, similarly, of methodology.

About the Author:
Dr. Djelloul NEDJAI, is a permanent teacher of English at the Department of English, Banta 2 University. He has over seven years of teaching experience in the subjects of culture and civilization of the language Social and Human Sciences research methodology, and Oral expression. He holder of a Ph.D. degree in Applied Linguistics since 2019, and a member of laboratory research affiliated with Banta 2 University (Extended Disciplinary Competencies in English as a Foreign Language “EDCEFL”). ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/ 0000-0001-6931-4022

References
A Teacher Training Platform of Content and Language Integrated Learning for Elementary English Education in China

Xiaohui Zhang  
School of Language Academy, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru, Malaysia  
&  
School of English Language and Culture, Xi’an Fanyi University, Xi’an, China  
Corresponding Author: zhangxiaohui0831@gmail.com

Farhana Diana Deris  
School of Language Academy, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru, Malaysia

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Abstract  
Despite a plethora of studies on practice of Content and Language Integrated Learning in most European countries, few have examined Content and Language Integrated Learning teacher training in China. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of a Content and Language Integrated Learning teacher training platform for elementary English education in China. It sought to answer the following main research questions: What are the contents differences in Content and Language Integrated Learning teacher training in China? What are in-service English teachers' perceptions of Content and Language Integrated Learning after the training? And What are the factors which affect the training effect? The qualitative evidence showed that the training content of the teacher platform in China has been flexibly designed following the Chinese elementary English education context, but it also reflected the lack of consideration of teachers' individual needs in the design of the platform's training content and the lack of practical sessions and the long-term follow-up support. The statistical evidence showed that teaching experience significantly determines Content and Language Integrated Learning efficacy, and the educational background has little bearing on Content and Language Integrated Learning perceptions. Furthermore, all teachers from different educational backgrounds had a positive perception of their Content and Language Integrated Learning competence. However, Participants believed that their theoretical knowledge and teaching abilities are not equal, which suggests that instructors in this field urgently need help. Further research examining the cultivation of pre-service Content and Language Integrated Learning teachers would be worthy of investigation.  
Keywords: elementary English education in China, content and language integrated learning, teacher training, European CLIL teacher development framework, platform establishment

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Introduction

To cater for European integration and to strengthen cohesion and a sense of belonging, the White Paper: "Teaching and Learning, Towards a Learning Society" was adopted and a program of integrated content and language learning for citizens to acquire three languages was implemented in 1995. This gave rise to the concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), a teaching model based on Hymes' 'communicative competence' and Halliday's 'functional linguistics', which teaches subjects in foreign languages to acquire more subject knowledge and improve the learner's foreign language skills and competence (Sophie Ioannou-Georgiou Pavlos Pavlou, 2011). Since the 1990s, European researchers and teachers have conducted studies on educational policies, teaching theories, practices and assessments related to CLIL, with a particular focus on mathematics and social sciences, and have found that CLIL learners have more positive cognitions and show higher L2 levels than their monolingual peers, and their L1 is also developed (Nikolov & Mihaljev, 2011; Nikolov & Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2006; Merisuo-Storm, 2007), laying a solid theoretical and practical foundation for the spread of CLIL and the development of CLIL teachers.

After the introduction of CLIL into China by Chinese scholars in 2004, research on it was confined to the foreign language sector in higher education, mainly focusing on the introduction of the latest research outcomes and its practice in university classrooms. It was not until 2007 that China's Ministry of Education released the 13th Five-Year Plan for National Education Development, which proposed to cultivate students' "spirit of innovation" and "lifelong learning ability". This provided a source for the integration of CLIL with China's elementary foreign language education. Moreover, the first CLIL English textbook "Light up Science" for Chinese elementary students was published with the cooperation of China Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press and Macmillan and carried out teaching practice in Guangzhou, Beijing and Shanghai.

In 2014, the Chinese Ministry of Education issued the "Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening Curriculum Reform and Implementing the Fundamental Task of Building People's Moral Character". The concept of "key competencies" was first introduced in the Education Act, which refers to the character and key competencies that students should possess to adapt to lifelong and social development, and is expressed in nine major competences: social responsibility, national identity, international understanding, humanistic heritage, scientific spirit, aesthetic sensibility, physical and mental health, learning to learn, and practical innovation. The concepts of "higher-order thinking" and "critical thinking" in CLIL have much in common with China's "key competencies" development. With the teaching practice, CLIL teacher development immerges to be an integral part of CLIL studies. In 2020, in response to the current situation and characteristics of elementary education in China, China Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press established the "CLIL Teacher Training Platform for Elementary English Education". However, the effectiveness of the existing education platform and whether the dissemination model is in line with the current realities of basic foreign language education in China are yet to be proven. Therefore, the following questions guide the whole part of the study:

1. What are the contents differences in CLIL teacher training in China?
2. What are in-service English teachers' perceptions of CLIL after the training?
3. What are the factors which affect the training effect?
Literature Review

As a cutting-edge approach, Content and Language Integrated Learning has already extended beyond the borders of the European Union (de Zarobe, 2013), piquing the curiosity of teachers and education authorities in Latin America, Japan, and Southeast Asia, which urges the need for ‘better trained and more proficient teachers (Gutiérrez, Durán, & Beltrán, 2012, p. 49). From then on, many studies varied from CLIL teaching design (Richards, 2013) to language and pedagogical competence (Aielloa, Martinob, & Sabato, 2017; Banegas, 2017; Custodio-Espinar, 2019). After that, different CLIL teacher development models and their practices were introduced for in-service teachers (Lo, 2020; Hemmi & Banegas, 2021). However, few studies are concerned about the CLIL training contents for language teachers and their attitudes towards CLIL in the Chinese context. Therefore, this paper attempts to find the echoes from English teachers after their receiving training.

Content and Language Integrated Learning Teacher Training Platform for Elementary English Education

The "CLIL Teacher Training Platform for Elementary English Education" is an educational platform established by China Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press for the training of CLIL teachers in elementary English education in China. The platform was established in 2020 and consists of three parts: offline CLIL seminars, online CLIL lectures and CLIL research project applications, which has formulated a three-dimensional training platform for CLIL teacher training in China. It aims to spread the concept of CLIL, guide the practice of CLIL in elementary English education, and promote scientific research on content and language-integrated learning in China.

The offline observation seminars are mainly conducted in the form of case studies of excellent courses in experimental schools, while online CLIL lectures invite experts from Macmillan and Beijing Foreign Studies University to expound CLIL concepts, course design concepts to enhance the understanding of CLIL and the operability of course practice for participating English teachers. The education platform currently uses teaching materials to drive curriculum practice to condense research, sparing no effort to promote CLIL English teacher development.

Research on Content and Language Integrated Learning Definition and Underpinning

Content and Language Integrated Learning or CLIL is an umbrella term adopted by the European Network of Administrators, Researchers and Practitioners (EUROCLIC) in the mid-1990s. The acronym CLIL was coined by Marsh (2002): CLIL is a “language pedagogy focusing on meaning which contrasts to those which focus on form” (p. 49). Coyle (2010) argued that "Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a dual-focused approach to education in which additional language is used for both content and language learning and teaching" (p. 17). However, ambiguity remains, as CLIL is often referred to as an 'umbrella' term that is difficult to define at both the theoretical and practical levels, as it includes many variants depending on the specific context in which it is implemented. After several revisions, scholars generally agree: content and language-integrated learning is an approach that merges disciplinary and (foreign) language development in an educational context (Nikula & Moore, 2019).

Three theories underpin CLIL: Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, the development of thinking skills (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) and systemic functional linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). The key principle of the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology is the sociocultural theory built on collaborative learning. In CLIL, through the Zone
of Proximal Development (ZPD), learners support content through language use (Jäppinen, 2005; Mahan, 2020). Teachers encourage students to learn in a student-student and teacher-student interactive way to maximize learners' individual potential to achieve their learning goals. This process of learning is considered by many scholars to be a 'social process'. Critical thinking skills and cognitive development are at the heart of CLIL practices. While lower-order thinking such as memorization and comprehension is important, CLIL practice is expected to help learners advance from lower-order thinking skills such as memorization, comprehension and application to higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation and creativity (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). Systemic Functional Linguistics, on the other hand, is used to analyze the relationship between content and language learning, as it is a theory of how language works in real-world contexts (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Martin & Rose, 2007), thus applying a corpus of teacher and student language in CLIL to study the language used in CLIL classrooms.

**Types of CLIL Courses**

According to the content and language integrated learning theory, its courses can be divided into type A class (subject class integration) and type B class (foreign language class integration) (cf. Burmeister & Massler, 2010 Lorenz & Met, 1989; Massler & Stotz, 2013). Type A class can be several lessons in a foreign language, or one or several subject courses in a foreign language, where the learning objectives are based on the subject courses and the assessment focuses on subject knowledge and competence, while foreign language competence is considered secondary. This type of implementation is usually applied to immersion programs, where at least 50% of the curriculum is taught in a foreign language, and to bilingual programs in international schools, or it can also be taught in modules. In Type B class, CLIL is taught in foreign language classes, ranging from subject-based foreign language instruction to language-based subject teaching and learning. The learning objectives are based on the foreign language course with content objectives as the icing on the cake. Overall, the assessment focuses on communicative competence in the foreign language, the subject knowledge assessment also may be considered. This CLIL type is most commonly found in general primary teaching. There is also the less common type C class (balanced subject-language integration), a complete subject and foreign language integration, which is taught as a separate course in the primary school timetable, with learning objectives based entirely on CLIL or mixed objectives from existing subject and foreign language courses.

Drawing on the CLIL experience of other countries such as Switzerland and Germany, and with the suggestions of experts from Beijing Foreign Studies University in China, the CLIL currently implemented by China Foreign Studies has adopted Type B class, which is the integration of CLIL into the foreign language curriculum (English). In addition to the 2007 edition of the CLIL-related English textbook 'Light up Science', 'New Thinking Science' was launched in September 2022 to promote CLIL teacher training with model lessons based on these textbooks.

**Content and Language Integrated Learning Teacher Competence**

Marsh (2010) and his colleagues emphasize that core topics such as self-reflection, CLIL basics, content and language awareness, methods and assessment, research and evaluation, learning resources and environments, classroom management and CLIL management should be covered in CLIL teacher training. Teachers applying for CLIL need to be qualified in one (or more) non-language subjects and have a high command of the foreign language used as the language of
instruction. Moreover, specific methodological skills to teach a non-language subject through the medium of a foreign language are needed (European Commission 2017).

In the two years since the "CLIL Teacher Training Platform for Elementary English Education" was established, there have been several offline class demonstrations and online lecture series, and it is now necessary to test the effectiveness of the training, as CLIL teacher education is the benchmark for continuity in bilingual education (Coyle, 2010).

**Research Objectives**

This study aims to examine the online data and offline training effects of this education platform with the following research objectives:

1. To give the comparative analysis of the CLIL online lecture series based on the European CLIL teacher development framework.
2. To find out in-service English teachers' attitudes towards CLIL training.
3. To analyze the factors influencing CLIL training.

**Method**

To achieve the research objectives, the author conducted a non-experimental study. Firstly, a comparative analysis of the data of the online CLIL lectures series based on the European CLIL teacher development framework; Afterwards, a questionnaire was administered to the participants of the offline seminars and two teachers were interviewed in a semi-structured manner. The result was analyzed in SPSS. Following the study, the effectiveness of the CLIL training platform was analyzed and strategies for improvement were suggested.

**Participants**

The researchers collected CLIL training data from 906 participants from two QQ groups; a systematic sampling method was used, whereby on average 151 students were picked randomly from each of the six in the training program. All the participants were in-service English teachers from various primary schools in China. The questionnaire data was collected in June 2022 and the online training content was collected from October to November 2022 from all seven classes of the CLIL series on the WeChat public website "Thousands of Good Lessons".

**Research Instruments**

The content of the online training was analyzed based on the European CLIL teacher development framework of the European Commission, with reference to the implementation of CLIL programs in Austria, and the context of the actual situation in China. The offline seminars analysis was based on the European CLIL teacher framework and a web-based questionnaire was designed on the Wenjuanxing platform with a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire consisted of three main parts: the first part was the basic demographic information of the participants (Part A); the second part was the basic theoretical knowledge of CLIL teachers (Part B); and the third part was the actual classroom teaching application (Part C).

**Research Procedures**

The research is divided into three phases. In the first phase with the consent of Mrs. Cong, one of the initiators, of the CLIL teacher training platform, the researchers got access to the application of all learning resources and compared the lecture framework with that in Austria. After
that, to assure the reliability, the researchers discussed and designed the questionnaire and the semi-structural interview and turned to two specialists for modification. In addition, all the participants in the study were invited of their own will. As the offline seminar was held in June 2022, the online lectures can be learned during October, and the data collection lasted for seven days each. Then two teachers were interviewed to share their perception towards CLIL and the training. The data was used to investigate the objective and subjective factors influencing teachers' attitudes towards the practice of CLIL and their reflection towards their CLIL competences.

Results

Analysis of the Content of Online Training Lectures

There are 7 lessons in the CLIL series in "Thousands of Good Lessons", including: How to Use CLIL to Develop Students' Core Competences in the English Classroom, Interdisciplinary Language Learning in CLIL Teaching, Teaching Design of CLIL-English Integration in Primary English Class, How to Use 'Light Up Science' to Empower Learners, How to Design a CLIL Lesson, Eight Key Words for Understanding CLIL and Getting Ready for Light Up Science. How to use Light Up Science to empower learners, How to design a CLIL lesson, eight keywords for understanding CLIL and Getting Ready for 'Light Up Science'.

Based on the competencies for CLIL teachers the author has compiled eight areas of skills shown in Figure 1 (in Appendix A): self-reflection, CLIL fundamentals, content and language awareness, methodology and assessment, research and evaluation, learning resources and environment, classroom management and CLIL management, and other core topics.

CLIL Fundamentals: In this part, the lecture first expounds on the commonalities between students' core competencies and CLIL teaching based on the present Chinese context and presents the CLIL practice of primary school in Denmark.

Content and Language Awareness: This lecture is about teaching language based on the CLIL teaching concept and proposes the integration method and curriculum design strategies based on the English Curriculum Criterion for Basic Education.

Methods and Assessment: the lecture proposes that the integration of English and science should attach importance to the integration of assessment feedback, suggesting that teachers should create a context for collaborative inquiry and teaching reflection.

Results of the Offline Seminar Questionnaire and Interview Analysis

Part I: Results of Basic Demographic Information

The key demographic information is shown in Figure 2 (in Appendix B), where up to 87.2% of the participating teacher in the sample are female, a common phenomenon in the gender ratio of teachers at the basic education level in China. Ninety-four point nine of the participants are below the age of 40 and are the most active in English teaching. Eighty-four point six of the participants have a bachelor’s degree and the percentage of teachers with postgraduate degrees is 10.3%.

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.941 indicates that the reliability of the scale is good, with Part B (theoretical knowledge of the CLIL) and Part C (pedagogical application of the CLIL) values of 0.843 and 0.956 respectively.
The current status of CLIL teacher training in China is shown in Figure 4, where to Mean one is part B of the scale (CLIL theoretical knowledge), with a mean value of 2.8596, and Mean 2 is part C of the scale (CLIL pedagogical application), with a mean value of 2.6583.

### ANOVA Analysis of Variance

The ANOVA for the effect of the educational background of the participants on the perception of CLIL knowledge is shown in Figure Five in the following, with values above 0.05 for each question, indicating that the educational background of the participants did not affect the perception of CLIL knowledge.

![ANOVA Analysis of Variance](image.png)

Figure 5. Analysis of variance for CLIL educational background

Figure 6 in the following shows the results of the ANOVA on whether participants' teaching experience influences participants' perceptions of CLIL. The results show that the p-values for the Mean one (CLIL basics) and Mean two (teaching applications of CLIL) sections are both 0.000, indicating that participants' teaching experience has a significant impact on their perceptions of CLIL.

![ANOVA Analysis of Variance](image.png)

Figure 6. Analysis of variance for CLIL teaching experience
**Relevance Analysis**

To determine the relationship between Part One (CLIL basic knowledge) and Part Two (CLIL pedagogical applications), the author analyzes the correlation between the two parts and the result is in Figure Seven in the following, indicating a strong correlation between the two parts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean 1</th>
<th>Mean 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean 1 (theoretical background)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean 2 (application of CLIL in teaching)</td>
<td>.781**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant 0.01 or more**

**Figure 7. Correlation analysis of mean 1 and mean 2**

**Teachers' Perception of Their Content and Language Integrated Learning Competences**

The following are the results of semi-structured interviews with two primary English teachers at the end of the training.

Teacher A: We English instructors found that the training session was really helpful in introducing us to several ideas that we had previously overlooked. Additionally, the seminar allowed normal English instructors the chance to speak with CLIL specialists so that we could better understand how to integrate CLIL into our teaching of the English language. I still haven't clarified how CLIL differs from other teaching methods, such as immersion and STEM teaching. Also, I personally find it challenging to strike a balance between language and content teaching in the classroom. Finally, the interval between the online and offline CLIL training is a bit long for me, as it is only once or twice a semester, and the lack of regular communication between regular teachers and expert coaches may prevent teachers from forgetting their CLIL knowledge reducing the effectiveness of the training.

Teacher B: Although the training is intriguing and the CLIL idea is fantastic, some English instructors still find it challenging. The training material may not be as useful to our school and children because CLIL is so adaptable. To truly combine CLIL with language learning, in my opinion, I would need to collaborate with other subject instructors and create our own content learning resources. When creating the curriculum, we require continual advice and assistance from professionals.

The result showed that the CLIL specialists in China modified the CLIL lecture framework based on their Chinese education context which helped CLIL teachers recognize and agree to their
role of teaching both content and language (Lo, 2020). The expressions of those two teachers catered for the online course combined with seminars as a platform for teacher reflection (Banegas D. L., 2019). Additionally, whereas teaching experience did, the academic background had no impact on how CLIL was perceived. The study's limitations were acknowledged to include the fact that there were only two instructors who were willing to be interviewed and the dearth of male teachers.

Discussion

This paper examines the advantages and drawbacks of an online and offline learning platform for the preparation of CLIL teachers. The efficacy of the offline training is compared by using a comparative analysis of the online training materials, a survey, and semi-structured interviews. The following findings are reached once the data are analyzed:

Question One: What are the content differences in CLIL teacher training in China?

The conclusion is that the platform for training CLIL teachers in China has been built with consideration for the regional characteristics of Chinese basic English education. However, as the promotion and development of CLIL in China are still in its infancy, the promotion of the concept and teaching materials to drive changes in teachers' perceptions is chosen, thus neglecting the practical and continuous tutor support of CLIL, which may result in a gap between training and practice.

Question 2: What are in-service English teachers' perceptions of CLIL after the training?

It is concluded that all teachers from different educational backgrounds have a positive perception of their CLIL competence. However, compared to Part B, participants perform slightly less well in Part C. Participants believe that their theoretical knowledge and teaching abilities are not equal, which suggests that instructors in this field urgently need help.

Question 3: What are the factors which affect the training effect?

While teaching experience significantly determines CLIL efficacy, the educational background has little bearing on CLIL perceptions. This suggests that future training programs should fully account for participants' grouping, cooperation, and practice.

Online Lecture Series

The aim of continuing education for CLIL in countries such as Austria is for content teachers to provide confidence to work in English and a full understanding of CLIL techniques and resources. Unlike the situation in the above countries, the current CLIL practice in China is a Type B CLIL program with the English curriculum as the main delivery component, and therefore the CLIL content training for English teachers has been adapted accordingly with reference to the actual educational situation in China. CLIL content training for English teachers has been adapted accordingly with reference to the actual educational situation in China.

Teacher requirements from the analysis of the CLIL online lecture series in Figure 1, the content of the current online training on CLIL at the basic education level in China mainly covers the fundamentals of CLIL, content and language awareness, methodology and assessment. As there is currently no explicit educational policy on CLIL implementation in China, the training content rarely covers self-reflection, especially the need for self-development, multiple identities of CLIL teachers and peer collaboration. In terms of content and language awareness, important CLIL components such as the role of the first language in supporting language learning, interpersonal skills, and cognitive academic language skills are not notably highlighted.
aspects of research and evaluation and CLIL management are not covered in the lectures for the time being, while the aspects of learning resources and environment are presented in the offline seminars in the form of case sharing. The comparison of the content of the CLIL teacher training in China and Austria in Figure 8 below also demonstrates that even though the content of the current CLIL teacher training in China has been adjusted to the current situation in basic English education in China, the practical aspects are lacking and teachers are not provided with more teaching resources and CLIL language content, and there is a lack of effective follow-up support from the training instructors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nation</th>
<th>CLIL training mode</th>
<th>CLIL training content</th>
<th>Training communication mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Offline seminar + individual online task</td>
<td>Module 1: CLIL fundamentals; teaching content knowledge; teaching methodology and multimedia input: text input; assignment 1</td>
<td>Face to face + online follow-up support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 2: academic language; support student output, writing, talk; assignment 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 3: sequencing activities; assignment 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 4: portfolios and planning; assignment 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Online lecture series + offline case presentation</td>
<td>CLIL fundamentals; core competences of Chinese students; CLIL teaching design; CLIL teaching materials and application</td>
<td>Face to face</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8. Comparison of CLIL training content between Austria and China

**Off-line Seminar**

In the descriptive analysis in Part A, the proportion of female teachers reaches 87.2 percent, reflecting the reality of English instruction in Chinese primary schools. 65.4 percent of the teachers are under the age of 30, indicating that the design of the future CLIL training should take into account the special needs of these teachers (Qiao, 2017). The results show that 139 of the 151 participants are primary teachers, underscoring the fact that CLIL's current training is only available to primary teachers and that the participation of appropriate secondary teachers is still insufficient to ensure that CLIL's instruction is consistent for students of various ages. There is evidence that teacher development research only accounts for 2.4% of CLIL research in universities in China, and scholars have focused more on the effectiveness of CLIL for higher education practice in China and its theoretical exploration, with less research involved in the practice of CLIL at the basic education level.
In terms of the current status of CLIL training, the data in Part B is satisfactory, representing that practice-oriented pedagogical training has aided teachers in expanding their linguistic awareness and fostering their identity as language educators (Lo, 2020). However, training related to CLIL in China is mainly undertaken by foreign language teaching and research press, mainly in the form of demonstration lessons and exchanges of teaching experiences, with fewer opportunities for teaching practice and exchanges in seminars.

The data, which contrasts with the results of the CLIL survey in other countries, demonstrates that teaching experience is the only factor impacting teachers' perceptions of CLIL through ANOVA. Findings from other countries show that teacher type rather than teaching experience is the factor that influences teachers' perceptions of CLIL (Cañado, 2018). The reason for the discrepancy is that while the British Council has been researching CLIL practices in 19 different schools for more than 20 years in Cañado's study, the data used in this paper comes from just one training program, which is conducted for less than a year and followed a different model that excludes specific classroom teaching research.

The substantial correlation analysis between part B and part C of the Likert scale supports the interdependent development of the two components of CLIL teacher training: the higher the CLIL communicative competence, the greater the CLIL theoretical knowledge (Pérez & Rodríguez, 2021).

Interviews with two teachers after the training revealed that the design of the training content, ongoing support for CLIL classroom teaching, teaching resources and teaching materials, and how language teachers and teachers of other subjects can effectively collaborate on teaching and research in the context of China's current basic English education policy were the main challenges for the participating teachers at present.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate a platform of CLIL teacher training in China to find out whether the training content helps build teachers' perceptions towards CLIL; the study also aimed to examine the factors influencing teachers' CLIL competences. It was found that the training content was carefully modified according to China's situation but lack of a link between theories and classroom practice. Another finding was that those teachers who received training programs had a positive on their CLIL competence. Although teaching experience has a key role in determining CLIL effectiveness, opinions of CLIL are mostly unaffected by educational background.

Limitations and Future Research

The findings do not reflect the overall statistics as the project focuses on the CLIL teacher training platform at the primary level, and there are few perspectives on CLIL from teachers in secondary schools and higher education institutions. In addition, the views of male teachers are underrepresented due to the current sex ratio of English teachers in primary schools in China. Furthermore, personal factors, such as language experience, are not considered in this study. Moreover, the lack of more pedagogical practice in the offline seminars made it impossible for this study to determine the collaborative approach and actual classroom management skills among the participants. The aforementioned findings all point to the need for more action to improve the platform's existing building state. To strengthen the development of a CLIL-related research foundation in the context of Chinese education, particularly in the area of CLIL teacher
development, it is advised that the platform be built in collaboration with domestic and international CLIL research centers or relevant research teams in universities. In addition, the platform should also integrate CLIL content with Chinese national education policy series to promote the integration of CLIL concepts with foreign language education with Chinese characteristics. A column of CLIL experts is recommended to build a bond between experts and linguists and CLIL teachers to support cooperation and exchange between teachers of different disciplines so that a long-term mechanism and a learning community of CLIL teachers will be developed to amplify the training effect. Furthermore, the design of the training materials should also take into account the unique personal requirements resulting from distinct teaching experiences and different fields. The development of follow-up CLIL teachers should be taken into consideration to create a CLIL teacher development in China since the pre-service CLIL teacher development shares a strand with the in-service CLIL teacher training.

Acknowledgement
I am grateful to Dr. Farhana Diana Deris for her helpful comments on the first draft of this paper and the cooperation and interests of those primary English teachers who took part in my study. This research was supported by the Teaching Team of CLIL Teacher Cultivation, grant no. 2022GP01JXTD01 and Collaborative Innovation Research Team of Language Education in the New Era, grant no. XFU21KYTDB01.

About the author
Xiaohui, Zhang is a Ph.D. student of English linguistics in Universiti Tecknologi Malaysia and an associate professor at the School of English Language and Culture, Xi’an Fanyi University. Her research interests include content and language integrated learning, and English translation. ORCidID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9607-7744

Dr. Farhana Diana Deris is the Assistant Dean (External and Global Engagement) at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Her research interests include technology enhanced teaching and learning, and building and sustaining partnerships through new media communication in the context of HEI internationalization. ORCidID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0319-9938

References
A Teacher Training Platform of Content and Language Integrated Learning

Zhang & Deris


## Appendices

### Appendix A

**CLIL teacher competencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence field</th>
<th>Competence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personal reflection</td>
<td>teacher’s attitudes on CLIL; pedagogical and content competencies; language competence according to CEFR; ways of working with learners jointly; individual learning needs; necessity and mechanism of cooperation with colleagues; multiple roles and identities of a CLIL teacher; attitude and behavior on learning process;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLIL fundamentals</td>
<td>CLIL core features, common misconceptions; contextualize CLIL with school, regional and national curriculum; discuss CLIL with school’s internal and external stakeholders; strategies for integrating CLIL and school ethos;</td>
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<tr>
<td>content and language awareness</td>
<td>Identify appropriate content to be taught and obstacles to content learning; view content through different cultural perspectives; deploy strategies to support language learning in content classes; create opportunities for reinforcing content learning in language classes; apply strategies for fostering critical thinking by students about content and language; apply strategies for fostering in students the habit of linking new learning with their personal experience; promote learner awareness of language and learning process; how first language supports additional language learning; model strategies for making transition from monolingual to bi/plurilingual teaching and learning; devise and implement strategies that take into account key concepts; describe implication of age for language learning and use; link language awareness issues to content learning and cognition; scaffold language learning during content classes;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology and assessment</td>
<td>Building learner capacity; cooperating with colleagues; building safe and meaningful learning experience; assessing;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research and evaluation</td>
<td>classroom and learner research methodology; action research in collaboration with colleagues; key CLIL research findings; critically analyze CLIL research articles; strategies and instruments for self, peer and student evaluation, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning resources and environments</td>
<td>Design and use appropriate learning materials; criteria for developing CLIL resources; criteria and strategies for non-classroom and non-school learning environments; techniques for cooperative networks; help students build cross-curricular links;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class management</td>
<td>Diverse classroom set-ups to promote student communication, cooperative learning and leadership; appropriate language for classroom interaction; opportunities; learners’ needs; co-create with students a non-threatening environment;</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLIL management</td>
<td>Work within changing models; principles of professional learning communities; self-management; ethical issues;</td>
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</table>

*Figure 1. CLIL teacher competencies in teacher competence framework*
## Appendix B

### Descriptive analysis

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
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<td>30-39 years old</td>
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<td>40-49 years old</td>
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<td>Education background</td>
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<td>postgraduate</td>
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<td>Working place</td>
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<td>Primary school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Junior high school</td>
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<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior high school</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>university</td>
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<td>Teaching experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 1 year</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>26.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 3 to 5 years</td>
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<td>0.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 5 to 10 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 10 years</td>
<td>9</td>
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*Figure 2 basic demographic information*
A Review of Intended Learning Outcomes of English Lessons and Learning Motivation

Hamood Albatti
English Language Department
Majmaah University, Saudi Arabia
E-mail: h.albatti@mu.edu.sa

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Abstract
This study uses a descriptive narrative approach to critically analyze the evidence and findings from the recently published literature. The results indicate that explicitly stating the Intended Learning Outcomes and planning are essential for practical English Language Teaching and Learning and are critical for effective English Language Learning. Findings suggest that adopting specific instructional strategies such as graphic organizers that record what students know, what they want to know, and what they have learned significantly improves communicating Intended Learning Outcomes to students and, thereby, activating their schema for language acquisition and cognitive and affective engagement in learning. The study recommends further conducting a systematic scoping review providing suggested strategies that improve students' engagement in the assessment process. It also provides an overview of learning motivation theories and highlights their direct bearing on achieving Intended Learning Outcomes during the learning process.

Keywords: English as Foreign Language, intended learning outcomes, learning motivation, lesson outcomes, motivation theories

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Introduction

Language acquisition in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms can be a challenging learning process, where motivation is a crucial component for successful learning (Al-Munawwarah, 2018). As a teacher of EFL, finding strategies that will enhance student motivation and learning engagement, and build students' autonomy in the learning process, is an essential component of teaching practice in this context. Therefore, identifying and implementing strategies to ensure students achieve Intended Learning Outcomes is essential to support teachers and learners. This review sought to critically analyze strategies that utilize graphic organizers to support EFL students in meeting Intended Learning Outcomes. Lesson outcomes are observable, measurable, and; precise statements that outline what a learner is expected to know or achieve at the end of the lesson. The learning outcomes of a lesson must focus on the intended learning (Khoza, 2016; Tractenberg, Lindvall, Attwood, & Via, 2020).

There are distinguishing characteristics of effective learning outcomes (Omari, 2018). Learners must master a corpus of fundamental information across all disciplines to succeed and, therefore, a whole set of applications in which they can use that knowledge (Mallidou, Atherton, Chan, Frisch, Glegg, Scarrow, 2018). Effective learning outcomes have three primary characteristics: what students are to do and how they are to perform it, what they are supposed to do, and what behaviors they are exhibiting (Bernacki, Vosicka, & Utz, 2020; Chin, Blair, Wolf, Conlin, Cutumisu, Pfaffman, & Schwartz, 2019). The second is a condition; what are the circumstances of the performances, and under what conditions are they performing (Huang, Ritzhaupt, Sommer, Zhu, Stephen, Valle & Li, 2020; Roslof, 2021)? Lastly, the performance criteria determine the acceptable performance level. It typically uses rubrics or something similar to measure student performance. These criteria assess the achievement of the learning outcomes (Hamad, 2019). In addition to Bloom's action verbs usually used to formulate the learning outcomes, Bloom identified three domains of educational activities to promote learning; they are cognitive, psychomotor, and affective (Rao, 2020; Zhao, Muhamad, & Mustakim, 2022). The cognitive domain concerns the student's mental skills, such as the student's knowledge and what the student knows (Wu, Kao, Wu, & Wei, 2019). The psychomotor domain is concerned with what manual or physical skills a student can do (Jaiswal & Al-Hattami, 2020), and the affective domain is the student's attitude, what the student values, and the growth of students' emotional and sensory learning (Shaikh, Daudpotta, & Imran, 2021).

Literature Review

Intended Learning Outcomes in English as a Foreign Language Learning

Learning language or abilities that students can apply to other genres, circumstances, and themes should be the primary goal of an English session for students (Richards & Pun, 2021). The purpose of English lessons is to guide linguistic, cognitive, and affective changes in EFL learners (Wang & Zhan, 2020). However, this review focuses on both linguistic and cognitive change. In
an English lesson, there are three main types of outcomes; they are language outcomes "grammar, vocabulary, and functions"; skills outcomes "reading/viewing, writing/representing, listening, speaking"; life skills "rapport, empathy, social and emotional intelligence" (Wu & Navera, 2018, p. 165).

Concerning the potential benefits of lesson outcomes to teachers and students, Garcia-Martinez, Fernandez-Batanero, Cobos Sanchiz, & Luque de La Rosa (2019) explained that choosing what will be covered in a lesson gives the instructor a clear sense of what they are trying to accomplish and allows them to forecast how the students will learn it. Additionally, defining the outcomes ensures that each class has a distinct focus. Another advantage is that putting learning objectives in writing for each lesson makes it possible to schedule and order learning. The primary learning outcomes for each lesson are reported when tasks are interconnected, built over, and integrated by learners (John, 2015). Another advantage is that with a clear set of lesson learning outcomes, evaluating the intended learning outcomes for each lesson is expected to be simpler and more accurate (Redelius, Quennerstedt, & Ohman, 2015). It is imperative to keep it simple for the teacher to assess whether the learning has occurred and whether the learners have achieved something (Cordingley, Higgins, Greany, Buckler, Coles-Jordan, Crisp, Saunders, Coe, 2015). Moreover, a fourth benefit is that these well-defined learning outcomes result in internal coherence in a lesson through the precise statements of intended learning outcomes (Krepf, Ploger, Scholl, & Seifert, 2018). Shankar, Gowtham, & Surekha (2020) found a fifth benefit; having predetermined lesson objectives does not stop teachers from being adaptable and creative in their instruction because various instructors may present the same class with identical learning objectives in many different ways.

**Identification of Intended Learning Outcomes**

Teachers must consider two key factors to identify and write learning outcomes for an English lesson (Biggs & Collis, 2014). The first is backward planning, which is when designing a strategy, the educator should start with the ultimate goal or target and work back from there. Backward planning is easier for instructors when precise class outcomes are identified and recorded (Reynolds & Kearns, 2017). When preparing a lesson backward, the instructor should commence with the lesson's objectives so that particular tasks, materials, and resources are arranged to satisfy each purpose. Preparation must be guided by the lesson learning outcomes instead of the lesson tasks, supplies, and resources (Price & Nelson, 2018).

The second factor that teachers should consider is that the lesson outcomes should state aspects of language, cognition, and affect (Mercer, 2019). As mentioned previously, the purpose of an English lesson is to direct students' language, intellectual, and emotional change. Therefore, to ensure that the lesson focuses on learning rather than doing, instructional outcomes must primarily reflect aspects of language, intellect, and emotion rather than conduct (Otwinowska & Forys, 2019). To assist language teachers in spelling out these elements of language cognition and affect, an algorithm like Bloom's taxonomy and active verbs can be utilized. For example, we have
action verbs in the cognitive linguistic domain like write, state, listen, predict, identify, contrast, classify, compare, and discuss (Yanchapanta, 2018). These verbs help to write compelling, clear, and measurable lesson outcomes. In the affective domain, action verbs such as accept, receive, decide, influence, derive, and judge are used for the same purpose (Christison & Murray, 2021).

Once language teachers have recognized and spelled out the lesson learning outcomes, they must be conveyed to the students (Sriratanaviriyakul & El-Den, 2019). One of the most effectual methods of sharing this is by writing objectives and supporting statements at the start of each lesson on the board. There is a specific acronym for communicating lesson outcomes, the WALT acronym, which stands for "We Are Learning To," and afterward, we have the lesson outcomes. The WALT is an efficient strategy to make lesson outcomes identifiable and memorable for the students (Graham, Dennis, Korenich, & Cornell, 2013).

Examples of WALT sentences:
"We Are Learning To" ask and answer questions about a place.
"We Are Learning To" ask for, offer and respond to help.
"We Are Learning To" compare, contrast, and summarise short biographies.

Once the teacher has identified, written, and shared the lesson outcomes, activating the students' schema about the effect is essential. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) declared that teachers must try to engage learners' paradigm or background knowledge about the lesson's result when they present it to the class. To achieve ILOs, students must acquire new knowledge or abilities and engage the current schema (Davis, Janssen, & Van Driel, 2016).

A KWL chart, created by Donna Ogle in 1986, is a visual tool that can be employed at the beginning, middle, and end of a course to activate learners' mental schema. It tracks down the learner's knowledge (K), queries or want-to-know tendencies (W), and discoveries or learning (L) about a particular subject, making it one of the most efficient of student engagement. (Newman & Ogle, 2019). KWL charts are used at the start of a lesson to (1) engage learners' previous knowledge and let them all reflect on what they already know about the subject to prepare them to connect their past knowledge to different learning (Al-Wazzan, 2020), (2) outline the lesson's goal and define its learning goals, informing students about what they can anticipate from the session (Alsalhi, 2020), and (3) Urging students to inquire about the new material to satisfy their interest by giving them the chance to engage with one another and talk about their concerns (Looi, CK. et al. 2016).

However, learners catch on to the fact that the lesson answers their questions during the class (Alsalhi, 2020). As soon as learners discover the solutions, they can put them in writing. Learners can also monitor their progress by looking at the queries they still need answers to. Furthermore, when they comprehend the new idea more deeply, students may add further questions during their learning (Sinambela, Manik, & Pangaribuan, 2015).
Students use the KWL charts to describe their understanding of the topic using straightforward, clear ideas (Alber-Morgan, Konrad, Hessler, Helton, & Telesman, 2018). To create a more thorough summary of their learning outcomes, learners can also evaluate their performance to those of their peers and add information they omitted. Additionally, instructors may utilize KWL charts as an alternative assessment to discover whether students met the session's objectives and how to adjust their teaching methods for students with difficulties with the novel material (Nurfadilah, 2021).

Motivation, Engagement, and Student Learning Outcomes

Motivation in student learning is critical to encouraging engagement and self-determination for learners. The seven factors determining students' learning motivation are curiosity, control, fantasy, competition, cooperation, and recognition (Malone & Lepper, 1987). Additionally, there are also several general theories of motivation, like the instinct theory (Cherry, 2016), the incentive theory (Cherry, 2017), and the arousal theory (Bandura, 1977), which emphasize different aspects triggering motivation, like biological programming, internal desires, and levels of arousal, respectively. However, several educational psychology theories on learning motivation can directly affect learning achievements (Gopalan, Abubakar, Zulkifli, Alwi, & Mat, 2017). These include a set of five psychological theories such as motivation theory, self-determination theory, Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000), The ARCS Model (Keller, 1987), Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1989), and Expectancy Theory (Eerde et al., 1996).

Motivation Theory

It describes the well-known psychological idea of motivation and its types: intrinsic, extrinsic, blending, and instrumental motivation. When one engages in a behavior because one finds it fascinating or appealing in some sense, the motivation involved is known as intrinsic motivation (henceforth, IM). IM makes a learner participate in the activities due to internal forces, like craving to experience some fascination or pleasure, e.g., the fun or the challenge. However, without any external power like a compulsion, a reward, or any incentive, IM can potentially increase the chances of retention of the achieved learning outcomes (ILOs or CLOs) during the learning process. It has been found that IM and academic achievement have a positive correlation (Lopez & Contero, 2013). In the same way, it has been discovered that attitudes that underpin motivation in education have a positive impact on and are associated with academic success (Akcayir, Akcayir, Pektas, & Oçak, 2016; Tarng, Ou, Yu, Liou, & Liou, 2015; Cai, Chiang, Sun, Lin, & Lee, 2016).

However, when one engages in a behavior, not because of any internal force but due to external forces such as reward, compulsion, and punishment, the motivation involved is known as extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Yardımcı, Bektaş, Nilay Özkütük, Muslu, Gerçek & Başbakkal, 2017; Legault, 2016; Deci & Ryan, 2016; Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012; Riaz, Ramblı, Salleh, & Mushtaq, 2010). EM (henceforth, EM) can be inculcated at the initial stage of learning
and then transformed into IM in due course as the learner enters the deep learning stage. While EM provides a solid basis for the level of willpower and engagement, it would not match the retention power provided by IM. However, demotivation occurs when a learner cannot be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. So, a-motivation where both IM and EM are nonexistent (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Yardimci et al., 2017). Both IM and EM are essential to a learning process (Li & Lynch, 2016; Ozcelik, Cagiltay, & Ozcelik, 2013; Liu et al., 2011), as Li & Lynch (2016) point out that learning is a complicated process, and motivation is the hard rock of this process. Therefore, learners have to be highly motivated. The IM and EM patterns can be compared to Gardner's notions of Integrating and Instrumental motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Integrating motivation is more like IM, and instrumental motivation is more like EM. Therefore, like integrating motivation, IM leads to self-motivation in the learning process. Similarly, like instrumental motivation, EM provides the purpose for engaging in and continuing the learning process (Li & Lynch, 2016).

Self-determination Theory

The self-determination theory, apart from concerning the learning environment, which includes learner autonomy, learner competence, and relatedness, consists of five sub-theories; Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), Causality Orientations Theory (COT), Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT) and Goal Contents Theory (GCT). CET is a sub-theory that aims to clarify the impact of outcomes on motivation. It highlights the essential role of autonomy and competence, which are crucial components of IM. OIT is a bunch of motivational states with three primary divisions, in which the a-motivational stage is focused on competence. OTI and COT were inducted into self-determination theory lately (Deci & Ryan, 1985a). According to Gagne & Deci (2014), human needs have been classified into three main psychological categories in BPNT: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. However, satisfaction is crucial to gain engaged, motivated, healthy progress and well-being among individuals (Gagne & Deci, 2014). Based on IM and EM, GCT demonstrates the difference between the learner's basic need for satisfaction and well-being (Gagne & Deci, 2014). As we know, IM goals are pertinent to the learning environment and, therefore, are more useful for the learners to achieve better academic performance (Gagne & Deci, 2014).

Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction Theory

ARCS is an abbreviated form of many motivational attributes in which 'A' stands for attention, 'R' for relevance, 'C' for confidence, and 'S' for satisfaction. According to Keller (1989), the ARCS provides a proper, systematic, and stepwise mechanism to deal with learning motivation, in which catching learners' attention is not just the first and foremost step but also crucial for achieving and sustaining learner engagement. Keller further points out other elements belonging to different stages. The second step elements include the learners’ experiences and needs related to relevance. The third element of the third step pertains to the learners' self-assurance,
which is linked to their emotions and ambitions. The final element of the third step is the favorable sentiments towards the learning process and the acquired knowledge, which results in the fulfillment of finishing the entire learning process. As per Wlodkowska (1978), learners can be motivated by capturing their attention through engaging media or learning materials. However, sustaining their curiosity and attention is crucial throughout the learning phase.

Assessment and Students Engagement

Once the teacher has identified, written, communicated the lesson outcomes, and activated students' schema about these outcomes, a final thing that a teacher wants to do is to engage the learners in evaluating the lesson results (Soffer & Cohen, 2019). Assessing lesson learning outcomes by evaluating whether the lesson objectives have been achieved is a vital step in the process. Jorre de St Jorre & Oliver (2018) highlighted two ways students could participate in this assessment of lesson outcomes. Firstly, through continuous communication with the teacher, and secondly, by exchanging, comparing, and integrating their ideas through discussions.

Continued dialogue between the teacher and the student is necessary to evaluate lesson outcomes. To check on learners' progression toward reaching learning objectives, teachers must schedule opportunities in the sessions to communicate with a student individually or in small groups of classmates (Bralić & Divjak, 2019). The components of this ongoing dialogue comprise: (1) assuring that each learner is aware of the lesson's learning objectives and how to evaluate their performance concerning reaching these objectives (Lopez-Pastor & Sicilia-Camacho, 2017); (2) providing regular feedback to learners to aid in advancing their study (Howe, Hennessy, Mercer, Vrikk & Wheatley, 2019); (3) assisting each learner in providing proof of what they have learned (Moos & Brookhart, 2019). Both educators and students can benefit from using this evidence, whether presented orally or in writing, to confirm and strengthen their understanding.

One highly effective way for students to demonstrate their knowledge is by participating in a post-class review session where they can ask questions about the lesson and learning objectives. This method serves as evidence of their understanding (Frazer, Sullivan, Weatherspoon, & Hussey, 2017), such as:

"What did you learn from the lesson?"
"What new vocabulary/grammar/functions did you use?"
"What did you enjoy about the lesson?"
"What did you find most challenging about the lesson?"
"What did you find most memorable about the lesson?"
"What would you like to remember about the lesson?"
"How will you remember what you have learned?"
"What would you like to share from this lesson with a friend?"
Finally, on paper, teachers can write questions or prompts about the session as exit tickets (Ciampa, 2017). Before leaving class, students may react to those same questions or instructions and turn in the paper to the instructor (McGlynn & Kelly, 2017). Exit tickets give teachers rapid feedback on how their learners have met the session's objectives. They also assist in identifying any areas of comprehension that need to be filled in during the subsequent lesson (Wiliam & Thompson, 2017).

It is noteworthy that Learners assist one another with their instructional results. To encourage students to participate in the assessment process, it is essential to facilitate collaborative learning tasks and conversations among them (Aghajani & Adloo, 2018). According to Raba (2021), one effective cooperative learning method is "Think, Pair, Share," which was introduced by Lyman in 1981. This approach supports students in comparing, combining, and sharing their ideas (Lange et al., 2016). For instance, if the learning objective is for students to be able to comprehend past events in a narrative by the end of the lesson, the teacher can prompt the class to discuss the five Wh-questions (Who, What, When, Where, and Why) to understand the narrative entirely. When sharing their responses with the class, learners might chat with a partner to double-check their thinking and writing before they do so.

**Learning Objectives and Student Motivation**

Indeed, WALT and strategies KWL charts can also motivate students to be engaged in their learning; and for teachers to actively participate in their students' learning. For students learning motivation is the willingness of learners to engage in academic activities and achieve either the intended learning outcomes of the lesson or course learning outcomes in general. As aforementioned, there are several theories of motivation, including Motivation Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Yardimci et al., 2017; Legault, 2016; Deci & Ryan, 2016); Social Cognitive theory (Bandura, 2002); ARCS Theory (Keller, 1989); and Expectancy Theory (Eerde et al., 1996; Hemamalini & Washington, 2014; Bauer, 2016). However, the Self Determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985a; Deci & Ryan, 1985b; Gagne & Deci, 2014) best explains the link between student motivation and learning. Self-determination theory includes learner autonomy, learner competence, and relatedness. However, satisfaction is crucial to attaining engagement, motivation, healthy progress, and well-being among individuals. (Gagne & Deci, 2014). Providing students with a map of the lesson – the statement of clear lesson learning intentions (We are Learning to…), and learning organizers, such as a KWL chart, will motivate them to achieve the stated learning outcomes. Providing time for reflecting on their learning at the end of the lesson consolidates their knowledge, leading to a sense of satisfaction and likelihood to be motivated in further learning. This way, WALT and KWL strategies can facilitate student motivation to achieve the learning outcomes.
Discussion

Previous studies (García-Martínez, Fernández-Batanero, Cobos Sanchiz, & Luque de La Rosa, 2019; John, 2015) have examined the benefits of explicitly defined learning outcomes on the structure and organization of lesson activities, assessment, and self-assessment, of students' learning. However, while studies have investigated the role of graphic organizers in supporting teaching practice and enhancing the learning outcomes of learners (Alsalhi, 2020; Al-Wazzan, 2020; Looi et al., 2016) of EFL learners, this review extends the discussion to consider the role of graphic organizers in motivating student learning and providing structural guidelines for instructors to shape lesson content as well as providing an effective way to measure student learning in EFL contexts. In addition, it shows how graphic organizers such as WALT and KWL charts can potentially increase learners' motivation.

Conclusion

Effective lesson planning and language teaching and learning in EFL or ESL programs depend on achieving learning outcomes. To enhance students' engagement in learning and their ability to achieve lesson objectives, it is crucial for us as educators to communicate these objectives, tap into their prior knowledge of the subject matter, and involve them in assessing their progress toward meeting these objectives. Moreover, when identifying, formulating, and evaluating the learning outcomes of a course or lesson, it is important to consider theories of learning motivation to ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved during the learning process. Finally, teaching strategies such as WALT and KWL charts can enhance students' learning motivation.

About the Author

Hamood Albatti is an Assistant Professor at Majmaah University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He received his BA in Applied Linguistics (English Language) from Imam University, Elqassim, Saudi Arabia. His Master’s degree was obtained from The University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia, in Applied Linguistics (TESL-TEFL). He has a Ph.D. in Education (Quality Applications in TESL-TEFL) from the University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia, in 2015. He works as an academic professor teaching English Language to University students. His main research areas embrace English Language, grammar, Applied Linguistics, Quality, Higher Education, TESL, and TEFL. He has written some articles in the publication process in scholarly journals such as the Arab World English Journal. OrCiD ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1460-1371

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The Construction of Racism in Cartoon Films: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Noor Audah Kadhim
Department of English, College of Education for Women
University of Baghdad, Iraq
Corresponding Author Noor.faraj2103m@coeduw.uobaghdad.edu.iq

Nawal Fadhil Abbas
Department of English, College of Education for Women
University of Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract
Animation is an industry that is expanding more quickly than ever. Every child's favorite activity is watching cartoons. Therefore, it is essential to be cautious of the kinds of cartoon films children and teenagers tend. Because children and teenagers are the target audience for these films. This study aims at exposing a hidden enactment, namely racism, in a well-known cartoon film, Lion King, which has been selected accurately by the researchers because it shapes a set of ideas about black people and constructs prejudiced beliefs in their minds. This study is to answer the inquiry ‘Is the ideology of racism imposed in Lion King? And how?’ The significance of the present paper lies in highlighting the educational function of cartoon films so parents and caregivers become more aware. In addition, this study is crucial for researchers in the critical discourse analysis approach in the sense of how van Dijk's (2000) model can be applied to children’s literature. The ideology of racism is investigated in the language of the film’s characters. The researchers have concluded that the ideology of racism is promoted in Lion King using various linguistic tools and strategies.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, cognition, construction, ideology, Lion King, micro and macro levels, racism

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Introduction

In this paper, the researchers investigate racism as an ideology implanted in the language of cartoon film, namely, *Lion King*. According to popular beliefs, Walt Disney creates family-friendly entertainment products that foster imagination and provide children and teenagers with access to various fairy-tale heroes and heroines in a world that seems like a dream, where good always triumphs and the villain is always caught and punished. Disney and culture affect how young people view the world around them and impact how they develop. According to Abbas & Khalil (2018), critical discourse analysis tends to concentrate on groups, organizations, and institutions and is more interested in power, dominance, and social inequality issues. Therefore, the researchers conclude that CDA is the appropriate approach to this study. The researchers attempt to illuminate the benefits of using Van Dijk's multidisciplinary model (2000) and the best techniques to spot any covert ideologies of dominance and power used and imposed by influential people. This study is essential for researchers in the critical discourse analysis approach in the sense that it provides an application of Van Dijk's model (2000) and for parents and caregivers in the sense that it is a recommendation to be more aware of what kids and teens tend. Even though there are numerous theories for evaluating this relationship, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theories try to go further by attempting to reproduce by resisting power. The aims of this paper are to explain how cartoons affect kids’ cognition, shape or create perceptions in their minds, and how language functioned in these cartoons to construct particular ideologies. The current study is to expose the problem that cartoon films contain an implementation of ideologies as in *Lion King*. Racism is an ideology that should not be revealed in such an entertainment form since kids and teens are the target audience. The main aim of the present study is to uncover the ideology of racism imposed in *Lion King*. The significance lies in increasing the parental and caregivers' awareness of the educational function of cartoon films. The objective of this study is to provide an answer to the inquiry, "Is the ideology of racism imposed in *The Lion King*?" And how?

The animator's success in conveying the social beliefs (cognition) is represented by the ideology of racism, maintaining a negative portrayal of black people by describing them as undisciplined, uncultured, and ignorant. Nasser, (2021) indicates that "Language is usually used by people for the purposes of communication and transmission of cultural ideas" (p.11). As Al-Saadie and Ali (2022) stated, language is perceived as serving the interests of the dominant classes, like other social institutions and behaviors. Muhammad, (2020) finds out that "Language is a vehicle for social values and ideologies that a man intends or attempts to express" (p.26). Thus, CDA as an approach is vital to find out how language functioned to construct a particular picture in the audience's minds using many linguistic strategies. In conclusion, the offered discursive strategies, which represent the micro level, expose the ideology of racism at the macro level. However, not all of the listed strategies are utilized. The most frequently used actor and presupposition, in addition to topicalization, rhetorical questions, topics, contrasts, illustrations, disclaimers, lexicalization, levels of detail and description, evidentially, irony, and modality, are the only linguistic strategies used. Hedges, formal sentence structure, or sentence syntax are out of the scope of the study.

Literature Review

*Cartoon Films*

Disney is a beautiful world that has become one of the prominent storytellers worldwide. Disney films combine entertainment with teachings on the importance of love, family, friendship, and the struggle of good versus evil, loss, and death. Talking about these important topics helps a
child's cognitive and behavioral development. Cartoons have been the subject of numerous studies. In a study conducted by Lillard and Peterson (2011), it was discovered that 4-year-old children's executive function was negatively impacted after only 9 minutes of watching a fast-paced television program. Utami and Harianto (2021) found that the structure of the film's text contains a discourse of advice to children to share objects they have and love. Owing to the indisputable fact that technology has advanced, Disney and its products are dominant. As a result, it dramatically affects how kids perceive the world. The language that characters employ largely constructs and shape these perceptions. According to Atabey (2021), children's personal, moral, social, and emotional growth happens during the "magic years" of life, which are incredibly crucial. Parents, educational institutions, and the media all play vital roles during this time.

Racism

Many scholars and researchers have studied ideology in-depth and in various ways, since some individuals feel it is difficult to define accurately because it refers to many distinct notions. According to Van Dijk (2008), the dominating classes or groups often conceal their ideologies and interests by making them seem "general" or "natural" so that others can accept them as a set of ideas, values, and objectives. According to Fairclough (1992), the primary purpose of ideology is to construct or produce texts that continuously and cumulatively "impose assumptions" on other people, usually without their knowledge. Nevertheless, ideologies can be constructive as well as destructive as supported by Abid, & Mohammad, (2022) "Ideologies are sociocognitive foundation of social groups, ideologies are gradually acquired and sometimes changed through life or a life period" (p.31). In addition to the potential to utilize ideologies as weapons to demonstrate resistance in situations of dominance and racism, they can serve as instruments for legitimizing power abuse (as in racist discourses). It is interesting that in both of these situations, ideologies serve as compass points that orient the goals, political beliefs, and social behaviors of the social groups or communities that share them (Akbar & Abbas, 2019).

Ideologies can be thought of as the mental counterpart of power. Therefore, ideologies connect the cognitive representation of behaviors and discourse production concerning individual and group social contexts. According to Van Dijk (2008), ideology is a high–level cognitive framework that shapes the production, modification, and use of various forms of social cognition, including knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and social representation, including social prejudices. Ideology is also described by him as "a sort of social cognition, shared by individuals, class, or other social structure" (p.34).

In this paper, racism is tackled as an ideology. Lafta, & Mustafa, (2022) conclude that "Racism has been defined differently, but all definitions share the idea that it is the negative feeling against others due to a perceived difference in religion, race, ethnicity, and the like"(p.3). It is defined by Mariam Webster (2023) as an inherent superiority of a particular race, a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities. It can be marked by color, ethnicity, language, culture, and religion. According to Miles (1982), racism is a complex system of social inequality where some groups (in this case, the white population) are more potent than other groups in society and even throughout the entire world. Van Dijk (2000) defines racism as "a system of ethnic/racial inequality, maintained through discriminatory social practices, including discourse, at the local (micro) level, as well as by institutions, organizations, and overall groups" (p.41).
Critical Discourse Analysis: An Overview

A groundbreaking technique known as CDA is made possible by the critical paradigm. The presence of the context connected to the linguistic element was not entirely adequate for the discourse analysis process. Wodak and Meyer (2001) declared that after a brief meeting in Amsterdam in January 1991, CDA started to develop into a network of academics. Ruth Wodak, Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, and Theo van Leeuwen met by chance with the help of the University of Amsterdam. Throughout the two days, they got the excellent opportunity to debate the theories and methods of discourse analysis, particularly CDA. The gathering allowed everyone to confront one another with the highly diverse and distinctive approaches that still characterize the various approaches today. Differences between theories and discourse analysis approaches were also revealed during this group formation. CDA is a theory and methodology that examines how people and organizations utilize language (Richardson, 2007). According to Bloor and Bloor (2007), CDA shares interests and, on occasion, methodologies with fields that focus on human cognition and behavior, such as cognitive and social psychology, as well as those that study social structures and groups, such as anthropology, sociology, ethnography, and ethnography. The approaches of CDA heavily draw from the philosophy of language and communication, notably the study of speech acts and conversational maxims, in addition to literary theory. Thus, CDA is a multidisciplinary field. It employs a variety of methodologies in addition to linguistic ones. The objectives of linguistics are different from the objectives of CDA. Generally speaking, linguists are interested in language for its own sake and are concerned with how conversation or language "functions."

On the other hand, critical discourse analysts are concerned with language, and discourse is employed to forward social objectives and its role in social maintenance and change. The main goals of critical discourse analysis are, therefore, briefly and tentatively suggested by Bloor and Bloor (2007) as listed below:

1. To examine discourse patterns that either reflect or create social issues;
2. To explore how ideologies can become embedded in language and find ways to break the ice
3. To spread knowledge about how to apply these goals to specific cases of injustice, prejudice, and power abuse.

External factors and social issues like power, inequality, ideology, etc., are addressed by CDA. As stated by Fairclough (2001), despite not beginning with texts and interactions, CDA analyzes both of them. Instead, social problems, challenges, and, or issues that people experience in their social life are where it starts, along with a study of different cultures. Discourse analysis examines explicitly how spoken or written language is used in a social environment. Al Khotaba, (.2023) declares "CDA supports analysing how users say things, their effects on the audience;and how it influences sociology,or the way society affects communication"(p.29).


This study is multidisciplinary. Van Dijk (2000) states that ideology and discourse are concepts that cannot be fully understood by one field alone; rather, they require analysis across the humanities and social science areas. The vast array of potential disciplines will be condensed into
three primary categories: discourse, cognition, and society. Thus, the study of discourse encompasses language use, text, verbal contact, and communication. The mental characteristics of ideologies, such as their position as socially shared representations, their nature as ideas or beliefs, and their relationships with opinions and information, are grouped under the heading "Cognition".

The broad term "society" will refer to the social, political, cultural, and historical aspects of ideologies as well as their group-based nature and, in particular, their function in the upholding or challenging of dominance. These conceptual distinctions are purely analytical and valuable. Naturally, they cross over. For instance, conversations and ideas that are socially shared among group members are a part of society. Van Dijk (2000) offers the following suggestions for methods to reveal covert or hidden ideologies:

1. **Meaning:** In theory, ideology may appear everywhere in a conversation. Yet, discourse meaning is where ideological "substance" is most clearly communicated. Therefore, paying close attention to the semantics of ideological discourse is crucial. Due to the complexity of meaning, the following are some of its most essential components:
   - **Topics:** The meaning of discourse includes the content of its sentences and words. Discourse also includes broader definitions that are more "global," such as "topics" or "themes" that capture the essence or key points of a discussion and explain its overall focus. Emphasizing or de-emphasizing information is the ideological function of topics.
   - **Level of description or Degree of detail:** When a topic is chosen, language users have further options for realizing their mental models or what they know about an event, such as providing many or few specifics, describing it abstractly, on a broad level, or in detail.
   - **Implications and presuppositions:** Our mental representations of events serve as the foundation for how discourse is produced.

2. **Contrast:** Over shared interests, ideologies frequently arise in social conflict, dominance, or disagreement between two or more groups. As the pronoun pair "Us and Them" indicates, multiple forms of polarization can be used to realize such opposition both cognitively and discursively. The main tactic of ideological discourse is to highlight "Our good and their bad," which is "polarization" is done linguistically through contrast.

3. **Examples and Illustration:** Examples and illustrations of "Our" good deeds and "Their" lousy behavior, frequently in the form of anecdotes, serve as an excellent cognitive and discursive strategy. Stories can therefore act as premises in an argument.

4. **Disclaimer:** The semantic move of the disclaimer is very typical of any kind of discriminatory discourse like negation in the following:
   - I have nothing against X, but…

5. **Actors:** The analysis of actors is very significant since the ideological discourse is about "Us and Them." Actors have various roles, namely agents, patients, or beneficiaries of an action.

6. **Modality:** Modalities might be used to modify propositions such as 'It is necessary that,' 'it is possible that', or 'it is known that.'

7. **Evidentially:** Speakers are countable for what they say or express. They are often expected to provide some 'proof' for their beliefs and words. There are evaluation criteria for each genre, context, and culture.

8. **Hedging and ambiguity:** As diplomatic language demonstrates, the management of ambiguity and clarity is a strong ideological tool. When the speakers do not have a clear answer to a question or do not want to seem uninformed, they may hem or be evasive.
9. **Topoi**: These are similar to the preceding definitions of topics, but they have undergone standardization. As a result, making them are frequently employed as "ready-made" in debate. Such topoi are common in ideological speech in general and racial discourse in particular.

10. **Formal structures**: Discourse structures can be used to highlight or underline meanings. It has been claimed previously that the most overt discourse level for the expression of ideology is content or purpose. This does not imply that semantic analysis should be the sole focus of ideological study. The different formal forms of text and speaking, such as the structure of a clause or sentence, the format of an argument, the arrangement of news stories, the size of a headline, etc., can also be influenced by the underlying beliefs.

11. **Sentence Syntax**: Several sentence patterns, including word order, active and passive sentences, and nominalizations, are contextually flexible and can be used to ideologically "mark" discourse sentences. Words can be "upgraded" by being placed later in a clause or sentence or wholly omitted. This process is known as "topicalization". As a result, when utilizing different sentence structures, the sequence of the words may indicate whether a word's meaning is more or less emphasized, and this emphasis or lack of it has ideological implications.

**Previous Studies**

Many studies regarding the key elements of this study, which are racism, children's cognition, and critical discourse analysis, are presented. Research by Abdul Wahab and Ahmed (2014), titled *Animation and Socialization Process: Gender Role Portrayal on Cartoon*, aims at examining how males and females are portrayed in animated cartoons that are broadcast on Cartoon Network, a kid-friendly television network is well-liked around the world. *Cartoons as Educational Tools and The Presentation of Cultural Differences Via Cartoons* presented by Ozer (2014), was conducted to investigate how cultural values are presented and assessed. *The effect of cartoons on Children* is presented by Wijethilaka (2020). The purpose of this study is to show how much cartoons have an impact on kids. Turkman proposed *Investigating The Responses of Children to Animated Films that They View* in 2021 to assess the degree of correctness of children's responses to the content of the animated films they watch. Utami and Harianto (2021) in their study titled *Da'wa Critical Discourse Analysis in the Omar and Hana Cartoon Film on "Alalala Raju" Episode* found that the structure of the film's text contains a discourse of advice to children to share objects they have and love. Naji and Abbas (2022) conducted a study entitled *Self-society Conflict in Angie Thimas' The Hate U Give: A Critical Discourse Analysis*. This study demonstrated that contemporary racial challenges, such as prejudice and anti-black attitudes, are authentic and cannot be ignored. *Imported Cartoon Films: Replacing African Social-Cultural Values* by Cytowè (2022) investigated how animation films affect Nigerian children regarding of association, cultural value, and affiliation.

None of the previous studies has tackled how to analyze a script of cartoon films using Van Dijk's model (2000) to discover the ideology of racism in *Lion King*. Thus, the current paper is to find out the discursive strategies used in *Lion King* to create negative and positive representations and how these strategies are used to implant racism as an ideology.
Method

The current study is qualitative since the collected data, a cartoon film of *Lion King*, is analyzed to end up with descriptive rather than statistical outcomes. The researchers have used the qualitative method to provide a description, meaning, and interpretation of the language used as long as the qualitative research emphasizes the process, interpretation, and meaning.

Data Collection and Selection

A study should be supported with data to call it practical. Not each piece can be considered appropriate for the study: data might be incomplete, inaccurate, or unreliable. So, the researchers have selected the data accurately to be applicable to achieve the aims of the study. The data is from a video on YouTube titled *Lion King*. The researchers have watched it and analyzed its script, which is available online, so they do not need to transcribe. The researchers have chosen nine extracts from the script because these extracts imply and reflect the ideology of racism. Africa was the setting for the 1994 release of the film. The links to the film and its script are provided in the reference list.

To create a conflicting perception of both Africa and America, it is essential to highlight the racial and ethnic divides that existed in the United States in the early 1990s. The African landscape, including the plains, desert, jungle, and elephant graveyard, is animated throughout the film with vivid colors, dramatic sunsets, and storms. The hyenas are black and stand for African people who are unqualified for high positions like being kings. Scar, the main character, is darker than the other lions and has a black mane. This reflects the ideology of racism, which is seen not only in the appearance and the landscape but in their language.

Model Adopted

The researchers use Van Dijk's Socio-cognitive Model (2000), which encompasses three components: cognition, society, and discourse. This model is adopted due to its connection to the aims of the study which are: how cartoons affect kid's cognition, uncover the ideology of racism, and how language functioned in these cartoons to construct a particular ideology, namely racism. This section offers a cross-disciplinary introduction to the concept of "ideology," incorporating sociology, discourse analysis, and cognition. The social cognitions that the group's members share serve as the basis for the cognitive definition of ideology. The social component discusses the kind of institutions, relationships between institutions, and people that contribute to creating and transmitting ideologies. The "discourse" component describes how ideas shape the language used daily, how ideological discourse is interpreted, and how discourse contributes to the spread of ideologies in society.

Research Procedures

The researchers follow the procedures as stated below to achieve the aims of the study:

- Introducing a theoretical account of what is meant by the main aspects of the study, such as racism, ideology, and cartoon film.
- Presenting a model which is Van Dijk's socio-cognitive (2000)
- Collecting the data which is a cartoon film of *The Lion King*
- Analyzing the data on two levels, macro and micro.
- Discussing the findings of the study, and
- Concluding and providing some recommendation.
Analysis

The data are analyzed on two levels: The macro level, where meanings are emphasized or de-emphasized using various discursive strategies like modality, evidentially, and contrast under the umbrella term microanalysis. Ahmed and Abbas (2020) support the notion of how discourses and the way linguistic strategies are incorporated into a discourse function in presenting the world. She considers discourses as social spaces consisting of cognition, social representation, and interaction. The expressions are going to be analyzed to find out how racism as an ideology is presented.

Extract One
Scar: "Life's not fair, is it? You see I…well, I… shall never be a King". (Exhales lightly) 1:23:25

Contextualization
Scar, Mufasa's brother, is at his cave holding the squeaking and struggling mouse in his paw. He talks to it while playing with it.

Saying "not fair," Scar reflects his feelings and thoughts about himself as being discriminated against and will never be a king. Semantically speaking, "not fair "is called lexicalization and at the same time, it is an implied meaning of racism. It is polarization as if he were contrasting himself to another one who shall be a king. The use of "Shall never" predicts Scar's future since one of the uses of shall is prediction, according to Cambridge Dictionary (2023). He is portrayed as someone who is certain of his position and he should never think of being in a higher status. The question is what makes him underestimate himself and think in such a way? This is modality.

The cognition of the surrounding environment or society leads him as an individual to think inside the common limitations that are already determined. The mental characteristics of ideologies, such as their position as socially shared representations, their nature as ideas or beliefs, and their relationships with opinions and information will be grouped under the heading "Cognition."(Van Dijk, 2003). Saying "Life is not fair", Scar reflects the way black people see life. It means that black people believe they are inferior to white people as if the animator naturalizes this belief. This negative stereotype would contribute to children's perception or cognition. As an experiencer, Scar would never experience being a king as if the animator intends to communicate the idea that, in contrast to white people, black people are rarely shown to have a highly recognizable vocation or professional position. According to Carter’s(2008) article, black people have commonly been represented in stereotypical vocational roles with negative personality traits as low achievers always portrayed, as servants blue collars, housekeepers, postal workers, cooks, entertainers, or musicians. Thus, cartoons are capable of creating or forming cognitions in the minds of the viewers by producing such discourse.

Extract Two
- Zazu: "Didn't your mother ever tell you not to play with your food?" 1:23:09

Contextualization

In the same setting and atmosphere of the previous extract, Scar is playing with a squeaking and struggling mouse in his cave, Zazu interrupts him asking him whether his mother ever taught him not to play with his food.
This is a rhetorical question to emphasize and stress that Scar, who represents black people, is uncultured, the one who does not even know how to eat politely. Describing ‘others’ negatively. This is topoi because eating politely is something familiar and standardized. To emphasize such a thing might be considered as not significant but actually, it has a great influence on the way the viewers (children) think and feel (cognition) towards Blacks because children will hate Scar for not being portrayed as tidy and disciplined. Black people are always described as stupid, comical, immoral, disrespectful, violent, greedy, ignorant and untidy, as Taylor and Francis (2008) state. Scar's role in this extract is that of a receiver, the one who receives negative features of being untidy at eating.

**Extract Three**
-Mufasa: That "hairball" is my son… and your future King (*Lowering his head and meeting Scar eye to eye to Scar*): 1:22

**Contextualization**
In Scar's cave, they are still in the same setting. Mufasa, in this utterance, asserts for his brother Scar that he is the king now and his son is the future king as if he is saying, "My ancestors and I are the owners of this Kingdom and you have no chance to rule it ". It is foreshadowing that Scar shall never be a king and a presupposition that Simba will be the future king. To start a sentence with the phrase "That hairball" is topicalization to emphasize the presupposition that Simba is the future king even if Scar does not like it. As Mufasa tells his brother, Scar "This what you called a hairball will be the king whether you like or not". Thus, it is a reflection that 'white people have the high occupations'.

**Extract Four**
- MUFASA: Simba, now that you have grown some, it is important for you to receive some lessons. Everything the light touches is our kingdom. 1:19:20
- Young Simba: Wow!
- Mufasa: A King's time as ruler rises and falls like the sun. One day, Simba, the sun will set on my time here and will rise with you as the new King. 1:19:13
- Young Simba: And this will all be mine? 1:19:02

**Contextualization**
Pride lands, early morning, Mufasa and his son, Simba.
Having this interaction, Mufasa speaks about his kingdom. Using the pronouns (mine, our, my) is an indicator of self-representation in a perfect and positive way. This is polarization. It is established clearly when he says" our kingdom," which means there is another place that is not theirs. While whatever the light touches is the (bright) part is "our", everything, that is not touched by the light, the Shadowy place ‘Dark’ is ‘theirs’. Bright and dark is a clear contrast between White and Black people. One of the discursive strategies is actors, which means what roles are played by agents, patients, or beneficiaries. Saying" mine" by Simba is a beneficiary. "Our" and" My" are produced by Mufasa are beneficiaries. "My", "our ", and "mine " are roles of actors to emphasize and stress that Mufasa and his son are the owners of the kingdom. Since they represent the white people so it implies a presupposition that "The kingdom is our".
Extract Five
-Young Simba: Everything the light touches?! What about that shadowy place? 1:18:54
-Mufasa: That’s beyond our borders. You must never go there, Simba. 1:18:53
-Young Simba: But I thought a king can do whatever he wants. 1:18:49

Contextualization
The same setting of the previous scene is repeated here.

In this extract, Mufasa and his young son Simba are discussing an essential thing which is the limitations or borders of their kingdom. Whatever beyond the borders is the hyenas,’ and it is described as being "Shadowy". The modal verb "must" used by Mufasa (Modality) is a great indicator that they know their limits, but later on it is proved that is only a kind of disclaimer which is a concession. Ironically the next events will prove that Simba does not commit himself to these limitations by going along with Lana beyond these limitations. The role of Mufasa is a director recommending and warning his son to go to the shadowy place. The pronoun "there" is the goal and the shadowy place is a location.

Extract Six
-Mufasa: (Chuckles.) Simba… Everything you see exists together, in a delicate balance. As King, you need to understand that balance, and respect all the creatures… from the crawling ant to the leaping antelope. 1:18:37
-Young Simba: But, Dad, don't we eat the antelope? 1:18:27
-Mufasa Yes, Simba, but let me explain. When we die, our bodies become the grass. And the antelope eat the grass. And so we are all connected in the great Circle of Life. 1:18:18

Contextualization
The same setting as the previous extract is portrayed here.

Mufasa is giving some of his knowledge and experience about ruling the kingdom. He directs his son to respect all the creatures from the smallest to the biggest one but ironically his son asks him "Do not we eat the antelope?"

In this interaction, the father is trying to show positive points relating to his way of ruling the kingdom, again it is polarization. By saying "Respect all the creatures from the crawling ant to the leaping antelope", Mufasa wants to show that he understands and accepts the circle of life which is a hierarchical system that the strongest is at the peak of the hierarchy and feeds on the lower levels. The same way the white people enslave the Black people. Thus, the hierarchy represents the common classification system. This extract is a Portrayal of the image of white people as rulers and kings. The image of white people as great leaders and they are at the top. The circle of life is a discursive strategy that is evident; Mufasa tries to prove to his son his point of view about the way he rules the kingdom. In this extract, Simba's role is a beneficiary.

Extract Seven
-Scar: And he's absolutely right. It's far too dangerous. Only the bravest lions go there. 1:16:1
-Young Simba: Well, I'm brave! What's out … 1:15:59
-Scar: All the more reason for me to be protective… An elephant graveyard is no place for a young prince… (Faking surprise) Oops!! 1:15:43
Contextualization
Scar and young Simba are interacting; Scar is indirectly convincing Simba to go to the graveyard. Scar is illustrated as manipulative for convincing and raising enthusiasm in Simba to visit the elephant graveyard, which takes the role of goal "there". Using this semantic role "goal" shows that Scar aims to make young Simba go there to a dangerous place. Saying "Oops!" is to pretend that something was revealed unintentionally. This is a semantic indicator. Using the superlative adjective "Bravest" is to encourage Simba indirectly to go to the graveyard. This is polarization to present others negatively. The semantic role of "he" in "he is absolutely right" is an experience. In the next scene, others are illustrated as stupid, liars and cowards lexically as in the following extract:

Extract Eight
- Scar: No, fool… we're going to kill him. And Simba too (Letting go of Banzai).
- Shenzi: Great idea! Who needs a King?
- Shenzi and Banzai: (Sing-song voices, dancing around Ed.) No King! No King! La-lala-la-la-la!
- Scar: Idiots! There will be a King! 59:32
- Scar: I will be King! Stick with me (triumphant, toothy grin), and you'll never go hungry again! 59:22

Contextualization
This conversation is between Scar and the hyenas at the graveyard. This interaction takes place in the graveyard, Scar calls Shenzi, Banzai, and Ed fools and idiots, implying the presupposition "Lexical" that Black people are ignorant and not smart, they do not understand what is going on easily. "And you will never go hungry again", Scar promises the hyenas never to be hungry again. This represents the hunger of Black people over the world. This extract reflects how Black people are illustrated in this film as being in constant hunger and ignorance. "Him" and "Simba" take the role of affected while "we" take the role of agent.

Extract Nine
Scar: (Slowly and evilly) Long live the King! (Scar throws his brother backward and Mufasa falls amid the wildebeest. 52:46

Contextualization
Scar pushes his brother from the high mountains; he is trying to climb it and asked for help. Instead of helping his brother, Scar pushes him. Whatever Scar and the hyenas are illustrated is a description of Black people. In this extract, Scar is illustrated as a killer and an evil that kills his brother to have the kingdom after him. Saying "Long live the king", reflects Scar’s eagerness to get the kingdom after his brother. How harsh he was to say this expression while killing his brother. As if he was celebrating his brother's death. This is called illustration; here, Mufasa and Scar represent the old myth or story of Cain and Abel. Scar and the hyenas are portrayed as criminals by trying to kill Simba and killing Mufasa, the way Black people were represented as criminals in the past by Hoffman's crime analysis as cited in Reed, (2020). Thus, the ideology of racism is like a conventional cognition framed by the previous generations, passed down, transformed, and applied to other social cognitions in various ways.
Discussion

Depending on the main principle of “positive self-presentation and negative others presentation” from Van Dijk's model and using the linguistic tools, the researchers find out that the ideology of racism is implanted in the language practiced by the characters of Lion King. Black people are represented by Scar and the hyenas, and whatever they do or say is considered an action by the Black people. All the studies mentioned in the literature review differ from the present study in that they have different findings, methodologies or themes, such as gender roles, cultural values, affiliation, and association. On the other hand, Wijetheilaka’s (2020) study is similar to the current study investigating how cartoons impact kids. Several linguistic techniques, such as modality in extracts five and one, evidentially in extracts six, topoi in extract two, and contrast in extract eight are used to create a certain mental image in the audience's mind which is that Black people are inferior. Linguistic strategies are used in Lion King to impose the ideology of racism on the viewers and to create a prejudiced cognition in the child's mind. Lexicalization, modality and the semantic role of Scar as an experiencer are used to emphasize the notion that Black people are always low achievers. In extract two, rhetorical question, topio and Scar, who represents Black people is a receiver of negative features such as being greedy, untidy and ignorant. In extract three, presupposition and topicalization are used to stress that Simba, who represents the white people, is the future king. It is a Portrayal that white people are always in high positions. The contrast between white people and blacks and the semantic roles of Simba and Mufasa as beneficiaries are used in extract four to stress that Black people are always inferior to white ones. Modality, disclaimer, and the semantic roles "goal and local " are used to indicate a great polarization. In extract 6, evidentiality and the semantic role "beneficiary" are used to portray the image of white people as rulers and they always occupy high positions. To reflect that black people negatively as manipulative, semantic roles are used, such as goal and experiencer in extract seven. Lexicalization and the semantic roles of affected and agent are used to imply that black people are ignorant and not smart in extract 8. Illustrating black people as killers and criminals is a negative portrayal of the blacks in extract 9. Thus, unlike white people, Blacks are negatively portrayed. The researchers have found that in Lion King, many semantic roles (Actors) are used such as ‘agent’, which is used three times for Mufasa and Simba who represent the white people, this role is used the most; beneficiary is used twice for Simba and Mufasa. The experience is used to represent white people's experience such as being the leaders and the kings while black people as the ones, who experience hunger. An affected is another semantic role used for both black and white people but differently. The effect is either positive or negative. The black people are portrayed as affected negatively while the white people are positive as in extract eight when Scar said “We are going to kill him and Simba too”. "Him and Simba" are affected and it is preceded by a negative word which is "Kill". The actor "receiver" is given to Black people, portraying them as receivers of negative features like being untidy and manipulative. Whatever has been found as a linguistic tool to emphasize racism is at the micro level while racism ideology is at the macro level. Black people's inferiority, criminality and whatever the Blacks illustrated are seen as struggles of masses out of racism or a system of classes.

Conclusion

In the current paper, the researchers have detected that cartoon films are not merely entertainment tools but these films have functioned differently. How the ideology of racism is implanted in Lion King using Van Disk’s model (2000) is the aim of this study. Hence, watching
animated films cannot be regarded as an innocent and a simple act of consumption as long as they reflect minorities in an inferior vision. Cartoon films are shown as strategies to convey the ideologies people believe in. Those who write and produce cartoon films are responsible for whatever a film includes. Cartoon films that contain stereotypes towards minorities should be placed under critical gaze because kids and teens are the audiences of such films. All that has been analyzed is evidence that racism is exercised through cartoon films. So, parents and caregivers should be more aware of what their kids or teens watch, the channels for kids should have a responsibility to filter the films they broadcast or show. The language used by The Lion King characters contains racist ideas, according to this study Scar and the hyenas represent Black people, and anything they do or say is seen as an action by Black people. They are characterized as ignorant, cowardly, manipulative, and without the necessary qualifications to control the kingdom. The way they appear is quite essential, as outlined by the blackness of their bodies, Rafiki's accent, and Scar's mane, which is also black like the rest of his body. Using a variety of linguistic strategies, the researchers get the conclusion that racism as an ideology is imposed in The Lion King. The success of the animators in conveying social cognition is embodied by characterizing Black people as manipulative, illiterate, and undisciplined. The negative image of Black people maintained is a reflection of racism.

About the authors:

Noor Audah Kadhim is an M.A. candidate in the Department of English, University of Baghdad, College of Education for Women. Her major is Linguistics, and she has an interest in several fields within linguistics, including Critical Discourse Analysis. ORCiD: https://orcid.org/0009-0002-3795-7853

Nawal Fadhil Abbas is a professor with a Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics. She teaches in the Department of English, University of Baghdad, College of Education for Women. Her research interests include Pragmatics, Stylistics, and Critical Discourse Analysis. ORCiD: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2608-6909

References


Exploring the Use of Gibbs’ Reflective Model in Enhancing In-Service ESL Teachers’ Reflective Writing

Siti Noor Aneeis Hashim
Language Department, Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Perlis,

Aizan Yaacob
Universiti Utara Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur

Ina Suryani
Centre of Excellence for Unmanned Ariel Vehicle,
Faculty of Business and Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis
Corresponding Author: inasuryani@unimap.edu.my

Ratnawati Mohd Asraf
Kuliyyah of Education. International Islamic University Malaysia

Zolkefli Bahador
School of Education, Universiti Utara Malaysia

Nadya Supian
University Tunku Abdul Rahman

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Abstract
While the importance of reflective writing is widely acknowledged worldwide, the lack of exposure to systematic reflective models to enhance reflexivity is a major concern among in-service teachers in many developing countries. This paper presents a qualitative case study that aimed to explore the elements reflected by a group of English as a Second Language in-service teachers through their reflective writing. Specifically, it explored how the in-service teachers wrote reflections before Gibb’s reflective model was introduced to them as well as examined to what extent the systematic model managed to help them write better reflections. This study contributed to the body of knowledge on reflective writing among in-service teachers. Gibbs’ reflective model was introduced as a systematic framework to guide their reflective writing for eight weeks. Multiple methods such as semi-structured interviews, reflection logs and field notes were collected and thematically analysed. The findings indicated that the teachers managed to write better reflections on their teaching after using the model. The teachers reported that Gibb’s reflective model provided clearer guidelines for writing reflection, minimized difficulties in the evaluation and analysis of their teaching, and provided a space for thinking about their action plans. Gibbs's reflective model can be used as a tool to enhance ESL teachers’ reflexivity and professional development.

Keywords: English as a second language, Gibbs reflective model, in-service teachers, primary school, reflective writing

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Introduction

Both pre-service and in-service teachers not only need to be aware of the importance of reflection in their professional development, but they also require support in writing reflections. An absence of reflective models makes it difficult for them to write effectively. Reflective practice enables teachers not only to develop critical thinking skills but also to increase self-awareness in improving their teaching performance. Teachers who engage in reflective practice go through a cyclical process to relook, rethink, relearn and reanalyze their teaching experiences which will eventually enhance their practices. It is one of the major determinants of teaching success as it helps the teachers to collect, record, and analyze everything that happened in their teaching processes. Reflection also enables them to move from just experiencing, into understanding by reflecting on the experiences that they went through. The reflective process activates the teachers’ thinking as they question what their experiences mean to them.

While the positive impact of reflective writing could be seen in promoting metacognitive awareness and critical thinking, lack of exposure to systematic reflection models to rely on, makes it difficult for teachers particularly in developing countries, to become critical in their reflections (Zaretsky et al., 2022; Kilic, 2022). Teachers need to use a suitable reflective model to help them to think critically, thus improving their teaching. Furthermore, the use of reflective models during reflection processes before, while and after teaching enables the teachers to increase their reflexivity (Rico et al., 2012; Yaacob et al., 2021). Therefore, the use of a reflective thinking model during the reflective journal writing process is essential to provide a better impact on teaching and learning.

In Malaysia, reflective writing has been added to the Malaysian teacher training programs when clinical supervision was implemented in 1989. Later, in 1999, the Malaysian Ministry of Education made reflective writing compulsory for all in-service teachers to write their reflections in their lesson plans whereby they are expected to reflect on what they have achieved during their teaching based on the learning objectives (MoE, 1999). Since then, reflective writing becomes a routine activity for teachers. Consequently, the Malaysian Education Quality Standard or known as “Standard Kualiti Pendidikan Malaysia Gelombang 2 (MoE, 2017) was implemented to upgrade the teaching quality of Malaysian teachers. Therefore, these documents show the Ministry’s awareness of the importance of reflective writing skills to be inculcated among teachers. It has become one of the major determinants of teaching success (MoE, 2019).

While efforts have been made by the Ministry of Education to improve teachers’ reflectivity, teachers are still unable to reflect critically (Kim, 2018; Min et al., 2017; Mohd Sharif & Zainuddin, 2017; Wan Hassan & Mohd Yusoff, 2019; Yaacob et al., 2014). In addition, there seems to be little research on the use of reflective models among in-service English language teachers to enhance self-efficacy. These past studies mainly concentrated on pre-service teachers as compared to in-service teachers (Chiew, Dali & Lim, 2016; Choy, Yim & Tan, 2017; Choy, Yim & Sedhu, 2019; Kabilan, 2007; Yaacob et al., 2014). On that note, this study was conducted to explore to what extent Gibb's reflective model was useful in improving English as a Second Language (ESL) in-service teachers’ reflective writing.

1. To explore the nature of reflective writing produced by in-service teachers.
2. To examine the extent to which Gibb’s reflective model is useful in improving ESL teachers’ reflective writing.

The findings will contribute to the body of knowledge on in-service teachers’ reflective writing in English as a second language context. We begin the paper with the literature review.
which provides related studies on reflective writing and the use of Gibbs’ reflective model, followed by the methodology section which details the study design, sampling, methods, procedures, and analysis. Then, we present the results and discussion before it ends with the conclusion of the study.

**Literature Review**

**Related Studies on Reflective Journal Writing**

A successful reflective process enables the teachers to learn through and from experience towards gaining new insights into their own practice. This new insight enables teachers to make changes and improvements in their instructions (Medic, 2022; Pasternak & Rigoni, 2015). However, it has been argued that without reflective writing, teachers could not focus on the main themes in their reflections, unable to record and analyze events in a prescribed manner to foster reflective thinking (Shandomo, 2010). As a result, they could not manage their teaching pedagogy and transform theory into practice (Mohammadi et al., 2020; Rousseau, 2015).

For that reason, reflective writing becomes an important tool in helping teachers to collect, record, and analyse everything that happened in their teaching process (Yoshihara, Kurata, & Yamauchi, 2020). Teachers need to use their reflective writing as a means of reflective practice for professional development (Richter et al., 2022) which enables them to move from just experiencing, to understanding by reflecting on the experiences they went through (Farrell & Kennedy, 2019; Maarof, 2007). Hence, reflective writing plays an important role for teachers to reflect on and understand their experiences in teaching (Fraser et al., 2022; Göker, 2016). In other words, it allows the teachers to learn from reflecting on their daily experiences by asking questions related to how, why, and what of their teaching and learning process, and recording their thoughts in reflective writing (Maarof, 2007).

Reflective writing has now become popular in second language teaching due to its contribution to educational development and instruction by facilitating teachers on both self-reflection and integration of theory and practice (Quirke et al., 2020). Quirke et al. also highlighted that the teachers will be able to build their capacity to function as leaders by reviewing the theories behind reflective writing and reflective inquiry which enable them to develop their professionalism and leadership.

Despite the importance of reflective writing in teacher education, its implementation among teachers faced exertion (Dinham et al., 2020). Dinham et al. (2020) argued that the environment at schools inhibits teachers to practice reflection. In the context of Malaysia, the teachers were not well acquainted with the idea of reflective practitioner which was adapted from Australia. Teachers perceived they had no time for reflection, received a lack of feedback on the quality of their work, and were discouraged by the guidelines to practice reflective writing (Senom et al., 2013). Consequently, they lacked practice to exercise professional knowledge and to use professional resources i.e. reflective writing to increase their professionalism (Rahimi & Weisi, 2018). Furthermore, Krutka and Carpenter (2016) claimed that even though many experienced teachers are always thinking about their teaching, they still prefer speaking to colleagues about critical incidents rather than writing in their reflection logs (Bruster & Peterson, 2013) as it was less practiced in their work culture (Rigg & Trehan, 2004; Trehan & Rigg, 2008; Fox, Dodman & Holincheck, 2019). Besides, teachers and policymakers understand reflection differently and this has caused major concern among educators in Malaysia (Saric & Steh, 2017).
Likewise, Leijen et al. (2014) revealed that the teachers who are not actively engaged in reflective writing did not use any suitable reflection model to write reflections and to reflect on the critical incidents that happened during and after the lesson was conducted. As such, they were unable to apply a more systematic process of collecting, recording and analysing their thoughts and observations, as well as those of their students. Besides, teachers with less practice in reflective writing were unable to go through the reflective cyclical process systematically (Helyer, 2015; Cirocki & Widodo, 2019; Ahmed, 2020) and thus, failed to reflect critically in building a robust, motivated and progressive professional personality (Jennifer & Mbato, 2020). They missed out on essential elements of reflections as they could not focus on the main themes in their reflective writing, and were unable to record and analyze events in a prescribed manner to foster reflective thinking (Mohammadi et al., 2020; Rousseau, 2015; Shandomo, 2010). Similarly, Smith and Martin (2014) claimed that teachers with less reflective skills will struggle in “being professional” as professionalism is strongly associated with reflection and lifelong learning.

In a similar vein, a lack of practice in reflective writing is also associated with a lack of guidance on how to write a good piece of reflective writing (Farrell & Kennedy, 2019; Yaacob et al., 2014; Miller, 2020). In some instances, teachers only described the incidents that happened in the classroom without critically analyzing their own teaching instructions (Ahmed, 2020; Maat & Zakaria, 2010). Therefore, a lack of reflective writing practices may lead teachers to become stagnant and less creative in their teaching (Jones, Rivera & Rooij, 2020). In other studies, similar findings show that teachers mostly reflected at technical and practical levels of thinking, but rarely rose to the critical level of reflection (Min et al., 2017; Ong et al., 2020; Yaacob et al., 2014). The teachers mostly focused on their classroom experiences as opposed to being deep thinkers (Chien, 2013).

While there are many existing models used in the literature, Gibbs’ reflective cycle is widely used for educational purposes (Adeani et al., 2020; Cooper & Wieckowski, 2017; Fathelrahman, 2019; Impedovo & Malik, 2016; Rolfe et al. 2011; Nguyen et al., 2020) as it provides well-structured guidelines that enable the teachers to write better reflective writing compared to other models of reflective writing (Adeani et al., 2020; Heyer, 2015). Previous studies claim that teachers could be guided on how to reflect and rethink their teaching through reflective practice and using reflective tools, models or frameworks (Ahmed, 2020; Benade, 2015; Impedovo & Malik, 2016). Reflective tools, models or frameworks help teachers to voice out their evaluation, responses and feelings to a particular problem they are facing in the classroom (Sert, 2019). This is supported by Korucu et al., (2019) and Yoshihara et al., (2020) who postulated that reflective tools, models or frameworks could support teachers to begin the process of reflective writing based on their critical episodes and critical phases they go through in their classrooms. Kallarackal and Thomas (2020) also stated that a structured reflective framework is needed to facilitate the teachers to do self-reflection which will encourage them to become more conscious of their acts and effects, strengths and of their practices. Hence, it allows them ample time to reflect and write their reflection based on the learning outcomes and evidence of the strengths and weaknesses of their own teaching (Ahmad et al. 2021; Canaran & Mirici, 2020; Vandermeulen, Leijten, & Van Waes, 2020).

Wass and Rogers (2019) claimed that it is vital to provide teachers with ample time to write their reflection logs and sustain their reflective practice with peer observation and video. Peer evaluation will help them to select significant teaching and learning approaches, increase their envision to apply what they had learnt from the previous reflection in future situations, commit
themselves to do an action plan and consciously modify their teaching styles and students’ behaviour (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019; Alemi & Tajeddin, 2020). Therefore, taking into consideration the need to train teachers with a systematic reflective model, this paper presents the findings from a case study which explored a group of ESL in-service teachers’ reflective writing. We argue that reflective journal writing using Gibbs’ Model could enhance these teachers’ reflectivity and improve their journal writing over time.

**Gibbs’ Reflective Model**

This study adopted Gibbs’ Reflective Model (1988) to guide the teachers in their reflective writing as it offers a well-structured framework to facilitate reflective writing. Table one shows Gibb’s Reflective model which guided this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>Action Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Description: What happened?</td>
<td>What, where and when? Who did what? What did you do/read/see/hear? In what order did things happen? What were the circumstances? What were you responsible for?</td>
<td>What was your initial gut reaction, and what does this tell you? Did your feelings change? What were you thinking?</td>
<td>What pleased, interested or was important to you? what made you unhappy? what difficulties were there? who/what was unhelpful? Why? What needs improvement?</td>
<td>Compare theory and practice. What similarities or differences are there between this experience and other experiences? Think about what actually happened. What choices did you make and what effect did they have?</td>
<td>What have you learnt for the future? what else could you have done?</td>
<td>If a similar situation arose again, what would you do?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table one indicates the components of description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. It offers a framework for the teachers not only to examine experiences of cyclic nature but also to allow them to learn and plan their future actions based on the weaknesses and strengths they found in the previous lesson (Heyer, 2015). In other words, the guided questions help the teachers to explore their teaching experiences deeply.

**Methods**

A qualitative case study approach by Yin (2014) was used as it provides a unique example of real people in a real situation and it offers a multi-perspectives analysis in which the researcher considers not just the voices and perspectives of the participants, but also the views of others and the interactions between them (Cohen & Manion, 2000; Nieuwenhuis, 2010). One of the researchers was the ‘research instrument’ or the participant whereby who was fully engaged with the teachers and established a good rapport with them. She was their district trainer in the English Language. Therefore, the data were reported based on a natural setting from an ‘emic’ perspective (Yin, 2008).

**Participants**

The study involved six in-service teachers (three females and three males) who were teaching in one primary school in one of the districts in the northern state of Malaysia in 2020. The teachers had between 19 and 32 years of experience in teaching English as a second language.
They were selected based on purposive sampling (Cohen & Manion, 2000). Table two shows the profile of the participants in the study.

Table 2. Profile of the participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Teaching experience</th>
<th>Reflective writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Amri</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>After teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Anuar</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>After teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Nazmi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>After teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Ira</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>After teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Vina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>After teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Zila</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>After teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table two, all of the teachers indicated that they write reflections after the lesson and they have a good reflective ability and are willing to share their experiences and professional opinions about their teaching practices. Because of ethical considerations (Creswell, 2013), the teachers were given an informed consent form to sign and were enlightened about their rights to withdraw from the study. Pseudonyms were applied to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

**Research Instruments**

Multiple data collection methods such as semi-structured interviews, reflective journals and field notes were employed in this study. The following section details the methods used.

**Semi-structured Interviews**

According to Merriam (2009), semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers twice, at the beginning of the study to examine the problems they had with writing reflection and at the end of the study after Gibb’s reflective Model was introduced to explore the extent in which the model used enhanced their reflective writing practices. The interview protocols were adapted from Leijen, et al., (2014). The interviews were conducted after the class time based on the teachers’ convenience and lasted between 30 minutes to one hour. The teachers’ views, ideas and feelings concerning the issue of reflective writing were recorded and analysed. This interview protocol was piloted with one English teacher from a different school in the same district. Some modifications were made to the instrument upon discussion with an expert in assessment (Lu & Gatua, 2014) before it was used with the group of teachers in the main study.

**Field Notes**

Field notes were used to produce meaning and understanding of the situation. The participants’ feelings, as well as behaviours, activities, events and other features of the setting, were also recorded. The field notes were written immediately after the site visits and the interview sessions. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), these notes form an audit trail of details about how the researcher conducted the inquiry to establish the confirmability of a research finding which involves establishing that the findings are based on participants’ responses instead of the researcher’s own preconceptions and biases. These are detailed and accurate descriptions of what the inquirer sees, hears, and experiences (Creswell, 2013). Field notes were used to support the findings from reflective journals and interviews.
**Reflective Journal**

Throughout this study, the teachers were asked to write their post-lesson reflections for four weeks. Twelve reflections were collected (two from each participant) and analysed before and after the intervention to see the patterns of reflective writing. Researchers then analysed and reflected on the nature of the reflections written by the teachers (Creswell, 2013). Lesson plans were also collected to examine their reflections prior to the training.

**Research Procedures**

There were four phases in the data collection procedures in this case study: First, gaining access and conducting the first interview; second, training how to use Gibb’s reflective model; third, writing post-reflections and conducting the second interview, and finally, analysing the qualitative data. Gaining access into the field was conducted in Phase One whereby a meeting with the teachers was conducted to enable the researcher to provide a briefing on the research purpose as well as to obtain consent from the participants. During this phase, interviews were also conducted to identify the problems in writing reflections. The interview lasted between half an hour to one hour in each session and they were recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Simultaneously, lesson plans were also collected to examine the elements reflected in their reflective writing.

In Phase Two, training on how to use Gibbs’ reflective cycle was conducted for three weeks to familiarize them with the framework and the debriefing questions. The training session enabled the teachers to practice writing reflections using Gibb’s model and guided questions. Next, in Phase Three, the teachers were asked to write their post-lesson reflections individually based on Gibb’s reflective model and guided by the researcher. This reflective writing session provided a chance for the teachers to have a better understanding of their thinking process. In this phase, a second interview was conducted to find out the effectiveness of Gibb’s model in helping the teachers to write their reflections. Finally in Phase Four, a reiteration process with the participants which involved getting clear information, to avoid the researcher’s bias was conducted. Here, the verbatim interview transcriptions were shared with the participants and they were allowed to explain further what they meant from the interview transcripts.

**Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis was conducted on all the qualitative data collected in this study. The thematic analysis involved transcribing, reading and familiarizing, coding across the entire data set, searching for themes, reviewing themes and subthemes, defining and naming themes and finalizing analysis, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2013). The reason for adopting thematic analysis was because it gives flexibility to the researchers and it works effectively in capturing key ideas from the transcription. Before arriving at the distinctive themes, the researchers repeatedly read the transcriptions a few times and recognized primary ideas while the codes were being generated. After this laborious procedure, the primary themes were identified by organizing the codes. The themes obtained from the interview data were presented to two experts for their expert opinion and approval of the terms used for the themes. The themes were then reviewed again before the final themes were established.
**Trustworthiness**

Being aware of many ethical issues in qualitative inquiry, the researchers carefully discussed the issue of confidentiality and the right to withdraw from this research with the participants at the initial stage of this study (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Researchers also protected the anonymity of the participants by assigning pseudonyms to their names and explaining to them the purpose of this case study was to improve their reflective writing and that the data would only be used for research purposes. In addition, inter-rater reliability was conducted to ensure reliability and validity by comparing and checking the coding made by two experts in the field (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

**Triangulation**

Triangulation was verified via methods of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002) which were interviews, reflective journals, and field notes. All the interviews were recorded and the transcribed interviews were brought back to the participants to be checked or known as ‘member checking’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002) and the content was verified to avoid misunderstanding and researcher bias.

**Findings**

The findings are presented in two parts. In the first part, it reveals the nature of the teachers’ reflections before the training, and in the second part, it depicts how the model helped in improving their reflections. The data were obtained from interviews and reflections. It is also supported by an extract taken from one teacher, named “Teacher Nazmi’ to illustrate his improvement in reflective writing.

**The Nature of Reflective Writing Produced by In-service Teacher Before the Training**

When asked in the interview when they wrote their reflection, the majority of them mentioned that they wrote it after each lesson during their free time. Teacher Anuar mentioned that he wrote his reflection in the spaces provided in the lesson plan, while Teacher Ira stated that she wrote it after every lesson while waiting for her next class.

“Everybody writes a reflection after teaching in the space provided in the lesson plan” (Teacher Anuar, Interview)

“Normally, I write the outcome of the lesson after teaching” (Teacher Vina, Interview)

“I do it every day after the lesson and during free time while waiting to get into the next class” (Teacher Ira, Interview)

These teachers also indicated that reflection after teaching allowed them to look back on their teaching and learning sessions. They asked questions about their lesson on what worked, and what did not work. Their reflections enabled them to record their strengths and weakness. The teachers said,

“Reflection is good for me as I could recheck the weaknesses of my instructions” (Teacher Nazmi, Interview)

“It is a time for me to do self-evaluation and check on the strengths and weaknesses of my instructions, especially between what I was planned and what actually occurred during my instructions as I noted at the end of the lesson” (Teacher Anuar, Interview)

Interestingly, one of the teachers mentioned that she focused on students’ achievement because it was required by the inspectorate who visited the school.
“I just write the amount of the students as required by the inspectorate to write a brief statement indicating the extent a learning objective has been achieved every time after teaching” (Teacher Vina, Interview)

Similar findings were found in the teachers’ reflective journals. Teachers’ reflective journals were analysed using Gibbs’ reflective model to explore the elements reflected in their reflections. The findings indicated that these teachers did not reflect based on the six elements of Gibbs’ reflective model. Table three shows the nature of the reflections produced by the teachers.

Table 3. The nature of reflections produced by the teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of reflection before using Gibb’s reflective model</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“28/30 pupils achieved the objectives. 2/30 of the pupils need more exercises and guidance”</td>
<td>Teacher Amri, Reflection log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“18 pupils matched the sentences accurately”</td>
<td>Teacher Nazmi, Reflection log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“25/32 pupils achieved the objectives. 7/32 of the pupils need more exercises and guidance in the next lesson”</td>
<td>Teacher Zila, Reflection log</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“65% pupils achieved the objectives. 25% of the pupils need more exercises and guidance in future lesson”</td>
<td>Teacher Ira, Reflection log</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table three, the teachers’ reflections were very brief indicating only the analysis as to whether the lesson objectives have been achieved by stating the numbers of the students who answered the questions correctly. For example, Teacher Nazmi wrote, “18 pupils matched the sentences accurately”, while Teacher Zila mentioned, “25/32 pupils achieved the objectives. 7/32 of the pupils need more exercises and guidance in the next lesson”. There were no elements of description, feelings, evaluation, conclusion and future action plan. The focus of their reflections was mainly on the student’s achievement.

In summary, the findings indicated that even though they were aware of the benefits of writing reflections for their teaching and learning, they were briefly written and focused solely on students’ achievement without reflecting on their instructions.

**Impact of Gibb’s Reflective Model on In-service Teachers’ Reflective Writing**

The second part of the paper examines to what extent Gibb’s reflective model helped in improving the teachers’ reflective writing. The data were obtained from reflective journals and interviews. The teachers’ interviews indicated a few themes: The model provided them with reflective writing guidelines; it reduced difficulties in analysing and evaluating teaching events; and it was useful for self-improvement.

**Reflective Writing Guidelines**

The teachers mentioned that Gibbs’ reflective model was useful in helping them to reflect and to write critically. The model became their reflective writing guidelines and was used as a tool for meaningful reflective writing. Teacher Zila mentioned that it helped her during the process of reflecting. Meanwhile, Teacher Vina stated that she could think and reflect better. Hence, the teachers were able to write their reflections using suitable reflective statements.

“The guided questions brighten up the way to do reflection and it promotes the process to reflect.” (Teacher Zila, interview)
“Teachers need to have clear guidelines to guide us to think and reflect better. It seems similar to the things that the administration asks about what are the interventions we did to increase students’ achievement. Now I realised that the correct way to do reflection is one of the ways to help me think and come out with the best intervention for my students” (Teacher Vina, Interview)

Reduced Difficulties in Analysing and Evaluating Teaching Events

The model also helped them to lessen their difficulties in analysing and evaluating their teaching. Teacher Anuar and Teacher Nazmi indicated that they were confused with all the terminology used, however, the training helped to minimize their confusion.

“I’m confused on evaluation, analysis and conclusion stages as they seem repeating the same things but it becomes clearer after the guidance and explanation…” (Teacher Anuar, interview)

“I was confused at first as the questions seemed similar yet have different needs. But I realized and agreed that they are connected. We need to go ahead… although we have a lot of work and activities to do.” (Teacher Nazmi, interview)

Self-improvement

Guided reflective writing helps to change their reflection to a more critical reflection. Through a series of reflection activities, the teachers managed to improve their ability to write a meaningful reflection and they showed positive intention to improve their teaching in future lessons. Teacher Nazmi mentioned that the questions helped him to reflect on his experiences, while Teacher Zila lamented that it increased her self-awareness of her strengths and weaknesses. On the other hand, Teacher Nazmi, Teacher Zila and Teacher Anuar stated that the reflective guidelines helped them to plan for future actions.

“The opportunity to use the questions, the template and your explanation helped me to flashback and learn from the experience. It makes me clearer on my next action to be taken.” (Teacher Nazmi, interview)

“It helps me to do self-improvement and increase self-awareness especially to identify the strengths and weaknesses and taking action to address them … it helped me to be more reflective and could think critically for better instructions” (Teacher Zila, interview)

“It’s good to try out to do better on the next lesson based on the previous experiences… the guided questions helped me to explore different/new ideas and approaches towards doing or thinking about my lesson to plan and choose relevant teaching strategies and materials to plan my future teaching…” (Teacher Anuar, interview)

The positive impact of Gibbs’ reflective model is also evident in the participants’ reflective journal writing. (Refer to Appendix 1: Teacher Nazmi’s reflection.

As can be seen in the extract, Teacher Nazmi was able to describe the lesson and to make the analysis as to how many students performed the task successfully when he wrote, “20 pupils read the passage correctly but the rest 8 pupils still did not know what to do. The advanced pupils carried out the task successfully compared to the others”. He also managed to express his feelings when he said, “I was satisfied. Satisfaction on what had happened in the classroom” and he was aware of his students’ enjoyment of the lesson, “Pupils enjoyed the lesson but sometimes they seem really confused and did not know what to do”. Interestingly, he was aware of the students’ problems, such as having “lack vocabulary” and that peer learning was useful for them. Most importantly, he reflected on the actions to be taken in his future classes. He wanted “to prepare a well-planned..."
exploring the use of gibbs’ reflective model:

Hashim, Yaacob, Suryani, Asraf, Bahador, & Supian

Discussion

The study was set to explore how the in-service teachers write reflections before gibb’s reflective model was introduced as well as to examine to what extent the systematic model managed to help them write better reflections. Our findings indicated that the in-service teachers in this study were not actively engaged in reflective writing at the beginning of the study as they were not exposed to any model to refer to. Their reflections focused mainly on the student’s achievement. When mapped against gibbs’ reflective model, there were no clear elements of description, feelings, evaluation, conclusion, and future action plan. Our findings have also shown that, even though most of them were aware of the benefits of writing reflections for their teaching and learning, they missed other essential components of reflections such as feelings, evaluation, and action plans. This is consistent with the study conducted by Leijen et al. (2014) and Yaacob et al. (2014) which indicated that the participants were not using a suitable reflection model to practice reflective teaching. Although the teachers were making changes in their teaching, the changes made were based on what they believed they should do rather than based on what they should reflect on and plan the new actions.

In relation to the second research question which was to examine the extent to which gibbs’ reflective model was useful in improving the ESL teachers’ reflective writing, our findings demonstrated that even though their reflections were not critical enough at the beginning, the introspecting questions, guidance, and corrective feedback provided, helped them to write better reflections. The teachers mentioned in the interview that the model did not only provide them with reflective writing guidelines, but it also minimized their difficulties in analysing and evaluating their teaching events. Furthermore, they claimed that it was useful for self-improvement. One of the teachers mentioned that with this guide, he was able to reflect based on his past teaching experiences. He was capable of describing the event, analyzing and evaluating his students’ learning, as well as thinking about action plans for his future lessons. He acknowledged that he was aware of his learners’ needs and capabilities based on the model taught. Our findings indicated that the teachers have a good capability and competence to explore different ideas and approaches towards doing and thinking critically to solve the critical incidents (Ahmed, 2020; Cirocki & Widodo, 2019; Kilic, 2022; Zarestsky et al., 2022).

Undoubtedly, gibb’s model helped these teachers to reflect and increase their reflexivity by identifying their strengths and weaknesses and thus, coming up with action plans to address them. The process of reflecting on their lessons also enabled them to link practice with theory by combining teaching with theoretical knowledge rather than ignoring it without reflecting and acting upon it. Our findings are following many scholars who view the need for a reflection model or framework to be used during the reflective writing process (Leijen et al., 2014; Cirocki & Farrell, 2019; Alemi & Tajeddin, 2020). The findings are also in line with many studies that looked
at the positive impacts of reflective writing on teacher education (Slade et al., 2019; Yaacob et al., 2021). Despite the positive impacts discovered in the teachers’ reflective writings, the duration of the study which took place for one month appeared to be limited in the sense that they needed more time to develop the reflective writing skills. We recommended that a more longitudinal study be conducted to ensure they become reflective practitioners.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is important to pay attention to the in-service teachers’ voices which focused on their perspectives and their commitment to improving their practices. Providing opportunities for them to reflect on their practices, and demonstrate that they are learning to make connections between theory and practice in a way that increases the potential for their learning. Here, the teachers search for personal meanings and emotions by focusing on their own thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and evaluations. Teachers need to be taught that different models are appropriate for different contexts and they need to be used selectively and judiciously. We have provided evidence that Gibbs’ reflective cycle can help the in-service teachers to practice both writing and thinking through reflective writing and inspire them to develop their way of thinking, improve their pedagogical skills, have a better understanding of their pedagogical content knowledge and ultimately, review their teaching progress. Finally, we recommend Gibbs’ reflection model to be used as a framework for both pre-service and in-service teachers to learn more from reflecting on their experiences and to endure themselves in devoting reflective practice.

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**About the Author:**

**Siti Noor Aneeis Hashim** is a Lecturer Language Department, Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Perlis. She lectures in curriculum and instructions. Her research interest includes reflective writing, in-service teachers, primary school and English for Second Language. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9474-2122

**Aizan Yaacob** is an Associate Professor at UUM Kuala Lumpur. She delivers lecture in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics. Her areas of specialization include ELT, Applied Linguistics, Bilingualism, and qualitative research. She is currently the Editor-in-Chief for Practitioner Research. She has published widely in national and international journals in her field. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0007-3354-9998

**Ina Suryani** is an associate professor and she teaches English for Special Purposes and Technical Writing at the Centre of Excellence for Unmanned Ariel Vehicle, Faculty of Business and Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis. Her research areas are in Genre Analysis and Text Analysis. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3193-4706
Ratnawati Mohd Asraf is a professor at the Kulliyyah of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). She was formerly the Chief Editor of Educational Awakening: Journal of the Behavioural Sciences, IIUM and the Director of the Research Management Centre, IIUM. ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4132-1989

Zolkefli Bahador is a lecturer at School of Education, Universiti Utara Malaysia. His research interests include e-learning and instructional technology. ORCiD ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0007-5365-4365

Nadya Supian is currently Assistant Professor with the Department of Modern Languages, Faculty of Creative Industries in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. Her research interests include metacognition in language learning, mobile assisted language learning, vocabulary acquisition, critical thinking, game-based language learning and semiotics. ORCiD ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3720-8660

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Appendices
Appendix A

Teacher Nazmi’s Reflection after the Intervention

20 pupils read the passage correctly but the rest 8 pupils still did not know what to do. The advanced pupils carried out the task successfully compared to the others. The teacher was the facilitator during the lesson and appointed the good students to guide their friends. They were really interested and felt relieved as they could read, understand and chose correct content to answer the questions with their friends. The quick action to separate them into groups helped me to guide the needed pupils individually. I was satisfied. Satisfaction on what had happened in the classroom. It was because to deliver knowledge is the main target. The knowledge gained by the pupils from easy to difficult seemed to be ample for the time being.” Pupils enjoyed the lesson but sometimes they seem really confused and did not know what to do because they lack of vocabularies. Peer learning is helpful for them to have during the lesson.” I should be more concerned and aware to enable me to try harder, to prepare a well-planned lesson and to prepare the teaching aids and materials for the students. I need to separate the students based on their different abilities to do the activities individually, with peers or in a group. I plan to choose PBL approach and recycle materials based on their interest, knowledge, surrounding and family background to prepare the next lesson. I hope this will arouse their interest to involve in the classroom activities. I feel like using songs and microphone to let them speak and correct each other”. I should planned well prepared lesson to face the intermediate and slow learners. The teaching aids used should be more interesting and meaningful. The learning process should be fun and enjoyable.

(Teacher Nazmi, Reflection journal)
A Critical Stylistic Study of Bullying in R.J Palacio’s Wonder

Israa Ezzet Hameed
Department of English, College of Education for Women
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq

Fatimah Khudhair Hassoon
Department of English, College of Education for Women
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq
Corresponding Author: fatimahassoon7@gmail.com

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Abstract
Bullying is one of the most common problems that generate vigorous arguments in the community. It is widespread in all societies, especially among children and adolescents in schools. The present study investigates the concept of bullying in the American novel ‘Wonder’ by R. J. Palacio from a critical stylistic perspective. The importance of the study resides for every ordinary reader to be aware of the strategies used in bullying others. It also might be of value to scholars of sociology, critical stylistics, critical discourse studies, psychologists, and any scholar interested in the discourse of bullying. The current study is expected to answer the following question: What is the most common type of bullying and the critical stylistic tools that bullies use to convey the concept of bullying in the analyzed data? The study aims at distinguishing the most common types of Bullying that bullies use in the selected novel and also identifying the critical stylistic tools that are employed by the bullies. The researchers adopt Jeffries’s (2010) critical stylistics modal to analyze the data under scrutiny. The study reveals that the most common form of bullying found is direct emotional bullying which is experienced by Julian and his schoolmates against the victim. Only eight stylistic tools are found in the five extracts through certain realizations related to the specific contexts in which they are initiated. The study concludes that the notion of bullying is represented through using most stylistic tools but with different ideologies.

Keywords: bullying, critical stylistic study, Jeffries’s critical stylistic modal, stylistics, Wonder

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Introduction

Bullying is one of the most common problems that generate vigorous arguments in the community. According to Sullivan (2004), bullying is a sequence of manipulative, harmful, and aggressive behaviors used by some powerful people against those who have physical imperfections, including people with facial disabilities. Bullying can be verbal or physical with negative effects on those subjected to bullying. To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, most recent research has paid attention to bullying as a social issue. Researchers like Nuriza (2014), Sya’diyah (2019), and Wulur (2021) have investigated bullying, its consequences and developments. However, these studies have focused on the psychological aspect of bullying rather than the linguistic one. To bridge this gap, the current study is intended to investigate the notion of bullying in Wonder from a critical stylistic perspective. The current study investigates verbal bullying as a social phenomenon to assess how the linguistic style of the novelist can portray the ideologies of those who bully others. The importance of the study resides for every ordinary reader to be aware of the strategies used in bullying others. It also might be of value to scholars of sociology, critical stylistics, critical discourse studies, psychologists and any scholar interested in the discourse of bullying. Therefore, the study aims at distinguishing the most common types of Bullying that bullies use in the selected novel and also identifying the critical stylistic tools that are employed by the bullies. It attempts to answer the following questions: What is the most common type of bullying that bullies use in the selected novel? How are the critical stylistic tools employed to convey the concept of bullying in the analyzed data? What are the underlying ideologies embedded in the bullies’ speech?

Some extracts are chosen from Wonder a novel by R. J. Palacio to be analyzed in this study. These extracts contain different forms of bullying practiced on the main character, August or Auggie, as he is sometimes called. August Pullman is a little kid who has had a facial deformity since birth. This makes it difficult for him to be accepted in society. Accordingly, the selected novel is an appropriate representative of the potential linguistic contexts of bullying in literature.

Literature Review

The Concept of Bullying

Bullying is defined as a form of repeatedly aggressive activity done by young people intended to hurt or harm another person. Most bullying took place in schools, where kids interact mostly in situations including classrooms, playgrounds, and school buses. Bullying in schools is a serious issue that has a negative impact on learning and social functioning (Yahya et al., 2015). Bullying can take different forms, including physical bullying like pushing and kicking, verbal bullying like racist slurs, cyberbullying, using technology and social bullying such as isolating someone from a group (Perdew, 2015).

Olweus (2004) believed that bullying frequently occurs without cause and might be viewed as peer abuse. Olweus considers bullying as an abusive behavior that occurs between two persons or groups of people engaged in an event and has comparable physical, financial, or intellectual abilities. He also believes that bullying does not always have to include physical harm or violence.

The definition of bullying has been extended and improved due to the rising awareness of bullying as a social issue. It is considered a deliberate act in which the bully intentionally selects victims to injure them. In addition to individual arguments or conflicts, aggressive behaviors should be committed repeatedly over time to be qualified as bullying. An imbalance of power is
an additional component in a comprehensive definition of bullying. A bully hurts or cruelly treats another person using physical or social authority (Perdew, 2015).

**Critical Stylistics**

Language is full of ideas and behaviors that combine power relations and social conflict. It has the social meaning that appears in phonology, syntax, lexical items, and structure, which are all of the critical interest (Abed & Halyut, 2022).

The field of stylistics emerged in the 20th century as a response against subjective methods of assessing literary qualities in texts in favor of objective analysis and interpretation of linguistic elements. Many scholars maintain that it is hard to define "stylistics" precisely. This is due to its various interpretations (Hassoon, 2018). Stylistics studies the text closely and analyzes its important language forms. It is highly similar to practical criticism (Jaafar, 2014). In other words, the field of stylistics is mainly concerned with studying the speaker/writer’s style in selecting linguistic elements that form a piece of language produced to reflect and portray specific meanings and contexts (Simpson, 2004).

A critical stylistic analysis has been developed by Jeffries who combines stylistic analysis with critical discourse analysis to study language (Ahmed, H., & Abbas, 2019). The study of critical stylistics has evolved in recent years and has shown to be valuable for providing discourse ideational meaning (Khalil, 2020). The Critical Stylistics approach offers a much more rigorous methodology and a more advanced theory than Critical Discourse Analysis (Hasan & Hameed, 2019). CS is a branch of stylistics that focuses on text analysis. It seeks to expose the ideologies that are hidden inside texts and how texts represent the real world to readers or listeners.

It is an analytical method created as a consequence of CDA critical discourse analysis shortcomings (Ahmed & Abbas, 2022). CS aims to answer the question “what the text is doing” by using a variety of linguistic tool analyses to expose the ideologies underlying literary and non-literary works. Additionally, the framework of CS is based on Halliday’s theory of grammar as social semiotic and critical linguistics (Ibrahim & Hussein, 2018).

This section presents some studies that dealt with bullying. Putri and Satvikadewi (2017) conducted a study in which they explored cyberbullying from a critical discoursal perspective. Data was collected from Instagram Dena Rachman’s profile, a transgender LGBTQ, including posts and comments. They try to show how the conversation develops the logic of reality that leads perpetrators to participate in cyberbullying without hesitation. The results show that the perpetrators’ attitude, which motivates them to engage in cyberbullying, follows a natural logic of truth. The institutionalization of this mindset is facilitated by state legislation, religious rituals, social interactions, and educational institutions.

Another study was conducted by Ma’yuuf and Abbas (2021) in which they analyze pragmatically five tweets from Donald Trump with Covid-19. The investigation aims to show whether Trump uses either implicit or overt bullying. Additionally, it clarifies the politeness strategies and the underlying meanings used in these tweets. According to the study’s findings, Trump bullies many people by using direct impoliteness strategies to bully and intimidate people. Thus, Trump’s mocking behavior is concealed by implicature.

Yassir (2022), identifies the forms of bullying and examines the reasons for bullying in children’s short stories. She also focuses on the particular pragma-rhetorical tropes that are utilized by the characters to perform bullying. The study reveals that expressive speech has got the highest frequency, whereas declarative speech acts are used at least frequency.
The current study differs in its approach as a CS study, whereas the previous studies are either critical discoursal, pragmatic, or pragma stylistic studies. Moreover, the present study explores the types of bullying exploited by school-aged students in a literary text. The current study is distinct from other studies in that it aims to illustrate how bullying behavior is portrayed in the selected novel.

**Jeffries’ Model**

Jeffries offers a comprehensive and detailed typology of CS tools that can be invested to recognize the author’s style and uncover the ideology underlying spoken utterances. He introduces ten linguistic devices:

**Naming and Describing**

According to Jeffries (2010a), there are various ways that texts can be considered to "name" the world. In naming, there may be a choice between two or more methods of referring to the same object. For instance, a person’s name may be changed with another that refers to the same person. There are, however, different forms of naming that have an ideological impact in a certain setting.

**Representing Actions/Events/States**

The verbal component of a phrase, which influences how readers and listeners interpret the information presented, is at the core of representing actions/events/states. Jeffries (2010), uses the transitivity model first forward by Simpson in 1993. The transitivity model divides lexical verbs into several categories based on the kind of process or condition that they seem to describe.

**Equating and Contrasting**

Language users appear to have the ability to create more complicated words than only conventional synonyms and opposites. According to Jeffries (2010), textual sense relations are the foundation of CS. Syntactic triggers can be used to construct equivalent and oppositional meanings. Speakers/writers express their points of view by connecting or contrasting to reveal the ideologies they believe about these objects (Jeffries, 2010).

**Exemplifying and Enumerating**

Exemplifying and Enumerating are interrelated and overlapping textual tools that cannot be separated linguistically, which forces the hearer/reader to rely on their pragmatic inference. Several linguistic devices, such as "for instance," "for example," and "to exemplify," are frequently used to exemplify rather than enumerate. It can be inferred that the main difference between them is that "exemplifying" does not mention all of a category’s cases, whereas "enumerating" does. In conclusion, comprehensiveness may be a useful indication for distinguishing between enumerating and exemplifying (Jeffries, 2010).

**Prioritizing**

This tool is used when syntactic alternatives emphasize some information or comments above others (Jeffries, 2010). This prioritizing approach can be carried out in one of three ways: information structure, transformation and subordination.
Assuming and Implying

This tool examines how knowledge is seen to be either background information or something that is inferred in texts. This textual-conceptual function is provided by presupposition and implicature. Presuppositions are statements that assume the occurrence of a certain action or the presence of a particular object or event. The term "conversational implicatures" refers to meanings that are not explicitly stated in the text but may be inferred by the reader by "reading between the lines." These are based on situations in which a speaker violates one or more of Grice’s conversational maxims, which leads to implicature, also known as implicit meanings that the reader is expected to infer (Jeffries, 2010).

Negation

Negation is a grammatical phenomenon indicated by adding a "negative particle" to the first item in the verb phrase, which can be either a true auxiliary or a "dummy auxiliary," such as (will not, is not, have not, are not, etc.) or through pronouns (nobody, no one, none, nothing, etc.)

Semantically, Negating may have lexical equivalents to its formal realizations "not" and "no" that encode the absence or lack of action. Also, negation can be viewed as a morphological process in which affixes are added to signify the negative version like "incomplete, unpleasant, humorless, inability, dislike, etc" (Jeffries, 2010).

Hypothesizing

This section discusses the role of modality in the creation of ideology in texts by exploring hypothetical situations produced by modality. Jeffries (2010) mentioned that the modality classification developed by Simpson is beneficial in studying critical stylistics. The concepts of epistemic, deontic, and bulimic modalities are distinguished by Simpson (1993) as the three distinct types of modalities. These modalities, in turn, express confidence, obligation, and desirability, respectively.

Presenting the Speech and thoughts of other Participants

According to Jeffries (2010), there are five distinct ways in which speech might be reported: the narrator’s report of speech, the narrator’s report of speech act, indirect speech, free indirect speech and direct speech. Similarly, there are five distinct methods to report one’s thinking: the narrator’s report of thought, the narrator’s report of thought act, indirect thought, free indirect thought, and direct thought. The narrator uses this power to manipulate both the characters and the audience’s perspectives (Jeffries, 2010).

Representing Time, Space and Society

This type of analysis examines how the writers of texts build up the world in terms of place, time, and society. Jeffries uses the deixis model to access these dimensions. The importance of deixis lies in the information that it causes a clear interpretation of a specific statement in a particular context; in contrast, the absence of this knowledge results in misinterpretation (Jeffries, 2010).

Method

In this particular study, a qualitative method is used to analyze the data. The novel that is adopted for analysis in this study is Wonder which contains several instances of the concept
under investigation. The selection of extracts is made through the use of a purposive sample strategy, which includes intentionally excerpting situations where the types of bullying are found. Consequently, the chosen extracts are the best representation of the concept of bullying. The researchers use the CS analytical tools to analyze the extracts.

The analysis involves some stages, which begin with selecting the extracts to analyze. Each extract is chosen based on the following criteria:

1. Reading the novel several times and selecting the parts that have the most ideological implications on bullying.
2. Determining the context in which the embedded extracts occur.
3. Distinguishing the type of bullying that bullies use in each extract.
4. Examining each selected extract and identifying the utterances that contain both an ideology of bullying and one or more of the CS tools.

The following section presents the analysis of the data Wonder (2012) by adopting Jeffries’s (2010) CS tools.

**Extract One**

"Nothing much to see," Julian said, walking in after me. He started pointing to a bunch of stuff around the room. "That’s the incubator. That big black thing is the chalkboard. These are the desks. These are chairs. Those are the Bunsen burners. This is a gross science poster. This is chalk. This is the eraser."

"I’m sure he knows what an eraser is," Charlotte said, sounding a little like Via.

"How would I know what he knows?" Julian answered. "Mr. Tushman said he’s never been to a school before."

"You know what an eraser is, right?" Charlotte asked me.

I admit I was feeling so nervous that I didn’t know what to say or do except look at the floor.

(Wonder, 2012. p.25)

**Context of the Bullying Act**

This extract takes place in the laboratory that Auggie visits on his school tour. On Auggie’s first day at Breecher Prep, Mr. Thusman, the headmaster of the school, introduces several kids to him, including Julian, Charlotte, and Jack. This introduction serves as a starting point for Auggie to begin interacting with new people. The mentioned kids are given the responsibility by Mr. Thusman to help Auggie get familiar with his school by introducing him to the various rooms and facilities that are available in the school. Mr. Thusman has high expectations that they would become close friends of Auggie and assist him in his academic pursuits in formal school. However, the truth is that Julian is unable to accept Auggie’s existence at all.

In this extract Auggie faces his first direct emotional bullying. Julian is the first person who bullies Auggie since he is the only one who cannot accept Auggie right from the beginning. All of the bullying acts that are shown in this extract are exemplified by Julian’s words, which expose his ideology to belittle Auggie’s intelligence and treat him with contempt in a manner that is hurtful.

According to the first bullying statement in this novel “This is chalk. This is the eraser.”, it is noticeable that Julian is already bullying Auggie after only a few minutes of knowing him. By doing so, Julian uses two linguistic tools, the tool of Naming and Describing and the tool of Equating and Contrasting to bully Auggie. Because Auggie only runs homeschooling, it makes
Julian superior to him. Julian believes that he is smarter than Auggie. He ideologically believes that Auggie may not be adequately educated. Thus, he arrogantly introduces the items of things in the school by using the choice of nouns "chalk, eraser" believing that those who undergo homeschooling are not intelligent enough to know such names.

In the case of Equating and Contrasting, Equivalence is found through the intensive relational verb "is" in the two utterances "This is chalk" and "This is the eraser". Julian’s arrogant description of something as simple as chalk and erasers is a tactic to make Auggie feel dumb. This demonstrates Julian’s dislike of Auggie.

In comparison, Charlotte tries to stop Julian by ensuring that Auggie is aware of the eraser and the chalk when he belittles Auggie by asking if he knows them. Julian responds sarcastically saying “How would I know what he knows?” and, “Mr. Tushman said he’s never been to a school before.” Implying and Assuming tools with the Hypothesizing tool are used in Julian’s above reply.

Implying and Assuming tool appears through the active verb “know” as logical presupposition, displaying Julian’s attitude to make fun of Auggie. In other words, Julian is aware that Auggie is a homeschooled kid who is untrained to use a chalkboard and an eraser. Meanwhile, the modal verb “would” and the lexical verb “knows” are used in the Hypothesizing process to show Julian’s certainty that he knows nothing about Auggie in an attempt to taunt him. Hence, he tries to reveal ideologically that he is superior to Auggie.

Moving to Julian’s final bullying statement in this extract “Mr. Tushman said he’s never been to a school before,” he uses the tools of Naming and Describing, Representing Actions, Events and States, Negation, and Representing Time, Space Society to justify his bullying actions toward Auggie. For the tool of Naming and Describing, Julian emphasizes the idea that Auggie does not know everything at school by using the term “a school” as a choice of noun. Regarding the tool for Representing Actions, Events and States, the verbalization tool is found by using the word “said,” and the tool for Representing Time, Space Society is discovered by using the social deixis “Mr. Tushman,” which refers to the headmaster who denotes the teller mixed with the Negation tool by using “never” as a lexical negation.

To conclude, the ideologies of this extract as the analysis reveals are embarrassing, insulting and underestimating.

Extract Two
"I’m taking the science elective," I said. "Cool!" said Charlotte.
Julian looked directly at me. "The science elective is supposedly the hardest elective of all," he said.
"Yeah." I nodded.
"He was homeschooled, Julian!" said Charlotte.
"So teachers came to his house?" asked Julian, looking puzzled.
"No, his mother taught him!" answered Charlotte.
"Is she a teacher?" Julian said.
"Is your mother a teacher?" Charlotte asked me.
"No," I said.
"So she’s not a real teacher!" said Julian, as if that proved his point. "That’s what I mean. How can someone who’s not a real teacher actually teach science?"
"I’m sure you’ll do fine," said Charlotte

(Wonder, 2012. p.27)
The Context of the Bullying Act

This section is a part of Auggie’s conversation with his classmates during their school tour when they are discussing potential electives that they may take in middle school. When they ask about Auggie’s electives, Auggie answers that he wants to focus on science.

Julian is suspicious of Auggie’s ability to join the science elective. Despite that, Auggie has shown his passion for the subject. Thus, Julian attempts to tease and belittle Auggie, which are sub-types of direct emotional bullying, as seen in his statement.” The science elective is supposably the hardest elective of all.” The critical stylistic tools that are used to carry the ideational meaning of Julian’s view are Naming and Describing, Equating and Contrasting, and Hypothesizing. Since Julian is not sure yet about Auggie’s capacity, he has a hard time believing that a kid could actually learn anything without a real teacher. The first tool, Naming and Describing, is used twice in Julian’s statements to reveal his doubt regarding Auggie’s ability to select the science elective. Julian exploits the noun “science” as a choice of noun and the adjective “hardest” as a noun modification revealing his ideology to disparage Auggie’s aptitude.

Within the tool Equating and Contrasting, Equating is represented by employing two noun phrases with the intense relational verb "is" to stress Julian’s point that science is particularly challenging for Auggie.

Concerning the Hypothesizing tool, it is triggered through the modal adverb “supposably” as an epistemic modality indicating Julian’s certainty that Auggie is not an intelligent person. Consequently, the science option is surely the most difficult elective for him.

After underestimating Auggie, Julian moves to insult Auggie's mother with his following statements “So she’s not a real teacher!” “That’s what I mean. How can someone who's not a real teacher actually teach science?” A number of tools are used together in these utterances, Naming and Describing, Representing Actions, Events, and States, Equating and Contrasting, Negation, Hypothesizing and Representing Time, Space and Society. For Naming and Describing, Julian uses the adjective “real” as a modifier to the noun “teacher” twice in his speech. Both times, he combines it with the syntactic Negation “not” to expose his ideology, which is to ridicule August’s mother, who is not a genuine teacher. For Representing Actions, Events, and States tool, is found through the relational verb “be”. In addition to that, the relational verb “be” expresses a relationship of equivalence between one thing and another. Julian uses the material action intentional verb “teach” indicating that “who’s not a real teacher” is the Actor and “teach science” is the Goal.

As for Equating and Contrasting tool, an Equating process appears between Julian’s two utterances. Here, Julian again contrasts Auggie’s mother with a real teacher to remind him that whoever taught him and whatever he was taught, he is still not a typical student because he had no typical teacher. For Negation, Julian uses explicit negation with “not”.

Hypothesizing process is found through the epistemic modality verb “can”; Julian expresses his ideology that he is certain about Auggie’s mother.

For the last tool, Representing Time, Space and Society, Julian uses the pronoun “she” as a person deixis referring to Auggie’s mother, in an attempt to make fun of her for not being a typical teacher. Julian emphasizes that a typical teacher and a typical school environment are the only criteria for someone to be counted as a learner.

Thus, Auggie is bullied, being learned unsystematically at home. Ideologically bullying is revealed in this extract through ostracizing, disrespectful, and mocking.
Extract Three

"Let’s just go to the library now," Jack called out, sounding really bored.

"Why is your hair so long?" Julian said to me. He sounded like he was annoyed. I didn’t know what to say, so I just shrugged.

"Can I ask you a question? he said."

“I shrugged again. Didn’t he just ask me a question?”

"What’s the deal with your face? I mean, were you in a fire or something?"

"Julian, that’s so rude!" said Charlotte.

(Wonder, 2012. p.28)

The Context of the Bullying Act

This extract is a continuation of Auggie’s tour with his schoolmates as they go from the performance area to the library during their school tour.

After Julian’s underestimation, Auggie is exposed to another kind of direct emotional bullying in the form of an insulting question about his appearance, notably his facial scar. Julian is being very mean to Auggie by asking, “Why is your hair so long?”. Julian combines the Naming and Describing tool with the Implying, and Assuming tool in his speech to bully Auggie. Starting with Naming and Describing, Julian makes a rude comment about Auggie’s hair by using the intensifying adjective “long” as a post modifier for the noun phrase “your hair”. Auggie’s long hair shields him from bystanders’ eyes and offers him an excuse to avoid looking at his classmates. Because he is uncomfortable telling other kids his age, this indicates his attempt to conceal his identity. The question implies the intention to remind Auggie of the scar and exposes it to others to motivate students to mock Auggie, this is Julian’s ideology.

Concerning Implying and Assuming tool, while Jack is asking them to move to the next step in their tour, Julian violates the maxim of relation with his question. Ideologically, it is a harmful question that might bring harm to Auggie so Charlotte has forbidden Julian to ask that question.

In the utterance, “What’s the deal with your face? I mean, were you in a fire or something?”, Auggie gets this kind of question from his schoolmate for the first time. Starting with the ideology of embarrassment, one realization of bullying, Julian uses Naming and Describing, Equating and Contrasting, and Representing Space, Time and Society tools. Even though Julian is aware that Auggie is born with his condition, he has repeatedly asked Auggie hurtful questions and uses offensive language. The choice of noun, as one practice of Naming and Describing, is used by the noun “a fire” with the preposition ”in “ as a pre-modifier. Julian uses this tool to expose his ideology by ignoring Augie and refusing to treat him as a real person.

Within the tool Equating and Contrasting, the two utterances "What’s the deal with your face?" " were you in a fire or something?", are parallel structures that are used to equate two concepts, highlighting the fact that Auggie is not an ordinary kid and equalizing the scar on Auggie's face with one resulting from a fire. All of this has hurt Auggie terribly.

As for Implying and Assuming, it is found through the use of the possessive expression "your hair " as an existential presupposition referring to Auggie’s unusual look.

Representing Space, Time and Society tool, is used through the person deixis "you" referring to Auggie. In this case, Julian’s bullying shows that he is prepared to defend his position. Julian is trying to protect his own image by using Auggie as a tool to prevent him from giving his best. With his recent actions, Julian is beginning to show that bullying may take many forms and can be both overt and covert at the same time.
By hinting that Auggie has a scarred face, Julian’s ideologies are humiliation, disgrace, and public embarrassment.

**Extract Four**

"Can you speak up, honey?" said Ms. Petosa.
"My name is August," I said louder, forcing myself to look up. "I, um . . . have a sister named Via and a dog named Daisy. And, um . . . that’s it."
"Wonderful," said Ms. Petosa. "Anyone have questions for August?"
No one said anything.
"Okay, you’re next," said Ms. Petosa to Jack.
"Wait, I have a question for August," said Julian, raising his hand. "Why do you have that tiny braid in the back of your hair? Is that like a Padawan thing?"
"Yeah." I shrugged.
"What’s a Padawan thing?" said Ms. Petosa, smiling at me. "It’s from Star Wars," answered Julian. "A Padawan is a Jedi apprentice."
"Oh, interesting," answered Ms. Petosa, looking at me. "So, are you into Star Wars, August?"

(Wonder, 2012. p.38)

**The Context of the Bullying Act**

It takes place on the first day of school in their first class when the teacher, Ms. Petosa, invites the students to identify themselves and they may ask questions to each other. When it is Auggie’s turn, Julian raises his hand and asks a question concerning August’s hair.

Bullying does not stop on the school tour. On the first day of school, Auggie walks quietly to his homeroom with his head down so no one would see him, while Julian chooses to ignore him. Auggie is greeted by Jack and Charlotte. To humiliate Auggie in front of his classmates, Julian maintains his direct emotional bullying actions against Auggie by asking an insulting question that reveals his ideology. "Why do you have that tiny braid in the back of your hair? Is that like a Padawan thing?". Since Auggie is passionate about Star Wars, his attempts to imitate the Star Wars character Padawan even extend to the way he styles his hair. When it is Auggie’s turn, Julian attempts to make fun of him. Naming and Describing, Representing Actions, Events, States, Representing Time, Space Society and Assuming and Implying tools are used together in the construction of the notion of bullying in Julian’s question. As for the first tool Naming and Describing in Julian’s speech, it is carried out through the nouns “your hair” and “a Padawan thing” that are pre-modified by the prepositional “of” and the relational pronoun “that”. Julian knows that Auggie is interested in Star Wars films so ideologically he tries to make fun of Auggie’s hair in public.

Moving on to the Representing Actions/Events/States tool, Julian expresses his embarrassed ideology via the possessive relational process through the word “have”.

Meanwhile, Assuming and Implying are found through using the demonstrative “that” with the noun phrase “tiny braid” as an existential presupposition. This question appears harmless at first, but Auggie remembers that Darth Sidious is a character whose face changes.

In these utterances, “It’s from Star Wars,” and “A Padawan is a Jedi apprentice,” Julian utilizes several tools to enhance his ideologies and continues hurting Auggie: Naming and Describing, Representing Actions, Events, States, Equating and Contrasting as well as Assuming and Implying. The tool of Naming and Describing is realized firstly through the noun modification
“Star Wars” which is modified by the prepositional “from” and through the choice of the nouns “A Padawan” and “a Jedi apprentice” which is mixed with the Representing Actions, Events, States tool through the intensive relational verb “is” showing Julian’s ideology to make fun of Auggie. Turning to Equating and contrasting, equivalence is found through intensive relational equivalence in the utterance “A Padawan is a Jedi apprentice”. When Ms. Petosa politely asks about Auggie.’s interest in Star Wars, Julian makes another attempt to attract attention to his ideology by explaining that a Padawan is a Jedi apprentice in the film, a figure whose face melts and burns in the film in an attempt to correlate it to the appearance of Auggie’s face.

As is revealed by the analysis, the notion of bullying is linked to the ideologies of confusing, insulting, and offending harmful questions.

Extract Five

You must be so bummed you got stuck with him,” he said. "You should tell Ms. Rubin you want to switch partners. I bet she’d let you."
"No she wouldn’t," I said.
"Ask her." "No, I don’t want to."
"Ms. Rubin?" Julian said, turning around and raising his hand at the same time.

Ms. Rubin was erasing the chalkboard at the front of the room. She turned when she heard her name.
"No, Julian!" I whisper-screamed.
"What is it, boys?" she said impatiently.
"Could we switch partners if we wanted to?" said Julian, looking very innocent. "Me and Jack had this science-fair project idea we wanted to work on together. ."
"Well, I guess we could arrange that .. ," she started to say.
"No, it’s okay, Ms. Rubin," I said quickly, heading out the door. "Bye!"

Julian ran after me. "Why’d you do that?" he said, catching up to me at the stairs.
"We could have been partners. You don’t have to be friends with that freak if you don’t want to be, you know.."

And that’s when I punched him. Right in the mouth.

(Wonder, 2012. p. 111)

The Context of the Bullying Act

The events described in this extract take place during the science lesson in which Ms. Rubin asked the students to collaborate with a pair in order to choose a project from the available options. Julian’s desire to be with Jack comes from his intention to prevent Jack from being with Auggie.

Julian, the bully, is outraged by Auggie’s close friendship with Jack. He seems not able to deal with that fact. He tries to get Jack to cut his relationship with Auggie. In this extract, Julian acts in both relational and emotional bullying simultaneously. Starting with the direct emotional bullying, in the following utterances, "You must be so bummed you got stuck with him," he said. "You should tell Ms. Rubin you want to switch partners. I bet she’d let you." Julian approaches Jack and taunts him about working with his "best bud." These utterances incorporate several critical stylistic tools to yield the notion of bullying on the part of Julian. Concerning the first tool of Naming and Describing, Julian uses two realizations. He uses the adjective “stuck” to tease and insult Jack because he is sharing Auggie. Another strategy is nominalization, in which Julian attempts to force Jack to leave Auggie by turning the verb “switch” into a noun in his second utterance. Thus, social bullying is when a person is neglected and socially isolated. The second tool of CS, Representing Actions, Events, and States, deals with how the verb phrases reflect the
conceptual meaning under analysis. As in Naming and Describing, the verb phrases in all of Julian’s utterances “be”, “bummed” “tell” and “got” encode Julian’s ideologies of ostracizing. Moreover, the Hypothesizing process appears in the utterance through the deontic modality “must” and the epistemic modality “should” to express Julian’s ideology by forcing Jack to reject his friendship with Auggie and quit hanging out with him.

Moving to the other utterance, "Could we switch partners if we wanted to?" and "Me and Jack had this science-fair project idea we wanted to work on together." Julian believes that Jack should not be with Auggie since Auggie is not an ordinary student. Starting with the Naming and Describing tool by utilizing the word “partners” as a noun to denote himself and Jack, thus Julian begs Ms. Rubin to share Jack cleverly. With the same ideology, moving to the tool of Implying and Assuming, Julian’s utterance carries an assuming process of existential presupposition, indicating the existence of a mutual idea that causes Jack to leave Auggie. The noun phrase "this science-fair project idea" carries this existential presupposition.

Prioritizing is also employed by Julian through the use of the subordinator "if" to stress the main clause "Could we switch partners" at the high level to convey Julian’s ideology as domination since individuals in positions of authority can bully others in lower positions.

Furthermore, the method in which Julian attempts to convince Jack to terminate his relationship with Auggie can be classified as a type of direct relational bullying as in this utterance "We could have been partners. You don’t have to be friends with that freak if you don’t want to be, you know". Julian makes an effort to explain that the victim should not be provided with any support. Again, Julian makes use of Naming and Describing; specifically, he uses the noun "friends" as a choice of the noun referring to Auggie and Jack, and he uses the adjective "freak" as a modification to describe Auggie as a kind of name-calling.

For Equating and Contrasting tool, the two utterances "We could have been partners" and "You don’t have to be friends with that freak" are parallel structures that are used to equate two ideas emphasizing Julian’s ideologies to exclude Auggie.

For Prioritizing, Julian utilizes the subordinator "if" to emphasize the main clause “you know” by placing it at a high level. Julian attempts to demonstrate his courage and power by threatening Jack. With the Negation tool, Julian uses the syntactic negation “don’t” twice in his utterance to intimidate Jack.

Concerning the tool of Representing Time, Space and Society, Julian uses the pronoun “you” several times as a person deixis referring to Jack while the person deixis “we” is used several times in the extract to demonstrate Julian’s idea that Auggie should be ignored and that he, rather than Auggie, should work with Jack.

The ideologies in the above extract are ostracizing, ignoring, and isolation.

**Conclusion**

This study is conducted to present a critical stylistic analysis of selected extracts from the novel *Wonder* to examine the critical stylistic tools that are used to perform bullying in this novel. The results of the analysis yield the following conclusions:

1. Most forms of bullying are experienced by Julian and his schoolmates against the victim. They experience direct and indirect relational and emotional bullying such as teasing, taunting, threatening, spreading gossip, mocking, and nicknaming. The most common form of bullying found is direct emotional bullying.
2. It is clearly observed that critical stylistic tools are implemented to build the notion of bullying to uncover the ideologies encoded in the language of the characters. Only eight stylistic tools namely Naming and Describing, Representing Actions/Events/States, Equating and Contrasting, Prioritizing, Implying and Assuming, Negating, Hypothesizing, and Representing Time, Speech and Society are found in the five extracts through certain realizations related to the specific contexts in which they are initiated. These tools appear in the selected data with different frequencies. For instance, the tool for Naming and Describing, and Representing Actions, Events, and States have been used extensively throughout all of the extracts, but the tool for Prioritizing is the least used.

3. The notion of bullying is represented through most bully characters (Julian) in the novel but with different ideologies. All these ideologies are encoded via the use of a set of linguistic choices such as noun modification, choice of a noun and nominalization, existential and logical presuppositions, the use of place and personal deictics, subordination and transformational structure.

About the Authors
Israa Ezzet Hameed is an M.A. student at the Department of English, College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad. Her field of study is linguistics and her specialization is Critical Stylistics. Her interests include literature, pragmatics and stylistics.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0006-5482-4365

Fatimah Khudair Hassoon is an assistant prof. of linguistics at the Department of English/College of Education for Women / University of Baghdad. Her research interests include stylistics, and applied linguistics. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2120-362X

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A Critical Stylistic Study of Bullying in R.J Palacio’s Wonder


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**That-stance Found in Discussion Sections in Applied Linguistics Research Articles**

**Wichanon Phongjit**  
Language Institute  
Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand  
Corresponding Author: wichanon_p@kpru.ac.th

**Chanika Gampper**  
Language Institute  
Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand

**Abstract**

This study identified the use of evaluative ‘that’ stance embedded in rhetorical move structures in applied linguistics research articles in discussion sections written in English and published in international and Thai journals. The study aimed to investigate the uses of the evaluative ‘that’ stance in discussion sections for observing the evaluative ‘that’ stance practices in both international and Thai journals. The data was gathered from 80 research articles. The rhetorical moves from the discussion sections were analyzed. Occurrences of the evaluative ‘that’ stance were identified and counted within the embedded rhetorical move-step. The results revealed that international journals and Thai authors employed a similar amount of evaluative ‘that’ stances, although they occurred in different moves and steps. The International authors used an evaluative ‘that’ stance for commenting on results, whereas Thai journal authors tended to use an evaluative ‘that’ stance for reporting results. In the subtypes of evaluative ‘that’ stance, Doubt stance was heavily used in move four: commenting on the results from the international corpus. The findings confirmed that Certainty stance was found in the same contexts from both corpora. Surprisingly, the international journal authors tended to use only a few instances of Neutral stance for commenting on the results. The findings show the differences in the common convention between both journals that could provide information in terms of how the discussion section moves and the evaluative ‘that’ stance presented to help novice EFL scholars to write discussions that comply with international conventions.

**Keywords:** evaluative ‘that’ constructions, evaluative ‘that’ stances, applied linguistics research articles, international journals, Thai journals

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Introduction

Understanding textual organization is essential for all writers in composing academic texts. This is a skill that can propel writers to a higher standing in academic society. It cannot be denied that publications are based on the degree of socialization of a target discourse community. That can lead to pressure to publish in English in ways that are acceptable and related to certain academic discourse conventions. The convention could provide guidelines for researchers to see the conventional trends of experts and the gatekeepers in a particular discipline (Hyland, 2016). To serve the international norm, knowledge of the textual organization is important. Especially in discussion sections, which is the part that allows researchers to construct knowledge, evaluate the findings, methods, and models, and contribute to the literature as a founder of their empirical evidence. In a Thai context, when considering the academic discourse analysis between Thai and English journals written in English, most empirical studies tend to solely focus on rhetorical moves such as quantitative data.

Furthermore, past empirical studies found that the unsuccessful manuscript may occur by interactional discourse that is the interaction between texts and readers such as discourse markers, coherences, authorial voices, and stance-taking (Englander, 2015). It is interesting to observe the use of stances in the discussion sections because writers mainly take their stances when constructing knowledge in discussion sections and take their stances to provide their own judgment to support their claim in the discussion. Few studies focus on the relationship between rhetorical move and evaluative ‘that’ stance. Similarly, few studies investigate functional analysis and pedagogical dimensions. Therefore, the study of evaluative ‘that’ stance is necessary to provide novice writers for publication especially in Thailand to see their practices in using the stances in discussion sections from both Thai and international journals.

In the present study, the use of evaluative ‘that’ stance in their rhetorical patterns of a discussion between Thai research articles and international research articles written in English were investigated to suggest pedagogical implications to novice researchers. To clearly understand the use of the evaluative ‘that’ stance, the study also observes the rhetorical patterns in the discussion based on the Model for Research article discussion (Yang & Allison, 2003). The rhetorical patterns can help the novice researcher see the occurrence trends of the evaluative ‘that’ stance. The findings would provide stance-taking practices from both Thai journal publications and international journal publications contexts. This could help novice researchers to visualize how to take the stances in their discussion section and make them more acceptable in the international academic community.

Literature Reviews

The premise of genre analysis, according to Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988), is "an explicit explanation of how texts are arranged" (p.114). The study of how language is employed in various contexts is known as genre analysis. Additionally, Hyland (1992) noted that different genres have various purposes that influence how language is constructed and used to achieve goals. In addition, genre analysis, according to Bhatia (1991), integrates grammatical knowledge with sociolinguistic and cultural interpretations that emphasized language use in each circumstance. John Swales carried out the first scientific study on genre analysis in 1981. He looked at 48 Research Article (RA) introductions from various scientific disciplines. He used movements and steps to explain his research results. Following that, genre analysis in research publications gains popularity. Yang and Allison (2003) studied the rhetorical transition from Results to Conclusion.
in a research article. They suggested using the study of genre analysis as a guideline in move analysis and move identification. The model developed by Yang and Allison (2003) was employed in this investigation because, as can be seen in Table one, it was created to identify the moves in the discussion part of papers on applied linguistic research that are relevant to this study.

Table 1. Discussion sections in applied linguistics research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhetorical moves</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Move 1: Background information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Move 2: Reporting results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 3: Summarizing results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Move 4: Commenting on results</td>
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<td>Step 1: Interpreting results</td>
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<td>Step 2: Comparing results with literature</td>
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<td>Step 3: Accounting for results</td>
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<td>Step 4: Evaluating results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Move 5: Summarizing the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 6: Evaluating the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Indicating limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Indicating significance/advantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Evaluating methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 7: Deductions from the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Making suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Recommending further research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Drawing pedagogical implication</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note 1. Adopted from Yang and Allison’s model (2003, p. 376)

Discourse analysis has been invaded by the rhetorical strategies used in discussion sections. Yang and Allison’s (2003) work was one insightful empirical research. They examined the results, discussion, implications, and conclusions of 20 empirical research articles in applied linguistics. The rhetorical patterns from 24 discussion sections were also recognized. They stated that the results of this study would offer insights into the realization of rhetorical patterns and proposed the move and steps in the discussion sections. Studies on move structures in discussion sections were undertaken after the Yang and Allison approach. Amnuai and Wannaruk (2015) investigated the rhetorical patterns of move in applied linguistics research articles' comment sections. In terms of move occurrence, move-ordering patterns, and move cyclicity, the research revealed some similarities and variations. They argued that move patterns and move cyclicity in Thai and international contexts can be better understood through the examination of rhetorical patterns of the move, especially for novice writers for publications. Besides, the discussion sections of articles on applied linguistic research that were published in Thai and foreign journals were examined using the Yang and Allison model by Sithlaothavorn and Trakulkasemsuk (2016). They indicated that the Thai researchers primarily used reporting moves rather than evaluative moves as the majority of the norm and convention. Their study was also in line with the study of Hussin and Nimehchisalem (2018). This indicated that the reporting moves were mainly used in discussion sections. On the contrary, Hilmi et al (2021) argued that international researchers tended to use reporting moves and also evaluative moves in the discussion sections. This was supported by the study of Boonyuen and Tangkiengsirisin (2018) which indicates the international researcher practices in using moves in discussion sections.
**Evaluative ‘that’ Constructions**

Evaluative "that" constructions, a grammar pattern in which the writer utilizes a "that" complement clause with a higher superordinate clause to complete its construction for conveying the writer's attitude or notion, are well-known tools for academics to use in discourse structure. For example, “we hope that a crucial relationship holds between these features” (Hyland & Tse 2005a, p. 37). The super-ordinate, or matrix, clause we hope includes both an evaluation and the source of this evaluation. This complement clause carries the ‘entity’ that is evaluated. The word "that" frames this. Therefore, Hyland and Tse (2005a) suggested the following structure:

matrix clause [evaluation] + that-clause [evaluated entity].

A fundamental aspect of extraposition is the use of evaluative "that" formulations (e.g., Chalker & Weiner 1998; Quirk et al., 1985). The subject is "shifted, or extraposed, to a position following the original predicate and substituted by it as subject," according to Hyland and Tse (2005a) (p.42). They divided them into four key categories: the assessed entity, the evaluative stance, the evaluation's source, and the expression of the evaluation. The form and functions of the evaluative ‘that’ stance can be seen in

Table 2. Classification of sentences containing evaluative ‘that’ construction: Expression of stance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative stance</th>
<th>Sub - categories</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. attitudinal</td>
<td>i. affect</td>
<td></td>
<td>We hope that, It is important to note that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. obligation</td>
<td></td>
<td>It <em>must be recognized</em> that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(deontic)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. epistemic</td>
<td>i. doubt</td>
<td></td>
<td>Our model <em>suggests</em> that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Certainty</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>We show</em> that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>His family <em>reported</em> that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note 2. Adapted from Hyland and Tse (2005b, p. 130)*

The evaluative stance, this category refers to the writer’s attitude towards the proposition in that that-clause. “It is typically realized by the controlling predicate (e.g. reporting verbs or adjectives) in the projecting clause” (Hyland & Tse, 2005a, p. 46). This category can be distinguished into two parts which are the attitudinal and epistemic stances.

In 2005a, Hyland and Tse explored the use of the evaluative ‘that’ construction in terms of frequencies, forms, and functions from the disciplinary variations. The data were gathered from 240 research abstracts from six disciplines. The findings showed that the authors tended to use evaluative ‘that’ construction in every five sentences. This study indicated that this structure guides writers to know the evaluative ‘that’ construction conventional uses. The evaluative ‘that’ stance was further studied by Kim and Crosthwaite (2019). They investigated the evaluative function of that-clauses across business and medical articles. The results showed that evaluative ‘that’ stances were mainly used in commenting on their own and previous findings. This can encourage the authors to take a position on a crucial aspect of the study articles. The previous study indicated the use of the evaluative ‘that’ stances in entire research articles. In this study, the authors aimed at studying the evaluative ‘that’ stances in discussion sections which could show more insight into details in each discussion moves from both Thai and international practices.
Method

Research Instrument

In this study, there were two corpora consisting of 40 Thai journal publications (TA) and 40 international journal publications (IA).

Table 3. Corpora of RAIs published in Thai and international journals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journals</th>
<th>Number of RAIs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thai journal publications</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International journal publications</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The selection of the English academic journals in this study was in accordance with the following criteria. First, the selected journals from the two corpora were well-known. The Thai journals in Table Three were from leading universities in Thailand and were listed in the Thai citation index (TCI 1-2). International journals were selected based on their high impact factor from the SCImago index rankings of 2019 and must list in Scopus Q1. Second, the selected research articles must consist of an introduction, method, results, and discussion sections. Third, the research paradigm of the selected articles must be experimental and survey research. Lastly, the lengths of the two corpora were comparable based on (Kanoksilapatham, 2005, 2007, 2011). She stated that the approximate number of words should not exceed 20 percent when compared among the two sets of corpora.

Table 4. Corpus composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corpus composition</th>
<th>No. of discussion sections</th>
<th>No. of Words</th>
<th>Av. Text Length</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thai journal publications</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45,684</td>
<td>1,142</td>
<td>230.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International journal publications</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49,977</td>
<td>1,249</td>
<td>219.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

In the identification move analysis from discussion sections, the corpora were transferred to Microsoft Word. After that, the identified discussion moves were transferred to the concordance program, AntConc (Ver. 4.03) according to their moves. Then, evaluative ‘that’ stances were identified in the embedded discussion moves. In the comparative study, the density calculation through frequency count and content analysis needed to be normalized. The number of words and sentences that appeared in the seven moves may be varied. Therefore, the density in terms of the number of words was determined and normalized. Following Crismore and Farnsworth (1990) and Kim and Lim, (2013), it is classified as 1) The number of each evaluative ‘that’ stance clause per 1,000 words to certify the comparability and consistency of the corpora’s textual length.

To ensure the reliability of coding, 25 % of the data were randomly given to a coder. Another researcher used PA ‘percentage of agreement’ to verify the level of agreement of the occurrence moves along with the Kappa value introduced by Jacob Cohen in 1960 to confirm the chance agreement. The second coder holds a Ph.D. in English Language Teaching from a prestigious university in Thailand. The calculation showed that the agreement rate of this data is 90.50 percent. The Kappa coefficient of this data analysis is 0.90. On the part of evaluative ‘that’ stances, 25 % of the evaluative ‘that’ stances obtained from embedded moves from the two sets of corpora were randomly selected and given to a different coder. This coder is an American English lecturer from a prestigious university in Thailand and specializes in Discourse Analysis. From the percentage of agreement, the inter-coder analysis indicated that the two coders agreed. According
to the Kappa value interpretation of Alman (1991), it could be implied that there was strong agreement between the two coders. Therefore, the two coders confirmed that the inter-coder analysis values of move identification and evaluative ‘that’ stances were reliable.

**Findings**

Table five presents the distribution of Evaluative ‘that’ stances used across the Thai journal corpus and international journal corpus. The table presents the normalization per 1,000 words from 45,684 words in the TP corpus and 49,977 words in the IP corpus. 391 evaluative ‘that’ stances were found in TP and 397 evaluative ‘that’ stances were found in IP.

Evaluative ‘that’ stances were next identified in the embedded moves and steps. Table five shows the occurrence of evaluative ‘that’ stance identified in each rhetorical move structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative ‘that’ stance Count</th>
<th>TA corpus (45,684 words)</th>
<th>IA corpus (49,956 words)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N = 391</td>
<td>8.55</td>
<td>7.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the normalization of the evaluative ‘that’ constructions per 1,000 words, it could be seen that the two corpora had a similar number of occurrences, with 8.55 for the TA corpus and 7.94 for the IA corpus. For the number of Evaluative ‘that’ clauses per discussion section, the TA had 9.77 and the IA had 10.06. This finding was in line with the study of Parkinson (2013) which observed the use of evaluative ‘that’ stances found in 50 social sciences research articles. It found that there were 9.2 evaluative ‘that’ stances per 1,000 words in the discussion sections.

As seen in Table six in an appendix A, For the total number of evaluative ‘that’ stances, it could be seen in Table six that the IA had more frequent use than the TA, with 397 in the IA and 391 in the TA. For Move one: Background information, the TA corpus had a higher number of occurrences with 22 (5.64%) compared to the IA corpus with 12 (3.02%) occurrences. In Move two: Reporting the results, surprisingly, the Thai journal authors employed evaluative ‘that’ stances in greater numbers than international journal authors, with 136 occurrences (38.87%) in the TA and 73 occurrences (18.38%) in the IA. As for Move three: Summarizing results, there were few uses of evaluative ‘that’ stances in both corpora. The IA contained 8 occurrences and the TA contained four occurrences. With regards to Move four: Commenting on results, it was found to have the highest frequency of occurrences in both corpora, with 231 occurrences (58.18%) in the IA corpus and 183 occurrences (46.83%) in the TA corpus.

In Move five: Summarizing the study, there were few occurrences found in both corpora, with 15 occurrences (3.77%) in the TA corpus and 9 occurrences (2.30%) in the IA corpus. In Move six: Evaluating the study, the IA had a higher number of evaluative ‘that’ stances than the TA, with 11 occurrences (7.44%) and 30 occurrences (2.56%), respectively. For Move seven: Deductions from the research, the TA corpus had small numbers of occurrences with 26 occurrences (6.66%), whereas the IA had a few more with 31 occurrences (7.80%).

**Samples of evaluative ‘that’ stance in the rhetorical moves found in the corpora**

Attitudinal stance refers to the affective attitude of the writers toward the proposition or an obligation that needs to be done by using these stances in the super-ordinate clause.
Affect: signals the author’s personal attitude toward a proposition in that-clauses
- It is therefore not so surprising that Ihsan says he would like to use English to conduct da’wah through the internet. IA corpus
- It is widely believed that second language learners will acquire the language successfully before the puberty period, or around 12 years old, and have a native-like proficiency. TA corpus

Obligation: shows rule, agreement, and law toward a proposition in that-clauses.
- It can be noted that motivation plays a pivotal role in fostering learners’ ICC enhancement. TA corpus
- In this regard, teachers should not assume that L2 students can utilize background knowledge to its full extent to aid understanding of a text just because they are familiar with the topic at hand. IA corpus

Epistemic stance is the writer’s assessment of the truth or accuracy of a proposition which is comprised of doubt, certainty, and neutrality. They are signaled through hedging (e.g., ‘suggest’), boosting (e.g., show) devices, or reporting verbs (e.g., report) in the super-ordinate clause (Hyland & Jiang, 2018).

Doubt: used to express authors’ avoidance in expressing an absolute certainty.
- These results suggest that the use of interaction strategies depends on the task being performed. IA corpus
- It is possible to say that the active learning approach implemented in the classrooms was practical. TA corpus

Certainty: used to express the author’s confidence toward a proposition in that-clauses.
- The data illustrate that teacher immunity implicitly guides teachers’ choices of action and responses to the contextual demands of their teaching. IA corpus
- On the contrary, it was revealed that they corrected themselves when they had noticed that they had made a mistake. TA corpus

Neutral: shows a writer’s decision to avoid expressing any strong opinion or feeling.
- Three students reported that they were not able to fully use the models because there were several expressions and vocabulary words that they did not understand. IA corpus.
- Brysbaert and Stevens (2018) points out that the only way to obtain the statistical power in mixed models is to estimate it numerically by simulation on a much larger data set. TA corpus

As seen in Table six, the use of evaluative ‘that’ constructions were most common in Move 4 with 183 occurrences in TA and 231 occurrences in IA. However, in Move 2, it was found that while evaluative ‘that’ stances were used in the TA at an occurrence of 136, there were only 73 occurrences of evaluative ‘that’ stances in the IA. This is similar to Move one1 where evaluative ‘that’ stances were used more often in TA than IA. On the contrary, in Move six, evaluative ‘that’ stances were found in the IA with 30 occurrences, whereas there were only 11 occurrences in the TA. It can be seen from the results that Move four was found to have the highest occurrences of evaluative ‘that’ stances. Apart from Move four: Commenting on the results, Move two: Reporting the results had the second highest number of evaluative ‘that’ stances in the two corpora.
Comparisons of evaluative ‘that’ stances in rhetorical moves from both corpora

As illustrated in Table Seven below, IA used an evaluative ‘that’ stance more often than TA. The evaluative ‘that’ stances were highly used in Move 4 from both corpora, 234 occurrences (58.60%) for the IA corpus and 183 occurrences (46.80%) for the TA corpus. Certainty was the most frequently used from both corpora, the TA corpus and IA corpus used slightly similar numbers, 89 occurrences (48.63%) for the TA corpus and 110 occurrences for the IA corpus. This was followed by Doubt, 82 occurrences (35.04%) for the IP and 35 occurrences (19.12%) for the TA. However, it was obvious that the use of neutral was significantly different from both corpora, 38 occurrences (20.76%) from TA and 19 occurrences (8.11%) from IA.

Table 7 Evaluative ‘that’ stances found in Move four: Commenting on the results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative ‘that’ stance function</th>
<th>Attitudinal stance</th>
<th>Epistemic stance</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>Obligation</td>
<td>Doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TP Corpus</td>
<td>16 (8.74%)</td>
<td>5 (2.73%)</td>
<td>35 (19.12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Interpreting results</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Comparing results with the literature</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Accounting for results</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Evaluating results</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP corpus</td>
<td>17 (7.26%)</td>
<td>6 (2.56%)</td>
<td>82 (35.04%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Interpreting results</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Comparing results with the literature</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Accounting for results</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Evaluating results</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IA used evaluative ‘that’ stances more often than TA. The evaluative ‘that’ stances were highly used in Move four from both corpora, with 231 occurrences (58.18%) in the IA corpus and 183 occurrences (46.80%) in the TA corpus.

Certainty was the most frequently used in both corpora. The TA corpus and IA corpus had slightly similar numbers, with 89 occurrences (48.63%) in the TA corpus and 110 occurrences in the IA corpus. As can be seen in the examples below, the evaluative ‘that’ stance embedded in Move 4 is signaled in bold.

- **It is clear from our data that** the internet and/or social media are in wide use in Pesantren C, and the students report listening to Islamic talks by preachers of global repute. IA Corpus
- The **obvious** explanation is that experience in any of the four skills makes the learners become accustomed to the language; hence, the experienced learners can study the language more rapidly than the less experienced. TA corpus
- This was followed by **doubt**, with 82 occurrences (35.04%) in the IA and 35 occurrences (19.12%) in the TA.
- These results **suggest** that the use of interaction strategies depends on the task being performed. IA Corpus
That-stance Found in Discussion Sections in Applied Linguistics

Phongjit & Gampper

Students might assume that they are responsible for capitalizing on their past SA experiences, the contacts they may have established, or the professional or academic opportunities they may have created for themselves.

Apart from the certainty and the doubt, neutral appeared respectively with 38 occurrences (20.76%) in TA and 19 occurrences (8.11%) in IA.

For “Smart Choice Online Practice”, most of the students said that the website has a simple design, meaning that the website is easy to use and follow. TA corpus

More anxious students in the present study reported that they use English less and feel more negative about themselves (i.e., have lower self-esteem), which can result in little improvement in English proficiency and reinforce anxiety. IA corpus

Discussion

The first research question asked whether evaluative ‘that’ constructions could share similar and different practices from both Thai and international journals. The findings showed that the frequency of the evaluative ‘that’ stance was found across the Thai journal corpus and international journal corpus, which could be compared with other previous studies (Hyland & Tse, 2005; Kim & Crosthwaite, 2019). One possible explanation was that the writer tended to strengthen their claims and arguments, and the evaluative ‘that’ stance functioned as a tool to allow the writers to evaluate the complement in the following clause (Hyland & Tse, 2005b). Additionally, from the occurrences of the evaluative ‘that’ stances found in each rhetorical move structure, they also shared similarities with Move Three: Summarizing the Results, Move Five: Summarizing the Study, and Move Seven: Deductions from the Research. However, with regard to Move One: Background Information, the Thai journal authors used the evaluative ‘that’ stance more often than international journal authors. This finding suggested that Thai journal authors tended to establish the territory and provide more background information about the research study. Similar to Move Two, the evaluative ‘that’ stance was mainly found in Thai journals, which was equal to 30% of the whole corpus. This could reflect the Thai authors’ conventions to focus on reporting the results of their study in the discussion sections, which was in line with the study of Sithlaothavorn and Trakulkasemsuk (2016). Furthermore, it was interesting to see that international journal authors used the evaluative ‘that’ stance more in Move Six. A possible explanation points to international authors’ tendency to raise their voices when discussing or evaluating their study. The evaluative ‘that’ stances could be used to express views, complements, and judgments (Hyland & Jiang, 2017) which normally occurred in Move Six.

The second research question asked what the evaluative ‘that’ stance types were found in the discussion sections in Thai and international journals. The findings from the comparisons of the evaluative ‘that’ stances in the rhetorical moves from both corpora revealed that Certainty was the highest sub-type of the Evaluative ‘that’ stance of both corpora. This was also the same line with a study by Kim and Crosthwaite (2019). This could be explained by the occurring environment. For this stance, the markers were mainly found in Move four, which occurred in Step Two: Comparing the Results with the Literature. This suggested that the authors were confident in presenting their claims from the evidence from previous empirical studies (Hyland & Tse, 2005b). On the contrary, Neutral was used differently in Move four, as the Thai journal authors often used this stance more than the international authors. Hence, the findings found that the international...
authors did not take a neutral stance. This was because, Move Four, this was a chance for the authors to support, persuade, and interact with the readers. Thus, Thai journal writers should be reminded that taking a neutral stance may not convey the author’s intended meaning. As for Doubt, the findings showed that international journal authors tended to use it more often than Thai journal authors. They clearly interpreted and commented on the results. This might be the international journal authors' way of mitigating the strength of the argument and allowing readers to interpret the findings as Doubt is also a hedging device (Hyland, 2005b) for achieving these purposes. This could reflect the typical stances in writing research articles that were internationally used (Hyland & Jiang, 2017). The results suggested that Thai journal authors are mainly limited to signal Certainty based on empirical evidence and Neutral based on their avoidance of expressing any strong opinion or feeling in Move four. It may result in readers finding the Thai discussion sections to be less interesting or convincing when compared with international discussion sections. While international journal authors are ‘critical’ in evaluating the results, Thai journal authors are less critical and simply report the results.

A limitation of the study was that only evaluative ‘that’ stances with the retention of ‘that’ were counted. Although the omitted ‘that’ could be functions of the evaluative ‘that’ stance, they were not counted in this study. Therefore, the findings could only be confirmed on the retention of ‘that’ in the evaluative ‘that’ clauses found in both corpora. Further study of evaluative ‘that’ stances should focus on the omission of ‘that’ stances. It would be interesting to see in which contexts the international journal authors omit the evaluative ‘that’ stances as a way of revealing the variety of writing strategies in discussion sections.

Conclusion
The evaluative ‘that’ stance presented in this study showed the frequency of the evaluative ‘that’ stances found in both corpora. The study revealed that there were some areas in which Thai journal authors used it differently from the international journal authors. The Thai journal authors tended to present data with the evaluative ‘that’ stance when they reported results, whereas the international journal authors made use of it in evaluating the study. This suggests that Thai journal authors should focus on commenting and evaluating, two areas that would strengthen arguments in discussion sections to meet global conventions. Moreover, as for the subordinate types of the evaluative ‘that’ stances, it was revealed that Thai journal authors used the neutral stance more often than international journal authors. This may interfere with and hinder readers from understanding arguments and claims made by writers. The study concluded that the differences between the Thai national journals and the international journals found in this study imply that the authors of the Thai journal should make use of various stances related to the communicative purpose of rhetorical moves that would strengthen their discussion sections to meet global standards.

About the Authors
Wichanon Phongjit is an English lecturer in the Department of General Education at Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University Maesot. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate at Language Institute of Thammasat University (Ph.D.) in English Language Teaching at the Language Institute of Thammasat University (LITU). His main interests include discourse analysis and reading pedagogy. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0004-3833-6113
Chanika Gampper is a senior lecturer at the Language Institute of Thammasat University (LITU). She received her Ph.D. in second language acquisition and teaching from the University of Arizona. Her interests lie in the area of contrastive rhetoric, discourse analysis, and testing and evaluation. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1435-5331

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**Appendices**

**Appendix A**

**Occurrences of evaluative ‘that’ stances in each rhetorical move structure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moves and steps</th>
<th>TAcorpus</th>
<th>IA Corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Move 1: Background information</td>
<td>22 (5.64%)</td>
<td>12 (2.98%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 2: Reporting results</td>
<td>136 (34.87%)</td>
<td>73 (18.11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 3: Summarizing results</td>
<td>4(1.02%)</td>
<td>8 (1.99%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arab World English Journal

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move 4: Commenting on results</th>
<th>Step 1: Interpreting results</th>
<th>49 (12.56%)</th>
<th>85 (21.41%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 2: Comparing results with the literature</td>
<td>49 (12.56%)</td>
<td>183 (46.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 3: Accounting for results</td>
<td>65 (16.66%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 4: Evaluating results</td>
<td>20 (5.12%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 5: Summarizing the study</td>
<td>Step 1: Indicating limitations</td>
<td>6 (1.53%)</td>
<td>16 (4.09%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 2: Indicating significance/advantage</td>
<td>4 (1.02%)</td>
<td>10 (2.56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 3: Evaluating methodology</td>
<td>1 (0.25%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 6: Evaluating the study</td>
<td>Step 1: Making suggestions</td>
<td>2 (0.51%)</td>
<td>2 (0.50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 2: Recommending further research</td>
<td>7 (1.79%)</td>
<td>26 (6.66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 3: Drawing pedagogical implication</td>
<td>17 (4.35%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move 7: Deductions from the research</td>
<td>Step 1:</td>
<td>Step 2:</td>
<td>Step 3:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Insight into the Role of Interaction in Language Acquisition: Vygotsky’s Interactionist Theory of Language

Jamilah Maflah Alharbi
Department of English
Majmaah University
AL-Majmaah 11952, Saudi Arabia
Email: jm.alharbi@mu.edu.sa

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Abstract
Psychologists' theoretical implications have led to several studies investigating L1 and L2 acquisition. This research examines Vygotsky's (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) interactionist view of language acquisition and draws on a critical review methodology to assess the relevance of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory in L1 and L2 acquisition. To assess whether Vygotsky's (1978) theory of language acquisition is effective, the selected articles will be critically examined. This research indicates that the articles under review prove the validity of Vygotsky's (1978) arguments. However, they did not address how children from non-western cultures and those with disabilities acquire language, on the one hand, and the role of self-regulatory speech in language acquisition, on the other hand. Though Chomsky's (1965) Universal Grammar and Skinner's (1957) behaviourist theory have inspired scholars, linguists, and researchers to examine L1 and L2 acquisition deeply, Vygotsky's (1978) interactionist theory explains how social interaction is crucial to a child’s cognitive development. The theory’s emphasis on learner-centeredness may significantly empower language teachers if implemented wisely into the L2 Curriculum. To maximize the effectiveness of social interaction in L2 learning, more profound and longitudinal research on the integration of zone of proximal development and scaffolding into teaching is required. Though teacher and peer interactions in L2 learning have been studied empirically, the types of social interactions that enhance language acquisition need to be assessed. Educators, researchers, and scholars must investigate how social interactions affect the cognitive and linguistic development of learners. Educators, researchers, and scholars must investigate how social interactions affect the cognitive and linguistic development of learners.

Keywords: Language acquisition, scaffolding, socio-cultural, Vygotsky’s Interactionist Theory of Language, zone of proximal development

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Introduction

Until the beginning of the 1970s, the correlation between child’s language acquisition and socialisation had been a relatively unexplored area (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017). Instead of analysing language acquisition through the compound sociocultural and psycholinguistic lenses, linguists and researchers put the focus on a separate discussion of such issues as human mind and language learning, child’s socialisation, and culturally specific skills for communication. Researchers have previously overlooked the significance of context and language in social interactions by children. Yet since the 1970s, a decisive step has been taken in the direction of a theoretical and empirical reconsideration of the role of interactions in early language development. In the light of this reconsideration, new models and theories of language acquisition based on the juxtaposition of cultural, social, and linguistic processes have been developed by scholars (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017). A famous Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) explicitly criticised the behaviourist stances on language acquisition and proposed a more unified sociocultural perspective on child’s cognitive and language development (Crawford, 1996). His major criticism referred to the scholars’ attempt to separately investigate higher mental functions and processes (Vygotsky, 1997). This approach to investigation complicates understanding of higher mental functioning because, instead of perceiving it in integrity, scholars focus on the analysis of its component elements.

The psychologist’s theoretical implications have evoked great interest among researchers and have paved the way for the emergence of studies investigating L1 and L2 acquisition in light of these implications. The aim of this research is to gain insight into Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) interactionist view of language acquisition by exploring his social development and interactionist theoretical implications. The psychologist’s interactionist stance was brought to the fore while formulating the sociocultural theory of language development and was later evolved into interactionist theory that occupied a middle position between the behaviourist theory and the nativist theory (Rudd & Lambert, 2011). The literature review that follows will give shape to Vygotsky’s (1978) social nature of learning and the relationship between the social world and child’s cognitive development. It will define the key theoretical concepts and clarify the terms used in the context of the present research. Moreover, through the discussion of some related theories, the attempt will be made to identify the differences between these theories and Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory. The subsequent critical review will assess the empirical evidence on Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) theoretical implications. Given that the psychologist did not undertake empirical testing of his assumptions because of his reluctance to predict human behaviour, on the one hand, and his early death, one the other (Nam, 2005), such review is of great significance to validate or disprove Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) observations.

Based on the chosen research methodology, the present research has four main objectives: 1) to gain profound insights into Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory of language, 2) to critically assess the psychologist’s theoretical assumptions on the role of interaction in shaping child’s cognitive and linguistic skills, 3) to assess research supporting Vygotsky’s (1987) interactionist theory as a teaching method into L2 classrooms and 4) to evaluate the effects of scaffolding techniques in language acquisition in L2. In line with these objectives, the following research questions will be addressed:
1) To what extent are the processes of cognitive and linguistic development affected by social interaction?
2) To what extent do social context influence language acquisition, as per Vygotsky’s theories?
3) To what empirical evidence justifies the integration of Vygotsky’s (1987) interactionist theory into L2 teaching?
4) To what extent does scaffolding in L2 teaching facilitate the acquisition of language skills?

The present research attempt to assess the relevance of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory for L1 and L2 acquisition. In the process of conducting a critical review, the focus will be put on the research that has the greatest contribution to the field of language acquisition. The chosen articles will be examined through a critical lens to determine whether Vygotsky’s (1978) theory is effective in explaining the phenomenon of language acquisition.

Literature Review

Two theories, which are closely related to Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) theory and are normally mentioned as the theories that have changed the realm of language acquisition, are the nativist theory and the behaviourist theory (Sarem & Shirzadi, 2014). Each of these three theories focuses on a particular aspect of learner’s cognitive and linguistic development. The nativist theory highlights the child’s aptitude for language learning, implying that a child is born with the brain structured for language. Promoted by the American linguist Chomsky (1965), this theory posits that every child has an innate set of language rules known as universal grammar (Azabdaftari, 2013). However, what should be taken into consideration is that the child still needs to rely on an adult speech to choose the grammatical principles from universal grammar that are specific to a certain language (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1984). Hence, the adult language provides the child with necessary linguistic knowledge. A crucial aspect of Chomsky’s (1965) theory is the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) that helps the child construct sentences and communicate. Due to the LAD, the child successfully recognises speech sounds, organises linguistic events into specific classes, and assesses a linguistic system (Azabdaftari, 2013). The device functions as follows: the child receives specific language data (input) and uses the LAD to produce an output.

In its turn, the behaviourist theory developed by Skinner (1957) underlines the impact of social environment on the development of language skills (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1984). Specifically, following this theory, language acquisition occurs through the child’s imitation of adult speech and through the mechanisms of operant conditioning (Sturdy & Nicoladis, 2017). In terms of Skinner (1957), operant conditioning is a method that draws on the system of reward and punishment to change the child’s behaviour. Delving deeper, the child’s acquisition of linguistic forms depends on whether the child receives positive or negative reinforcement. Given the aforementioned discussion, the major difference between the nativist theory and the behaviourist theory is that the former reinforces the idea of child’s deduction of rules from speech and the use of these rules for the construction of sentences, while the latter supports the hypothesis of child’s repetition of words and utterances after adults. While the stimulus-response theory and the nativist theory provide rather reasonable explanations for language acquisition, their shortcomings have encouraged researchers and scholars to be in search of alternative theories (Azabdaftari, 2013). In particular, the behaviourist theory that revolves around the idea of learned responses fails to give a detailed account of how the language functions or clarify how the child learns complex grammar.
rules and syntactic constructions without competent adult instruction (Owens, 2008; Sturdy & Nicoladis, 2017). Moreover, the fact that the child creates their own utterances, despite constant exposure to a Motherese way of communication, undermines Skinner’s (1957) belief in the child’s imitation of adult speech (Pinker, 1994). Likewise, adults do not intentionally slow down their speech to develop child’s vocalisation and rarely give feedback to the child’s construction of sentences (Owens, 2008).

In a similar vein, Lin (2017) criticises Chomsky’s (1965) theory, asserting that the linguist’s use of English data puts into question the universal grammar hypothesis. To prove it, researchers need to extend the sample and include about 8000 world languages into the analysis. Azabdaftari (2013) goes further by claiming that generative semantics oppose Chomsky’s (1965) idea of an idealised speech community, which fails to devote sufficient attention to contextual aspects in communication. What ensues from this particular criticism is the impossibility of deducing the meaning of an utterance without knowledge of a context. This assertion contrasts sharply with Chomsky’s (1965) view that the human brain has particular linguistic properties that are not changed by contextual effects. Bruner (1983) also challenges Chomsky’s (1965) concept of LAD, asserting that this concept is fully inconsistent with the evidence gathered from the cases of feral and deprived children. As is evident from these particular cases, the child does not acquire language skills in the absence of social interactions. The mentioned example reveals that the LAD is stimulated by adults with whom the child interacts. In general, being dissatisfied with the nativist theory and the behaviourist theory, language teachers have started penetrating deep into the theoretical assumptions that provide clues on the genesis of mind (Azabdaftari, 2013). This is just the case with regard to Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) social development and interactionist stances that, as will be shown further, bring to the fore the idea of the human mind as a by-product of cultural and social processes. Using the strong sides of behaviourist and nativist theories, Vygotsky’s (1978) theory draws on the constructivist approach to learning to generate a more comprehensive picture on language acquisition.

Stepping into the Terrain of Vygotsky’s Interactionist Theory

Before proceeding to the critical analysis of Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) views on social development and the role of interactions in language acquisition, it is essential to outline the main arguments of his theoretical implications. Given that the psychologist put much effort into the exploration of higher forms of person’s mental behaviour, he was especially interested in researching the correlation between social relations and the development of higher functions in an individual (Azabdaftari, 2013). As language occupies the central place in this development, Vygotsky (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) devotes particular attention to the child’s acquisition of language skills. In the process of his investigation, Vygotsky (1997) finds out that there are two functions of the linguistic sign: indicative and symbolic. While the indicative function helps the child concentrate on the object, the symbolic function allows them to gain insight into the abstract aspects of objects and learn to think in a conceptual way. Both functions contribute to the child’s development of a conceptually-based mental system (Azabdaftari, 2013).

The central premise on which Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory is based is that children’s language skills are shaped through their interactions with more knowledgeable others (Rudd & Lambert, 2011). While, according to Vygotsky (1978), biological factors give impetus to the emergence of elementary processes in a child, the evolution of such mental activities as
problem solving, logical thinking, intentional memory, and voluntary attention largely depend on different socio-cultural factors. Hence, in the opinion of Vygotsky (1978), child’s social and cultural learning always precedes language acquisition. An important aspect of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory is the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) that specifies the difference between the child’s development without adult assistance and the child’s development under the support of adult carers and advanced peers. By applying this concept to L2 learning, the role of the language teacher is to fill the lacuna between the learner’s existing knowledge and expected knowledge. Thus, Vygotsky (1978) devotes sufficient attention to instructional scaffolding, claiming that it enhances children’s high levels of reasoning. An important implication from Vygotsky’s (1978) notion of ZPD is that language comes first to thought.

Vygotsky’s (1978) notion of scaffolding is further borrowed by Bruner (1983), who claims that the child needs scaffolding at the initial stages to acquire knowledge of new concepts. In Bruner’s (1983) terms, a caregiver or teacher relies on a Language Acquisition Support System (LASS) to facilitate early language development of the child. In the process of using this system, a caregiver or teacher designs collaborative learning tasks, adjusts a language to child’s needs, gives a feedback during communication, and prepares samples for imitation. However, according to Bruner (1983), teacher’s support and structured interaction should be decreased when the child develops independent thinking. What can be gleaned from Vygotsky’s (1978) and Bruner’s (1983) assertions is that language learners should be provided with challenging tasks to maximise their learning opportunities and acquire good language skills. For all that, as Crawford (1996) points out, complex tasks are better resolved within a collaborative environment. In such an environment, the learner actively participates in learning, while the teacher changes their views on teaching and adjusts their methods and strategies to meet the child’s needs. The result of this reciprocal learning is the teacher’s sharing of responsibility for language acquisition with the child (Crawford, 1996).

Taking a discussion of Vygotsky’s (1978) theory a step further, it is essential to bring into a sharp focus his concept of private speech. Overall, Vygotsky (1987a, 2012) distinguishes among three types of speech used by the child in the process of growth: social speech, private speech, and silent inner speech. Judging from this distinction, the child’s earliest speech is social and it fulfils the functions of constructing simple utterances and expressing emotions. At the age of 3, social speech is gradually evolved into egocentric private speech. The central claim of the concept of private speech is that it is a phenomenon responding for child’s complex mental activity and self-direction (Vygotsky, 1987, 2012). In light of this claim, private speech is a middle stage between the child’s thinking for oneself and child’s communication to others. By relying on private speech, the child learns to develop the strategies that are necessary for their development, improves their imagination, and becomes aware of the ways to overcome obstacles. An interesting finding of Vygotsky (1987a) is that private speech helps the child increase their social competence and outperform the peers who do not widely use this kind of speech.

Moreover, Vygotsky (1987a) draws parallels between the extent of social interactions and the development of private speech in the child. In more precise terms, the child brought up in the family with a high socio-economic status more readily develops and internalises private speech than the child living in poverty because of a more linguistically and cognitively stimulating environment. According to Berk and Landau (1993), two crucial conclusions may be deduced from Vygotsky’s (1987a) analysis of private speech: 1) the child starts extensively using it during demanding and complex tasks; 2) the reliance on private speech ensures task success and development of self-control.
Penetrating deeper into Vygotsky’s (1987b) line of argument, child’s thinking not only evolves from practical activity but is also reinforced by speech. To put it differently, language helps the child exceed the primitive mental state and develop higher mental functions. Viewing thought and language as separate systems at the initial stages of child development, the psychologist asserts that these systems intertwine when the child reaches three years of age (Vygotsky, 1987a). In contrast to Piaget (1995), who does not attribute great value to egocentric speech and accentuates its gradual disappearance in a child, Vygotsky (1987a) considers private speech as an integral part of child’s development and mental activity. With the acquisition of self-regulation, the child starts using silent inner speech instead of private speech. Such internalisation stems from the child’s ability to understand people’s feelings and thoughts and accept social beliefs, norms, and values (Vygotsky, 1987a, 1987b). The process of child’s progression from egocentric private speech to inner speech is unique in every child (Vygotsky, 1987a). The same is true with regard to the outcomes of the child’s transformation of social speech into inner speech (Nam, 2005). While egocentric private speech, according to Vygotsky (1987a), resembles social speech in its structure, inner speech is characterised by continual dynamic changes. With inner speech, the child succeeds in organising their thoughts and conveying meanings. Summarising Vygotsky’s (1987a) theoretical implications, it becomes obvious that all functions in child’s cognitive development make a shift from a social level to an individual level. Given that child’s individual development has its roots in the social, the development of higher mental functions requires participation in joint activities (Ameri, 2020).

Methods

The present research draws on a critical review methodology. What is behind the choice of this research methodology is an attempt to assess the relevance of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory for L1 and L2 acquisition. In the process of conducting a critical review, the focus will be put on the research that has the greatest contribution to the field of language acquisition. The chosen articles will be examined through a critical lens to determine whether Vygotsky’s (1978) theory is effective in explaining the phenomenon of language acquisition. This is in line with Gheondea-Eladi (2015), who asserts that a critical review methodology allows the researcher to generate a common ground for criticising theoretical and empirical evidence obtained in prior studies. Given that the purpose of this review is to juxtapose perspectives to facilitate understanding of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory, the attention will be paid to the articles with different perspectives. In this regard, the review sacrifices breadth in favour of depth. By focusing on the articles that both confirm and challenge Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) claims, the critical review will produce a balanced discussion of the psychologist’s key concepts and will uncover the potential of Vygotsky’s (1987) theoretical concepts for L2 teaching.

In more specific terms, the discussion will critically engage with Vygotsky’s (1978) arguments and theoretical perspectives to consolidate the existing knowledge and analyse the psychologist’s legacy on learners’ cognitive and linguistic development. According to Webster and Watson (2002), such a critical engagement with the material reinforces theory development and application of theory to practice. By bringing together the findings from different theoretical and empirical studies and assessing them, the critical review will produce answers to research questions “with a power than no single study has” (Snyder, 2019, p. 339). A deductive approach to research is adopted for this critical review. According to Taylor et al. (2006), this approach is used when the aim of the research is to test specific theoretical implications. In line with DePoy
and Gitlin (2015), the deductive approach generates a complete picture on the application of theory to practice. Given the focus on a deductive way of reasoning, the present research assumes a theoretical truth and integrates this truth into an exploration. Appropriate information on theoretical concepts will be taken from relevant research and academic literature. As Solomon and Draine (2009) assert, a deductive approach provides the researcher with an opportunity to trace how the selected empirical studies either approve or disapprove the hypotheses made by a particular theorist.

Results

The sources chosen for the present critical review expose the functioning of Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) concepts in an L2 setting. The article of Carpenter et al. (1998) has an important contribution to the discussion of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory in several ways. By exposing the findings of two longitudinal studies, the researchers have provided justification for the development of social-cognitive skills in infants aged 9-15 months due to interactions with mothers. Due to the researchers’ measures of different aspects of children’s behaviour (declarative and imperative gestures, comprehension and production of a language, imitation of actions, gaze following, and joint attentional engagement), they have gained a comprehensive understanding of close relationships between child’s social skills and cognitive skills. As is clearly illustrated by Carpenter et al. (1998), the more amount of time the child spends with parents and the more appropriate language for communication is chosen by them, the better is child’s linguistic competence. By way of example, the children, who took part in more joint attention activities with their parents had a more extensive vocabulary than the children with fewer episodes of joint attention. Specifically, the infants in the analysed studies produced the majority of words when they played with an object together with their mothers or pointed to the objects to attract attention of adults. Hence, a crucial implication from this particular study is the need for infants and parents to participate in joint engagement and sharing of gestures and gazes. However, the evidence acquired by Carpenter et al. (1998) reveals that joint attentional engagements are possible only when the child starts perceiving adults as intentional agents.

While the research of Carpenter et al. (1998) brings to the forefront the significance of interactions in L1 acquisition, the articles of Kuhl et al. (2003) and Turuk (2008) provide proof of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory in relation to L2 acquisition. In particular, Kuhl et al. (2003) have found the evidence that the American infants between nine and ten months of age developed their L2 phonetic knowledge after the exposure to a live speech, not to a prerecorded speech. By carrying out two experiments, the researchers have revealed that the infants, who listened to native Mandarin Chinese speakers and interacted with them in the laboratory, responded to a foreign language more eagerly than the infants, who listened to audio or audiovisual recordings. Two crucial factors affecting the infants’ responses to a foreign language were 1) the speech explicitly directed to infants and 2) the use of several speakers. Overall, the received findings expose the role of social interaction in enhancing L2 learning. As is evident from the findings of Turuk (2008), socially-mediated activities and scaffolding used in L2 language instruction facilitate collaborative learning and, thus, encourage the learner to uncover their full potential. In keeping with Vygotsky’s (1978) zone of proximal development, teacher’s assistance is pivotal in moving the learner from the actual development level to the potential development level. What ensues from Turuk’s (2008) analysis is that the interaction with the teacher in a classroom deepens learner’s understanding of the function and structure of L2. The results of Kuhl
et al. (2003) and Turuk (2008) are in consonance with that of Lantolf (2000) and Donato (2000), who clearly illustrate the benefits of integrating Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of social interaction into SLA. In particular, the researchers have revealed that peer interaction during focused activities facilitates the children’s acquisition of a second language.

The research undertaken by Syomwene (2016) has generated empirical evidence on the need to integrate Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory into L2 instruction in Kenya. The findings received from the observation checklists, document analysis, and the structured and focused group interview schedules have revealed that the strategies and activities used by English teachers in Kenya are inefficient in improving oral communication skills of learners and in developing learners’ understanding of new language items. In light of the acquired results, an interactive social setting is a prerequisite to meaningful language learning. The proposal made by the researcher is the inclusion of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory into English course books, teacher training courses, and the English language curriculum. Following Syomwene’s (2016) line of argument, the emphasis on purposeful interaction and scaffolding in L2 instruction will provide the learner with an opportunity to achieve a higher developmental level. In this regard, Syomwene’s (2016) conclusions are consistent with that of Turuk’s (2008). However, Syomwene (2016) goes further by claiming that the English language teacher should reconcile collaboration with the learner and design the learning strategies that increase the learner’s developmental level. These aspects are interdependent, given that intensive interaction with the learner allows the teacher to penetrate deep into the ways through which the learner creates meanings. The implications received by Syomwene (2016) are congruent with the view of Nam (2005) that, according to Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory, it is not a specific task but social interactions that are crucial for the development of child’s cognitive and linguistic skills. Specifically, it is teacher’s scaffolding that helps the learner deepen their knowledge and expand their learning experiences during L2 teaching.

Yet, to a certain extent, the empirical evidence gathered by Ochs (1985) and Schieffelin (1985) challenges Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory. By comparing the examples of language acquisition of Kauli and Samoan children with the data from the studies that identify the positive effects of the interactionist theory on language development, the researchers have clearly shown that the findings of these studies are highly questionable. The fact is that the majority of studies focus on the language acquisition of Western, middle-class children, disregarding the language acquisition in non-Western cultures.

As a result of this emphasis, these studies, according to Schieffelin and Ochs (1984), clearly illustrate that caregivers take into account the child’s perspective and adjust their language to the child’s needs to maintain a dialogue. An interesting result of Ochs’s (1985) and Schieffelin’s (1985) investigation is a lack of correlation between a child-directed speech and language fluency. In more precise terms, Kauli and Samoan children become fluent language speakers even without their parents’ use of child-directed speech. In these societies, as Ochs’s (1985) and Schieffelin’s (1985) show, parents are reluctant to simplify their language during communication with children because of the prevalent belief that a person of a higher status does not adjust to a person of a lower status. As such, a child-directed speech is not a necessary requirement for effective language acquisition, while an intentionally simplified speech is not a universal phenomenon (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017). However, the study conducted by Berk (1986) has identified the positive effects of teacher-designed tasks on the formation of child’s private speech and has confirmed Vygotsky’s
(2012) assumptions on the importance of private speech and task-related behaviours in child’s cognitive development.

According to the evidence gained by Berk (1986) from the observation of the first and third graders in a math lesson, task-relevant private speech improves child’s attentional focus and reduces tension during motor performance in classroom learning contexts. The results of the study undertaken by Fernyhough and Fradley (2005) both confirm and refute Vygotsky’s (2012) hypotheses on child’s private speech and task performance. On the one hand, the researchers’ empirical evidence is in line with Vygotsky’s (1987a) opinion that private speech is a transitional stage between social speech and inner speech. On the other hand, the received findings undermine the psychologist’s assertions that private speech diminishes during the early school years and that there is a strong correlation between child’s private speech and concurrent task performance. As for the former, the researchers have found that the child continues to use overt self-regulation while fulfilling challenging tasks. The child’s return to private speech in various problem-solving contexts signifies that temporary transitions from silent inner speech to private speech are possible. While this particular result provides explanation to the use of private speech in adulthood, profound longitudinal research is necessary to generate conclusive evidence on overt self-regulatory private speech. With regard to the latter aspect, Fernyhough and Fradley (2005) have revealed that the development of private speech has a relation to future task performance.

In contrast to Fernyhough and Fradley (2005), Berk and Landau (1993) have found the evidence of the use of private speech by children with learning disabilities during puzzle solving and academic seatwork in a laboratory setting. Through the comparison of 112 normally achieving children and children with learning disabilities from grades 3-6, the researchers have obtained proof that the latter group of children uses more task-relevant and setting-specific speech than the former group. However, in their study on the development of private speech among the Appalachian children from low-income families Berk and Garvin (1984) have acquired the evidence that challenges Vygotsky’s (1987a) view on the correlation between the child’s socio-economic status and the use of private speech. While the findings have proved Vygotsky’s (1987a) assertion that private speech develops with cognitively demanding tasks, they have revealed that the Appalachian children from low-income families do not significantly differ from the middle-class children (in the prior study of Kohlberg et al., 1968) in the development of private speech. Although the children in this study were slower in shaping their private speech skills, they did not differ in the form of development from the middle-class children. Another controversial aspect of Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) theoretical implications is highlighted by Liu and Matthews (2005). In particular, the researchers assert that the psychologist’s ideas of the importance of social interactions for language acquisition can be considered disputable in cases of children with learning disabilities. What is evident from the analysis undertaken by Liu and Matthews (2005) is that there are some social groups that do not benefit from collaboration and active participation in the learning process. This is explained by the fact that children with disabilities differ from normally developing children in capabilities, experiences, ways of communication, and learning strategies. Delving deeper, even normally developing children are different in their cognitive and linguistic development (Caseli & Stefanini, 2006). By way of example, the child may develop at a slow rate, despite constant scaffolding and interactions with the teacher and peers.

Pathan et al. (2018) accentuate the limitations of Vygotsky’s (1978) notion of ZPD, stating that the psychologist analyses the ZPD in general and does not evaluate the use of this concept in
a classroom environment. According to Piaget (1995), there is a risk that the child, who is not prepared for interactions with more knowledgeable others, will start imitating the behaviour of adults and borrowing their views. As a result of such experience, the child will fail to develop higher mental functions. This stance of Piaget (1995) becomes even more resonant, if taking into account the fact that the efficiency of learning depends on the child’s prior knowledge, personality traits, and the extent of self-esteem. As such, there is a need for language teachers to use individual approaches to the assessment of learners’ ZPD (Nam, 2005). The differences in the stances of Piaget (1995) and Vygotsky (1987) are attributed to the scholars’ different perceptions of child’s cognitive development (Sarem & Shirzadi, 2014). While Piaget (1995) treats cognitive development as an individual act, Vygotsky (1987) opposes the idea of definite stages of child’s development and argues for the impossibility of achieving higher mental functions without extensive social interactions. Lambert and Clyde (2000) express another concern with regard to the ZPD, stating that it reinforces the child’s dependence on adults and deprives them of active participation in the learning process.

However, this particular view is highly questionable, given that Vygotsky (1997) focuses on the idea that the teacher’s role is to create a dynamic and stimulating learning environment for the child but not explicitly affect their cognitive development. What is behind this idea is the transformation of the child into an empowered and self-regulated learner, whilst preserving close interactions with the teacher. Following the line of argument made by Cannella and Reiff (1994), an empowered learner is reflective, autonomous, inquisitive, and enthusiastic. Such a learner engages in communication, poses questions, takes risks, investigates, explores the unknown, acquires new experiences, identifies different perspectives, and resolves complex problems. Cannella and Reiff’s (1994) view of an empowered learner expands Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of ZPD by implying that learners may engage in interactions with their peers to uncover their potential. The similar opinion is expressed by Nam (2005), who asserts that the recent empirical research (e.g. Anton, 1999) has brought to the fore the evidence of the positive effects of non-expert interactions on L2 acquisition. In the study of Anton (1999), the peers not only engaged in joint activities but also provided effective guidance, thus achieving higher academic levels. As such, the received empirical evidence modifies Vygotsky’s (1978) theoretical implications.

**Discussion**

The study intends to analyze Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) interactionist view of language acquisition to assess the relevance of Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory in L1 and L2 acquisition. As the undertaken critical analysis has revealed, the articles under review prove the validity of the arguments made by Vygotsky (1978), despite the fact that some questions still remain unanswerable, especially in relation to the language acquisition by children from non-Western cultures and children with disabilities, on the one hand, and the child’s use of overt self-regulatory private speech in challenging learning contexts, on the other. Some inconsistencies identified in the process of critical review are explained by the uniqueness of each L2 setting and the use of different samples and research methods by researchers.

Overall, the basis on which the psychologist builds his interactionist theory of language is strong enough to justify the application of theory to practice. The deductive approach to critical research has produced crucial information that may be used to promote Vygotsky’s (1978, 1987a, 1987b, 1997, 2012) theoretical implications. In particular, the discussed evidence suggests that L1 and L2 acquisition is significantly reinforced when children have access to social interaction and...
live speech. On the contrary, the lack of social interaction deprives children of the opportunity to develop good language skills. As is obvious from the conducted analysis, mastery of language depends on the child’s ability to acquire external social reality and individual subjectivity. When these requirements are met, the child succeeds in generating a grammatically correct and situation-specific speech. While the theory of Universal Grammar by Chomsky (1965) and the behaviourist theory of Skinner (1957) have been influential in inspiring scholars, linguists, and researchers to undertake profound research on L1 and L2 acquisition, it is Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory that has deepened understanding of the crucial role of social interaction in child’s cognitive development.

**Conclusion**

To recapitulate, the articles under review prove the validity of the arguments made by Vygotsky (1978) despite the fact some questions remain unanswered. In particular, the child’s use of overt self-regulatory private speech in challenging learning contexts, and language acquisition by children from non-Western cultures and children with disabilities. Given that Vygotsky’s (1978) interactionist theory brings together such important aspects as cognitive development, social interaction, private speech, and internalisation, it generates one of the most systematic and comprehensive stances on how the child acquires cognitive and linguistic skills. Although this theory is not ideal and should be used wisely by a language teacher, its implementation into L2 curriculum may significantly empower language learners because of the theory’s emphasis on learner-centeredness. However, to maximise the effectiveness of social interaction in L2 learning, more profound and longitudinal research on the integration of the concepts of ZPD and scaffolding into teaching is required. Despite the fact that the discussed empirical studies have addressed the role of teacher and peer interactions in L2 learning, it is important to assess the long-term effects of these interactions on the process of L2 learning and shed more light on the types of social interaction that enhance language acquisition. Taking into consideration the fact that cognitive and linguistic development is a continuous process, it is essential for researchers, scholars, and language teachers to gain understanding of how the learner changes with the expansion of social interactions.

**About the Author**

Dr. Jamilah Maflah Alharbi is an Assistant Professor at the Department of English Language and Literature, Majmaah University. She has taught Semantics, Linguistics, Sociolinguistics and second language acquisition. She is interested in English as a second/foreign language learning and teaching and second language vocabulary acquisition. She is also interested in Sociolinguistics and the general area of second language acquisition. She has published primarily in the areas of vocabulary learning strategies and language teaching and learning. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3695-3471

**References**


Insight into the Role of Interaction in Language Acquisition


Enhancing EFL Students’ Performance and Genre Awareness in Academic Writing through Genre-based Instruction

Piriya Thaksanan
Language Institute, Thammasat University
Bangkok, Thailand
Corresponding Author: piriya.tha@dome.tu.ac.th

Panna Chaturongakul
Language Institute, Thammasat University
Bangkok, Thailand

Abstract
For EFL students, academic writing can be challenging, especially in Thailand, where English is taught in formal classroom settings. To become proficient in academic writing, students need to master genre knowledge and develop an understanding of genre variations. This study attempted to figure out how genre-based instruction affected the academic writing performance of EFL students. The main research questions are to what extent students improve their writing performance and their awareness of genre after studying academic writing through genre-based instruction. The study involved fifty-six undergraduate students in Thailand. There were four research instruments, i.e., pretest and posttest, student writing, student reflection, and semi-structured interviews. Students’ writing scores were analyzed using descriptive statistics. An independent-sample t-test was used to analyze the means of the two groups receiving different instruction types. Student reflection and interviews were used to explore the target students’ genre awareness and students’ attitudes toward the instruction. The results of this study showed that the students in the control and experimental group had equal writing abilities, as seen in the pretest. However, the experimental group of students significantly outperformed the students in the control group in all types of academic writing. The findings also revealed that the target students improved their genre awareness in four ways, i.e., audience awareness, purpose awareness, appropriate content, and textual features. In addition, they held positive attitudes toward genre-based instruction. This study provides a guideline for teachers and practitioners to incorporate genre-based instruction into teaching writing to improve students’ writing proficiency.

Keywords: EFL students’ performance, genre awareness, genre knowledge, genre-based instruction, second language writing, teaching and learning cycle,

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Introduction

Academic writing has played a crucial role at all educational levels. Academic texts are reputable sources for students to gain content knowledge. At the same time, students have typically measured their disciplinary knowledge via their writing abilities. Therefore, undergraduate students must have a solid academic foundation to advance their discipline knowledge in the future. Unfortunately, many students find writing challenging to deal with due to several factors such as insufficient vocabulary, and grammar, lack of revising skills and writing styles, lack of motivation, confidence, and negative attitudes toward English learning (Padgate, 2008; Nguyen & Suwannabubpha, 2021; Khamkhong, 2017). Another reason that possibly hinders students from achieving English writing comes from teachers’ perspectives. For example, teachers often avoid writing instruction because of time constraints, lack of content knowledge, insufficient pedagogical knowledge, and adherence to a multiple-choice test format (Darasawang & Watson Todd, 2012; Goldstein, 2017; Luxia, 2007; Taylor, 2005). As a result, writing is often skipped in almost all classes.

Students’ lack of genre knowledge is one of the reasons why Thai and EFL students have difficulties writing. Essentially, genre knowledge is recognizing and categorizing different literary styles. Appropriate genre knowledge assists students in understanding shared conventions and patterns of how members of communities speak or write (McGrath, Negretti, & Nicholls, 2019). A proper understanding of genre is crucial for writers since it allows readers and writers to know what to anticipate from each other’s work. This can help students become more proficient writers (Miller, 1984; Bazerman, 2012). In addition, several studies indicate that many students think all types of writing have similar conventions and language features (Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011; Artemeva & Fox, 2010). It can be said that those students lack awareness of the genre. This causes them to be unable to distinguish between the aims of the target text and to choose the proper conventions and language to use when composing the content. Therefore, developing genre awareness should be one of the main goals for novice students. An understanding of the links between how language functions in various situations and audiences is fostered through genre awareness in students (Johns, 2008; Millar, 2011; Skulstad, 1999; Yayli, 2011).

Subsequently, this study aims to incorporate genre-based instruction in teaching three academic essays. In genre studies, it is essential to understand how EFL students learn genre through various instructional contexts. This will enable teachers to create and choose appropriate and efficient teaching methods to help students better understand how language is used in authentic contexts related to a particular discipline. Thus, the three main research objectives are to 1) ascertain how students’ writing performance improves after studying writing through genre-based instruction, 2) examine how genre-based instruction fosters students’ genre awareness, and 3) determine their attitudes toward genre-based instruction. Therefore, three main research questions were formulated as follows:

RQ1: To what extent does genre-based instruction improve students’ academic writing performance?
RQ 2: How does genre-based instruction raise students’ awareness of genre?
RQ3: What are students’ attitudes toward genre-based instruction?

The following sections review relevant literature on genre-based instruction and genre awareness. Then, the research design is provided, followed by the findings, discussion, limitations, and conclusion.
Literature Review

Genre-Based Instruction

Several studies have asserted the importance of genre in teaching writing, making it an essential concept in writing instruction. According to Hyland (2007, p. 149), the genre is conceived of as "abstract, socially recognized ways of using language." It is based on the notion that experts or members of the community can easily understand texts. They have minimal trouble spotting similarities in the texts they use regularly. With their genre knowledge, they can read, understand, and create them relatively readily because of their recurrent exposure.

Genre-based instruction is “an approach to teaching that provides students with tools for understanding texts as genres, for analyzing those genres, and for using this insight in their writing” (Tardy, 2019, p.24). Genre-based instruction is an approach that has increasingly gained popularity in response to the notion that different texts require different language features, generic structures, and styles. To produce a composition, a writer considers essential factors and steps, such as the target audience, the purpose of writing, the context, and language choice. This instruction aims to draw students’ attention to these issues (Derewianka & Jones, 2016; Hyon, 2018). In instructing writing, teachers must use meaningful activities that foster students’ awareness of the genre and introduce the organization, language choices, etc. Previous studies have proved that genre-based instruction is recognized as one efficient approach in terms of building students’ knowledge of appropriate composition and in raising their consciousness or awareness of key elements of a genre (Fenwick & Herrington, 2022; Dugartsyrenova, 2020; Lo, Liu & Wang, 2014; Acar, 2023; Aunurrahman, Hikmayanti, & Yuliana, 2020; Best, Floyd, and McNamara, 2008).

Teaching and Learning Cycle

Feez (2002) proposed instructional processes, the Teaching and Learning Cycle to apply Genre-Based Instruction (hereafter TLC). In general, there are five stages of teaching and learning: 1) setting the context, 2) modeling and dissecting the text, 3) collaborative text development, 4) independent text construction, and 5) linking similar texts.

Building the context: This stage aims to engage students in the target topics and build a shared context in preparation for working with the genre. Students explore the purposes and expected audiences of the target genre through various activities such as brainstorming, floor-storming, think-pair-share activities, and research activities (Derewianka & Jones, 2016).

Modeling and deconstructing the text: The activities at this stage enable students to discuss and explore the moves of the genre and its key grammatical and rhetorical features. Model texts will be evaluated, interpreted, and contrasted to help students understand the distinctions and similarities across different genres. Teachers typically demonstrate patterns of language from representative samples of texts. An analysis can be done at the different levels of text (clause, group or phrase, and word).

Joint construction of the text: In this phase, students practice writing texts that incorporate language elements they have studied in prior phases. This stage aims for the students to construct a text collaboratively. The teacher can design activities in the form of small groups, individuals, or whole class groups. While students collaboratively write the text together, the teacher facilitates and scaffolds the students through questions, thinking aloud, and explanations.

Independent construction of the text: During this phase, with the instructor taking the role of facilitator, students have the chance to create a text independently. In this stage, students are
expected to apply what they learned in the previous stage to their writing by utilizing their understanding of the target task's content, procedure, language, context, and genre.

Linking related texts: In the TLC’s last phase, students are encouraged to contrast the genre they have been studying with other texts. Another comparable piece of writing with certain modifications, such as those to the audience, goal, or language elements, may be required of the students.

The TLC is flexible and adaptable. It allows teachers and practitioners to adjust following teaching objectives, time, and student levels. Research shows that various versions of TLC have been used successfully in various language curricula (see examples, Derewianka & Jones, 2016; Humphrey & Macnaught, 2011; de Oliveira & Lan, 2014).

Genre Awareness

The term genre awareness can be regarded as the ability to notice and recognize how language works at three levels, i.e., context awareness, discourse awareness, and language awareness (Millar, 2011; Paltridge, 2001). Genre awareness can be raised by exploring and analyzing multiple sample texts (Devitt, 2004; Johns, 2008; Millar, 2011; Hyon, 2018). When students are conscious of analyzing various samples of texts within and across disciplines, they can recognize typical language features, conventions, and variations of such genres. Consequently, they can see how the rhetorical context of communication is intertwined with generic norms and practices. Students eventually recognize the link between rhetorical patterns and the culture of the genre rather than as random or decontextualized rules (Tardy, Pawlowski, & Slinkard, 2018).

Recent research has emphasized the significance of increasing genre understanding in L2 writing teaching (Viriya & Wasanasomsithi, 2017; Jarunthawatchai, 2010; Turgut, 2013; McGrath, Negretti, and Nicholls (2019). Research on how a genre-based course raises students' genre awareness was conducted by Tate (2015). Two homogeneous groups—a control and an experimental group—were used for the investigation. Three reflection essays from each of these two groups were examined. The study results revealed that the experimental group’s students developed genre awareness as they progressed through the instruction. In addition, Tate identified four genre awareness themes, including audience awareness, purpose, appropriate content, and grammatical elements, which the students showed awareness of.

Language education and literacy fields have been interested in genre-based instruction and genre awareness for decades. However, most previous studies of genre awareness and genre-based instruction have focused on one specific aspect. Exploring how these concepts can be adapted and applied concurrently would provide valuable insights into supporting language students to gain, retain, and transfer knowledge of the genre.

Method

The current study is quasi-experimental research conducted to examine the impact of genre-based instruction on students’ academic writing performance focusing on three academic text types, i.e., a descriptive, comparison and contrast, and causes and effects essay. Furthermore, two important issues investigated are how genre-based instruction affects students' understanding of genre and their attitudes toward the instruction. The researcher gathered quantitative data first, and then qualitative techniques were used to collect qualitative information relevant to explore students’ genre awareness and attitudes toward the intervention.
Participants

The participants involved in this study were fifty-six undergraduate students studying Mechanical Engineering and Industrial Engineering at Kasetsart University Chalermprakiat Sakon Nakhon Province Campus, Thailand. The participants were enrolled in the English for University Life course as required in the second semester of the academic year 2020. There were a combined 28 students in the experimental and control groups. To find participants, a purposive sampling technique was used. The participants had some prior knowledge of English because they had taken the prerequisite course English in Daily Life, which had given them a foundation in fundamental English abilities. They were given a pretest to ascertain their writing skills, particularly in composing academic essays. The outcomes served as a benchmark for subsequent comparisons.

Research Instruments

Pretest and Posttest

Pretest and posttest were used to trace students’ improvement in writing essays after the intervention and to answer RQ1: To what extent does genre-based instruction improve students’ academic writing performance? This elicitation method determined the participants’ knowledge in composing an academic essay before and after the experiment. Results obtained from the pretest were used to indicate students’ writing ability. Students completed the pretest before the implementation was conducted. At the end of the intervention, around fourteen weeks later, they took the posttest.

Pretest: The test was a written task—a compare and contrast essay. Students needed to complete the task based on the prompt provided. Students had sixty minutes to write two hundred and fifty words of essay in English.

Posttest: The posttest followed the same types of writing as the pretest but differed in a topic. The test was administered after the intervention was completed. The goal of the posttest was to document the students’ changes after the intervention.

Student Essay Writing

Students’ written work was assessed to examine students’ achievements in composing three academic essays (descriptive, compare and contrast, and cause and effect essay). The final draft of each genre was brought into the analysis. The written task results answered RQ1—To what extent does genre-based instruction improve students’ academic writing performance? The information gathered at this stage triangulated the pretest and posttest outcomes in terms of the students’ writing output. Written tasks occurred in the TLC model's final stage—Independent text construction. The tasks were take-home assignments. Each student submitted an essay of at least 250 words based on the assigned topics.

Reflection Writing

Reflection writing provides qualitative information regarding students’ genre awareness and attitudes toward genre-based instruction. Reflection analysis allows the researcher to explore how students composed the essay, what aspects brought about changes in their writing, how they negotiated with the texts, and how they presented their thoughts in the texts. The reflection writing was designed in a written form adapted from the reflection questions in Discroll, Paszek, Gorzelsky,
Hayes & Jones (2020). Students wrote their reflections after composing an essay and submitted three reflections.

**Semi-Structured Interview**

This study employed semi-structured interviews to acquire answers to RQ 2: *How does genre-based instruction raise students’ awareness of genre?* and RQ3: *What are students’ attitudes towards genre-based instruction?* Nine students took part in the one-on-one interviews through a video conference. Even though certain questions were predetermined as guidelines, the interviewer had considerable latitude to veer off-topic and elicit additional information.

**Data Collection**

There were two groups of students involved in this study. The control group of students learned how to write the three academic essays through the process approach. In contrast, genre-based instruction was implemented in the experimental group. The quantitative phase took place over a fifteen-week course. The class met weekly for a three-period class.

The pretest was given to the students at the start of the course, lasting around 60 minutes. The genre-based instruction was implemented three times, starting from descriptive writing, compare and contrast, and causes and effect essays, respectively. It was mandated that the essay be at least 250 words long. The implementation followed the modification of TCL adapted by Feez (2002). All three rounds of implementation of genre-based instruction followed the same stages, including 1) building the field, 2) modeling and deconstruction, 3) collaborative writing, and 4) independent writing. A teacher and student conference stage was added as an additional stage. Meeting together, the teacher and the students went over their written work. The students provided a written reflection on their work immediately after finishing their essays. After finishing all of the lessons, the students took the posttest.

The interviews were carried out the week after the participants completed the posttest. Nine students from the experimental group participated in the interviews. The interviews were conducted individually in the Thai language to ensure understanding. In addition, the audio was recorded for transcription and analysis.

**Data Analysis**

*Pretest, Posttest, and Student Essays*

The pretest, posttest, and the students’ essays were assessed and analyzed, focusing on overall writing quality and lexico-grammatical resources. To assign scores to the written tests and three assignments, three raters gave scores against the scoring criteria and rubrics. The scoring criterion was an analytic scale. The rubrics included seven criteria: audience awareness, context, genre-driven structure, style, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The maximum score for each aspect of scoring was four. The pretest and posttest results and the student’s essays were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Furthermore, to compare two sets of scores obtained from pretest and posttest, an independent sample t-test was applied.

*Student Reflection*

Information retrieved from student reflections was used to capture the students’ genre awareness in relation to a descriptive, compare and contrast, and cause-and-effect essay. The reflections were coded based on predetermined codes from Tate (2015). Four major codes relevant
to genre awareness included 1) audience awareness, 2) purposes, 3) appropriate content, and 4) textual features. In addition, other qualitative information arising from the student reflections was coded using the thematic coding technique. After the analysis, the categories of coding themes were examined by independent observers to ensure the consistency and creditability of the researcher’s analysis.

**Semi-structured Interviews**

To answer RQ 2: How does genre-based instruction raise students’ awareness of genre? Transcripts were coded following the predetermined codes following the same method as with the student reflection. To answer RQ3: What are students’ attitudes toward genre-based instruction? Thematic coding was adopted.

**Results**

*To what extent does genre-based instruction improve students’ academic writing performance?*

This section discusses the findings of this study to answer RQ1: To what extent does genre-based instruction improve students’ academic writing performance?

Table 1. Students’ improvement in the pretest and posttest across seven aspects in the control and experimental groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Full Scores</th>
<th>( \bar{x} ) Pretest</th>
<th>S. D.</th>
<th>( \bar{x} ) Posttest</th>
<th>S. D.</th>
<th>( p )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of genre: Purpose and development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre-driven organization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>.697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>.461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>.406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling and punctuation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total scores</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table one displays the pretest and posttest results from the control and experimental groups of students across seven aspects of scoring rubrics, i.e., audience, purposes and development, contextualization, genre-driven organization, style, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The total score for each assessment sub-scale was four marks. The independent samples t-test was applied to figure out the analysis of mean scores from the pretest and posttest for the control and experimental groups of students. The pretest results reveal that students in the control and experimental groups were broadly equal across all seven subscales to some extent. In contrast, the mean scores in the posttests show that the students in the experimental group earned better scores.
than those in the control group in terms of conveying the purpose of the text and developing effective support (control group \( \bar{x} = 2.43, \) S.D. = 0.48, experimental group \( \bar{x} = 2.77, \) S.D. = 0.67), providing reader(s) with sufficient contextualization (control group \( \bar{x} = 2.36, \) S.D. = 0.55, experimental group \( \bar{x} = 2.70, \) S.D. = 0.60), appropriate use of organization (control group \( \bar{x} = 2.27, \) S.D. = 0.53, experimental group \( \bar{x} = 2.64, \) S.D. = 0.69), writing style (control group \( \bar{x} = 2.01, \) S.D. = 0.52, experimental group \( \bar{x} = 2.48, \) S.D. = 0.57), the correctness of grammar use (control group \( \bar{x} = 1.92, \) S.D. = 0.44, experimental group \( \bar{x} = 2.29, \) S.D. = 0.66), and spelling and punctuation (control group \( \bar{x} = 2.00, \) S.D. = 0.50, experimental group \( \bar{x} = 2.38, \) S.D. = 0.67). However, the students in the control and experimental groups did not differ in their audience awareness.

Although the experimental group outperformed the control group, there was no statistically significant difference (p < .05).

Table 2. Students’ performances on descriptive essay writing across seven sub-scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Full scores</th>
<th>( \bar{x} )</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control Group (N = 27)</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Experimental Group (N = 28)</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean dif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of genre: Purpose and development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre-driven organization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling and punctuation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total scores</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table two shows the findings relevant to writing descriptive essays for the students in the control and experimental groups. The findings show that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in writing descriptive essays across all seven assessment sub-scales. The experimental group demonstrated the greatest achievement in contextualization (mean difference = 0.78) and genre-driven organization (mean difference = 0.69). On some sub-scales, both the control and the experimental groups achieved quite close mean scores, such as on spelling and punctuation (mean difference = 0.43), grammar (mean difference = 0.52), and audience (mean difference = 0.54). However, even on these, the independent samples t-tests still showed a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups (p < .05).

Table 3. Students’ performances in compare and contrast essay writing across seven sub-scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Full scores</th>
<th>( \bar{x} )</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control Group (N = 28)</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Experimental Group (N = 28)</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean dif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The students’ compare and contrast essay writing scores were analyzed using descriptive statistics and an independent sample t-test. In Table 3, the results indicate that the experimental group’s performances in writing compare and contrast essays were significantly better than the control groups in all seven assessment sub-scales. The largest mean differences between the students in control and experimental groups were for audience together with the use of genre (mean dif. = 0.69), contextualization (mean dif. = 0.58), and organization (mean dif. = 0.51).

**Table 4. Students’ performances in cause-and-effect essay writing across seven sub-scales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Full Scores</th>
<th>Control Group (N = 26)</th>
<th>Experimental Group (N = 28)</th>
<th>Mean dif.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.14 0.70</td>
<td>2.57 0.66</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>-2.33</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of genre: Purpose and development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.06 0.69</td>
<td>2.54 0.69</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
<td>-2.52</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.95 0.67</td>
<td>2.56 0.71</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>-3.23</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre-driven organization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.00 0.66</td>
<td>2.42 0.72</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
<td>-2.21</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.90 0.58</td>
<td>2.35 0.68</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>-2.60</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.69 0.52</td>
<td>2.12 0.64</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>-2.66</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling and punctuation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.72 0.62</td>
<td>2.14 0.66</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
<td>-2.45</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total scores</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table four displays the students’ performances in cause and effect essay writing. The results indicate that the experimental group’s performances in writing cause and effect essays were significantly better than the control groups in all seven assessment sub-scales. The largest mean differences between the students in control and experimental groups were for contextualizing (mean dif. = 0.61), the use of genre (mean dif. = 0.47), and the writing style (mean dif. = 0.45).

**How does genre-based instruction raise students’ awareness of genre?**

This part discusses students’ awareness of genre arising from student reflection and semi-structured interviews. The four principal areas of students’ awareness of genre were audience awareness, purpose awareness, appropriate content, and textual awareness.

**Audience Awareness**

Students’ awareness of their audience was captured when the students discussed their target audiences. The analysis of qualitative data, including interviews and student reflections, revealed that the target students had developed an awareness of their audience covering four aspects, namely...
1) drawing readers’ attention, 2) establishing the target readers, 3) establishing connections between the target audience and the language choices, and 4) understanding the distance between the reader and the writer.

The first aspect regarding students’ awareness of the audience was students’ attempts to draw their readers’ attention. Four out of nine student interviewees responded in the interview that their writing had to provide content in a manner that would attract their readers’ attention.

The results of this study indicate that the students were likely to establish their audiences when they composed essays. One-third of the students (three out of nine) in the interviews referred to the presence of their target audiences, most of the time as teachers and friends. However, when it came to writing comparison and contrast and cause and effect essays, their target audiences appeared to include “people in general” more frequently.

The analysis from the interviews and student reflections demonstrates that students’ language choices relate to their target audiences. For example, most students stated that they tended to use some formal language in their essay writing when their readers were their teachers or people in general. On the other hand, they tried to use less formal or informal language in their writing if they wrote the texts for their friends. These findings indicate that most of the students did not only think about their audiences, but they also showed their understanding of how the audience was closely connected to their language choices.

**Purpose Awareness**

Students’ awareness of purpose was coded when they acknowledged the purposes of their essays. The findings from the interviews show that all the students could indicate accurate and appropriate purposes for the texts. Also, they could tell the correct genre names. Nearly two-thirds of the students (five out of nine students) not only explained the purposes of the target text accurately, but they could also differentiate the purposes into the three text types they had written throughout the course. Therefore, it can be inferred that students had acquired knowledge regarding the purposes of the texts. The students explained and compared the purposes of the three text types: descriptive, comparison, and contrast, and cause and effect essays.

**Appropriate Content**

The students in this study worked on the content differently across the three text types. The qualitative information illustrates the students’ awareness of content in three aspects: using relevant information for the topics, resources for content development, and students’ content awareness across all three academic texts.

The outcomes of this study reveal that nearly all the students typically examined the assigned topics and planned for what content should be included in their writing. Two-thirds of the students realized that the content had to be relevant to the topics. These findings are in line with the information found in the student reflections. More than half of the students agreed they should not include irrelevant information in their essays.

The student’s responses to each written task were not identical. In the first piece of essay writing (a descriptive essay), the students expressed that they found writing descriptive essays effortless because they could use their subjective experience to write the essays. Conversely, they thought composing the final essay was the hardest for generating content. When composing their cause and effect essays, they made significant efforts to find sufficient information and screen for
the most suitable content. They tended to analyze and make judgments about whether the information they received was accurate or not.

**Textual Features**

Textual features are conceptualized as the target genres' language features, vocabularies, and generic structures. In this study, it was found that the students slightly improved their awareness of textual features in four different ways, namely students’ awareness of linguistic features, students’ awareness of language choices and their audiences, students’ awareness of language choices and genres, and students’ awareness of generic structures.

The responses from the interviews show that the students considered sentence structures, word choices, tense, and cohesive devices and that they implemented these in their essay writing. Some students (around one quarter) considered the appropriate use of syntax. Their awareness of the appropriate use of sentence structures can be seen in their discussions regarding word order and sentence structures. Further analysis of the student reflections reveals that some students were aware of using cohesive devices in composing essays. Although the findings indicate that the students were aware of the linguistic features in their essay writing, they did not explain such aspects in detail. The students realized that the different text types needed different language choices. Most students thought writing descriptive essays required basic word choices. Typically, the vocabulary used in descriptive essays originated in word lists. The students tended to use simple sentences in their writing. In contrast, they seemed to increase their range of language choices in the other two essays (comparison and contrast and cause and effect essays). Most students considered using more transitional words, pronouns, and cohesive devices in their writing. Moreover, the students perceived the importance of textual organization. Most students carefully followed the convention of the target texts they were writing.

**What are students’ attitudes toward genre-based instruction and genre awareness?**

This study's results illustrate that the experimental group students held positive attitudes towards genre-based instruction. Based on information from the interviews, the students found the genre-based instruction course relaxing. The classroom atmosphere was friendly, and the workloads were appropriate. Some students found the tasks challenging, but they helped improve their writing ability. Moreover, the students were appreciative when the instructor explicitly informed them of the teaching objectives before each class. They stated that knowing what they were about to study and the expected outcomes of each lesson made them feel less nervous or worried about the lessons.

**Discussion**

Regarding the first question, the results of this study demonstrate that during the fifteen weeks of instruction, the experimental group's students' writing skills increased. On all three forms of writing, students in the experimental group significantly outperformed those in the control group. The results from the pretest and posttest demonstrated that the application of genre-based instruction enables the students in the experimental group to produce better quality text spelling and punctuation, organization, and grammar. The outcomes of this study are similar to Fenwick and Herrington (2022), Dugartsyrenova (2020), and Aunurrahman et.al. (2020). This might result from explicit teaching on identifying textual features concerning social context. One of the most important tenets of genre-based learning is explicit teaching. Explicit instruction is systematic,
direct, engaging, and success-oriented--and has been shown to promote student achievement (Anita & Charles, 2011). It is based on the notion that writing teachers cannot presume that all students have the necessary language, cultural, and social background to succeed in their writing (Hyon, 2018). To assist students in acquiring and practicing target language points appropriately and accurately, explicit teaching encourages teachers to utilize clear, concise, and consistent language (Gunn, Smolkowski, Strycker, & Dennis, 2021). With an explicit awareness of clear social activity, the purpose of the texts, and an understanding of how language is used, students attune to the target texts. This helps them maintain their focus. Hyland (2007) asserts that teaching is more effective when teachers make lessons explicated to students.

Additionally, students' posttest mean score clearly illustrates how much they have learned about writing style. When the pretest and posttest results were compared, it was discovered that the students receiving genre-based instruction had improved their writing style the most. The connection between reading to writing might explain this. The students have sufficient opportunity to learn from diverse model texts while in the constructing, modeling, and deconstruction stages. These encourage students to learn writing styles from these examples of texts. Brown (2001) asserts a positive effect of connecting reading and writing that reading can reinforce writing skills. By exposing students to relevant types of target essays, the students will gain insight into topic selection and other features of “good” writing. Derewianka and Jones (2016) argue that model texts or supported reading give writers solid knowledge of language patterns for later bringing these patterns to writing. By reading example texts, students can become familiar with the subject matter and be exposed to the literary elements they might use in their writing.

The study's results also showed that students' writing abilities in the three written genres of descriptive texts, compare and contrast texts, and cause and effect texts had significantly improved. According to the findings, students' performances vary across three activities. Duke, Caughlan, Juzwik, and Martin (2012) explain that students always respond to each text in a particular way. Because each genre has unique characteristics, students cannot approach each genre similarly. This aspect appears to be supported by Best et al.’s (2008) study. They examined how effectively the students comprehended narrative and expository literature. According to the study, students were more successful at understanding narrative texts than expository writings. In addition, they found that the students’ word knowledge and decoding abilities varied as they comprehended texts of various genres.

To answer research question two, the findings of this study demonstrate that throughout the genre-based course, practically all students gradually modified their understanding of the intended genre purposes. For example, in the initial reflection, some students wrote essays to complete the course assignments and to develop their writing skills. In contrast, in later reflections, almost every student attempted to communicate with perceived audiences actively. The results are consistent with Tate (2015) in that students may not be aware of the purposes of the text in their initial writing. However, when they reflected on their writing in the following stages, their awareness of purpose rose significantly.

There was no statistically significant difference in the students' average audience awareness scores in the control and experimental groups. Additionally, the score results support the findings from the interviews and reflections. When asked to consider their target audiences, most students identified a teacher and their peers as their readers. They also presented themselves as writers who were students. The teacher and their friends remained the students' primary readers, even though they tried to incorporate readers from outside the class, such as their potential
audience from the broader public, in their reflections. The students' unclear understanding of the target audience is consistent with earlier research by Turgut (2013), Viriya and Wasanasomsithi (2017), Jarunthawatchai (2010), Tate (2015), and McGrath et al (2019).

Regarding content awareness, emphasis was placed on students intentionally choosing appropriate content to fulfill the communicative purpose. Most students stated clearly that the information had to be pertinent to the topics. The students were conscious of their target audience while they engaged with the content. For instance, the students reported that managing the content for a descriptive essay was simple. This was possible because the topic and information contained in descriptive essays directly affected their personal experiences. They considered their readers as people they knew, such as their classmates and teachers. After completing the descriptive essay, the students appeared to be more careful in choosing relevant and reliable information to complete the compare and contrast and cause and effect essays. It appears that they spent more time reviewing the content. The students seemed aware of genre variations after being taught through genre-based instruction.

The student’s awareness of textual elements varied. Almost all students could demonstrate their comprehension of the genres’ underlying structures. Clear evidence of the student’s understanding of genre structures can be found in the interviews and reflections. The students could discuss the differences in textual forms according to each distinct aspect. Despite being aware of language use in a particular genre, the students did not offer insight into language aspects employed in writing. Instead, the students casually discussed a few grammatical issues. In their interviews, all of the students in this study stated that they learned and practiced writing by concentrating on form and usage rather than working on a lengthy essay. It is implied that writing a reflection about essay writing may be their first experience, and so they were unable to provide in-depth detail on this aspect.

To answer research question three, the participants in this study had favorable opinions on instruction in genre-based writing. The findings of the interviews indicated that they were typically satisfied with the instruction. In addition, they believed the course had given them an understanding of the targeted genres.

Limitations

Some limitations should be mentioned. First, this study's sample size and number of students might not accurately reflect the entire undergraduate student population. Because the study's findings were collected in a specific setting, they might not be relevant to the broader Thai tertiary context. In addition, students in engineering were the only discipline among the target students that participated in this investigation. In this study, genre-based instruction was implemented for only one semester. It was challenging to document how students changed over this semester regarding their linguistic expertise and how they perceived their audience awareness. A better case scenario would be to apply genre-based writing instruction over at least two academic semesters, allowing teachers to monitor changes in their students' writing ability. Finally, due to time restrictions and the large number of writing assignments needed to be examined, this study focused only on the students' general writing development and their understanding of the genre. Although it is clear that students' performance in terms of language features increased, additional research should be done to determine how well students are doing regarding language usage and forms.
Conclusion

Although there is evidence that genre-based instruction and awareness of genre help enhance writing abilities, there is a requirement for further studies to explore in what way genre-based instruction could foster students' learning process. In addition, a fuller understanding of how students acquire knowledge of the genre and transfer it to different writing contexts would contribute to a deeper understanding of the sustained effects of genre-based instruction. Thus, this study aimed to implement genre-based instruction in tertiary students who were learning how to write academic essays. The results show that the target students benefited from the instruction. They demonstrated progress in their writing skills in three types of essays: descriptive, compare and contrast, and cause and effect. The outcomes of this study also reveal that the students gradually developed their awareness of the genre and showed favorable attitudes toward the instruction.

About the Authors:
Piriya Thaksanan is a Ph.D. candidate (in English Language Teaching) at the Language Institute, Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand. Research interests: methodology of teaching foreign languages, EFL writing instruction, and English for Specific Purposes. https://orcid.org/0009-0008-3686-9935

Panna Chaturongakul is an English language lecturer and a vice director for human resources and administrative affairs at the Language Institute of Thammasat University (LITU). She completed her Ph.D. in English Language teaching (ELT) at the University of Essex in the United Kingdom. At LITU, Panna teaches undergraduate courses such as English for Academic Purposes and English for Science and Technology. She also co-teaches postgraduate courses such as Teaching English for Specific Purposes, Research Methodology, and English Language Teaching Methodologies. Her research interests include English for specific purposes (ESP), vocabulary teaching, and ESP materials design. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3928-1789

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Religion and ESL Teacher Identity in Malaysia Context: Does Religion Matter?

Lee Yii Tyng
Department of Language and Literacy, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya
&
CELS, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, Sunway University
Corresponding Author: etynglee@gmail.com

Fatiha binti Senom
Department of Language and Literacy, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya

Lim Jia Wei
Department of Language and Literacy, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya

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Abstract
This paper aims to showcase the interrelationship between religion and ESL teacher identity by using the literature on religion, religion and English teacher, religion and English teacher identity, as well as religion and English Language Teaching (ELT). Despite the potential significance of religious beliefs in shaping teacher identity, this area has received little attention. By examining the literature on religion and ELT, this paper seeks to contribute to our understanding of the importance of religious beliefs in shaping teacher identity. The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform teacher training programs and promote culturally sensitive and inclusive learning environments. This study reveals that religious beliefs play a significant role in shaping ESL teacher identity. Religious beliefs are deeply personal and intimately intertwined with one's identity, and they can influence teaching practices and interactions with students. The study proposes a conceptual framework for future research on the impact of religious beliefs on ESL teacher identity. The article also suggest that a study focuses on the impact of religious beliefs on ESL teacher identity, whether religion matters in shaping and negotiating ESL teacher identity, should be conducted in Malaysia, a country with a diverse religious landscape. These findings have important implications for teacher training programs and for creating inclusive learning environments that take into account the religious and cultural diversity of students.

Keywords: Religion, religious beliefs, religious identity, ESL teacher identity, transidentitying, Malaysia context

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Introduction
Previous research on Language Teacher Identity (LTI) and language education has shown that the main focus has always been on professional norms such as knowledge, competencies, and skills that language teachers should possess in language teaching and learning due to the connection between teaching quality and teacher identity (Anwaruddin, 2016; Arends, 2014; Pennington & Richards, 2016, Richards, 2021). For example, teacher's beliefs on language teaching and learning is a crucial component of a teacher's identity and cannot be disregarded in LTI (Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2015). Most studies of teacher’s beliefs emphasize professional norms such as matter of language teaching and learning awareness and a teacher’s beliefs (see Borg, 2003, 2018; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). The existing literature has been emphasizing things a teacher should know and do, and the teacher's personal self has been dissociated from the act of teaching (Farrell et al., 2020). However, a cohesive teacher identity is formed by the dynamic interaction and emerging of a teacher's personal and professional notions (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017). Although teaching involves two dimensions: personal and professional, the discussions of teacher’s personal self and beliefs are under-addressed in the literature (Farrell et al., 2020). By counter-balancing this scenario, this paper intends to show the relationship of religion and English teacher by focusing on personal aspects of English teacher identity, specifically their personal beliefs (religious beliefs), which may help language teachers to be more integrated with both professional and personal development. Moreover, there has been a lack of attention given to religion in language teaching and education research as it is overdue for religion to be openly discussed and integrated into language teaching and education (Canagarajah, 2018). To address this gap, this article presents the relationship between religion and English teacher by analysing the literature on religion, religion and English teacher, religion and English teacher identity, as well as religion and ELT. The findings of this study demonstrate the significant influences of religious beliefs on the formation and negotiation of ESL teacher identity. The study also suggests a conceptual framework for future research on the influences of religious beliefs on ESL teacher identity.

Literature Review

Religion and English Teacher

It is imperative to first expound on the relationship between religion and English teachers and their identity before delving into religion and ELT.

Religion consists of three elements: (a) beliefs (ideas and representation), (b) rituals (behaviour and practices) (Jensen, 2014; Paul Victor & Treschuk, 2020), which shape (c) institutions that set the limits, conditions and rules for humans that govern ethics and morality (Jensen, 2014) and these elements are held and performed by humans. Also, everything that happens in religion is initiated by religious beliefs, and therefore belief comes first, ritual follows (Jensen, 2014).

Religion is a foundational and long-lasting element of human thought and civilization. Thus, they play an essential and lasting function in education and learning (Baurain, 2012,2016). A person’s identities, actions, views of self and others, ambitions for purpose, relationships, moral standards, and general happiness are shaped by religious beliefs, regardless of their association with any particular religious institution (Baurain, 2012, 2016). In other words, ethical and moral principles instilled by religious beliefs empower humans to develop theories and knowledge that promote social justice, cultural diversity, environmental sustainability, and an improved quality of life (Canagarajah, 2018). Having said that, teachers' religious beliefs often shape their perspectives.
on effective teaching (Canagarajah, 2018, Kubanyiova, 2013). This recognition has prompted the
development of more reflective teacher development programmes, which aim to bring teachers'
beliefs to the forefront and support them in creating a cohesive approach that combines their
pedagogical philosophy and professional expertise with their personal belief systems
(Canagarajah, 2018). This implies that recognizing the inner lives of teachers is crucial, and this
can be achieved by comprehending their spirituality from vantage point of the teacher
development, both personally and professionally (Farrell et al., 2020).

In the field of English teacher research, religion does influence English teacher professional
choices. Religious beliefs influence teachers’ professional choice to venture into teaching (Wong,
2013). Moreover, religion has a significant role in sustaining teachers' mental and emotional health
in circumstances that may lead to professional burnout because they seek Allah's reward when
teaching (Almayez, 2022). This shows that religious beliefs help teachers to overcome hardship,
cope with the emotional obstacles of working in unfamiliar sociocultural and professional
situations, and instill an attitude to accept the paradoxes and imperatives imposed by their
organizations (Kubanyiova, 2013). Having said that, religious beliefs may play a prominent role
in preventing professional burnout and motivating teachers to persevere their profession.

Although there is widespread agreement among social science scholars that religious
beliefs do influence teachers thinking and actions in general, such issues have rarely been
discussed in TESOL or ELT (Baurain, 2012, 2016). Moreover, researchers in teaching and teacher
development maintain that integrating teacher’s beliefs and identities is essential for creating
relevant, meaningful, and rewarding teaching practices (Canagarajah, 2018). In this case, the
following sections will discuss the connection between religion and English teacher identity
followed by ELT.

Religion and English Teacher Identity

As mentioned above, religious beliefs are essential in most people’s daily lives. Researchers in ELT have also regarded religious beliefs as potentially central influences on teacher identity as they are one of the most important sources for teachers to construct images of good
teaching (Kubanyiova, 2013; Wong, 2013). However, religion is a neglected part of the field of
language teacher identity (Almayez, 2022; Mahboob & Courtney, 2018; Wong, 2018; Karimpour
et al., 2022) although it possesses potential influences on some language teachers when
approaching their work (Baurain, 2012, 2016). Literature and studies on teacher identity regarding
ELT are predominantly focused on language awareness as well as language teaching and learning
(For E.g. Borg, 2003, 2018; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017) rather than personal beliefs (Farrell et al.,
2020) such as religious beliefs. As Morgan (2009) has claimed, the religious aspects are a “blind
spot” in teacher identity research in TESOL. Just as personal beliefs shape teacher identity
(Richards, 2021), religious beliefs, the most personal and profoundly held beliefs are connected to
an individual's identity of any sort of belief (Johnston, 2003). Religious beliefs are also regarded
as the most fundamentally important aspects of identity, they are the most profoundly and deeply
held, and strongly tied to identity compared with other kinds of beliefs that are held by an
individual. Hence, religious beliefs are relevant to individuals seeking a thorough knowledge of
teacher identity. This is because a religious individual draws on religious beliefs that influence
their moral choices in personal life (Oviedo & Szocik, 2020) and thus influence their work as a
teacher (Johnston, 2003). Despite the centrality of religion in most human’s daily lives, discussions
about the impact of religious beliefs on English teachers’ identity are often left out (Johnston, 2003; Mahboob & Courtney, 2018).

When addressing teacher religious beliefs and teacher identity in the ELT context, Johnston (2003) argued that teachers’ beliefs influence their actions in class and schools. In this light, this division of teacher identity focuses on how language teachers’ religious beliefs influence their thinking and actions as teachers (see Almayez, 2022; Karimpour et al., 2022; Wong et al., 2013). This is because Miller (2009) argues that teacher’s thinking, knowledge, beliefs, and actions in the classroom are intertwined with their identity formation, which is influenced by their ongoing interactions. Having said that, personal religious beliefs fit into the way teachers acquire their knowledge and the reasons for their actions as teachers (White, 2009, 2014). Simply put, the religious beliefs and experiences of teachers will mediate the skills and knowledge of being an effective teacher (Canagarajah, 2018; Kubanyiova, 2013). Borg (2003) indicated that such beliefs represent the dimensions of the “complex, practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs” (p. 81), which teachers refer to while constructing teacher identity. Furthermore, the identity of a teacher cannot be understood merely by observing the classroom, religious beliefs that clearly come from outside the classroom deserve a place in language teacher identity context (Johnston, 2003; Mahboob & Courtney, 2018) because teacher’s personal beliefs and values influence identity construction (Richards, 2021) and religion-related beliefs are the most fundamental parts of identity (Johnston, 2003). In short, these researchers not only highlighted the interrelationship between religious beliefs and English teacher identity but also claimed that religion should be considered in language learning and teaching contexts (Wong, 2018).

In LTI research, Vandrick (2018) and Kayi-Adar (2019) mentioned that current research has been paying attention to racial, social, gender identity and other identities of teachers but an identity that is related to religion has seldom been a subject of study, and hence, it is notably understudied (Vaccino-Salvadore, 2021). Similarly, Norton (2013) also pinpointed that although issues of socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, class, and race as well as their influence on learning and teaching are being openly studied, it is ironic that the issue of religion in the social category is often overlooked. This shows that religion has been “the neglected domain of language teacher identity research” (Wong, 2018, p. 15). To address this discrepancy, studies that focus on the issues of religion and teacher identity are needed. This is because Canagarajah (2017) and Duff (2017) maintain that it is insufficient to believe that an English teacher’s identity is being exclusively determined by their proficiency of language and ELT. It is also essential to pay attention to characteristics other than the English subject, which are generally still understudied when examining teacher identity up to this point, particularly religious identity in LTI research. Thus, religious identity should be considered just as important as other identities in LTI research and literature.

Some researchers endeavored to venture into the research of religion and language teacher identity, and showed how this is reflected in the ELT (see Baurain, 2012, 2016; Varghese & Johnston, 2007; Wong et al., 2013). Their focus is on the influences of Christian beliefs on English teacher identity. According to Kubanyiova (2013), Christian beliefs may substantially impact in shaping a teacher’s image of effective teaching. This is a noteworthy conclusion in light of previous research has proven that teachers' perceptions of effective teaching, precisely, their future-oriented self-perceptions, are not only critical in impacting their professional development decisions (Hiver, 2013) but also “firmly imprinted in what the teachers do in the classroom, what
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concerns them about their practices, which classroom events they are determined to act upon and to which, in contrast, they, subconsciously or deliberately, turn a blind eye” (Kubanyiova, 2013, p. 122). Having said that, religious beliefs are proposed to be a critical stimulant for the production of adaptive images for classroom practice and a comprehensive examination of their influence on the perspectives of Christian language teachers and, subsequently, the implications for students' language learning possibilities might be a significant area of future research. Furthermore, Dornyei et al. (2013) illustrated that religious beliefs facilitate teachers in shaping visions of being a language teacher and pedagogical decisions. The teachers translate Christian faith into classroom teaching and learning. Similarly, Baurain’s (2012, 2016) study showcased that personal religious beliefs affect pedagogical decisions in classroom, relationships with students, a teacher's professional identity and growth, and pedagogical style in general. Apart from ELT and learning in the classroom, Wong et al., (2013) has discovered that religious beliefs are critical in helping teachers maintain their determination and commitment to overcome obstacles, managing emotional challenges inherent in new professional and sociocultural contexts often entails and cultivating positive attitudes such as addressing the numerous paradoxes and imperatives imposed by the workplace.

However, religious beliefs, not limited to Christianity, exist in an individual’s professional context and they influence their professional identity (Mahboob & Courtney, 2018). Numerous studies have also started to focus on the influences of other religions. Johnson (2003) revealed that Islamic beliefs influence ESL teacher’s professional behaviour particularly in regards to their selection of teaching materials. This can include the incorporation of biblical texts into English lessons. Moreover, three Muslim English language teachers in Vaccino-Salvadore’s (2021) study showcased three Muslim English language teachers demonstrated various ways in which their religious identity informs their professional lives, including how they navigate their religious beliefs and position themselves in a professional setting. Furthermore, Brown (2018) has also highlighted the connection between Buddhism by showing its impacts on language teachers’ approaches to work. In addition, Sharma (2018) has revealed the relevance of Hinduism with ELT as it could be the fundamental element of what it means to teaching and learning. Sharma (2018) also discovered the interrelationship between existing professional TESOL ideas, learner autonomy, student-centredness and Hinduism. In addition, the researchers have also stated that religious beliefs how teachers view themselves as language educators, thereby potentially influencing the development of their professional identity. These studies have demonstrated a connection between English teacher religious identity that is shaped by religious beliefs and teacher identity. In this scenario, more research is required to examine the dynamic, complexity, as well as interrelationship between religious beliefs and English teacher identity (Wong et al., 2013) corresponds to the intention of this article, that is by using literature to show that ESL teachers do deploy their religious beliefs into their professional contexts and their identities are shaped by their religious beliefs from their respective religious background. Subsequently, studies that disclose how religious identity intersects with professional identity may also explain how religious beliefs influence ESL teacher identity is essential.

Religion and English Language Teaching

Numerous studies in the field of ELT have attempted to unpack the influence of religious beliefs on different aspects of ELT. However, until recently, ELT educators and scholars have mostly
shared their religious beliefs at Christian conferences and in Christian publications, which are not widely known among the larger TESOL professional community (see Baurain, 2012, 2016).

This has started to change recently, as more educators and scholars have publicly spoken and written about how their religious beliefs have influenced their teaching. Many of these individuals have been associated with Mary Shepard Wong, the co-editor of this book and two previous books on the same topic (Wong & Canagarajah, 2009; Wong et al., 2013), which fostered dialogue between Christians and non-Christians. Wong and co-editor Ahmar Mahboob subsequently published a book which encompasses significant domains of teacher development, encompassing religious, cultural and self-identity, as well as teacher cognition. This book examines major world religions, such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism, and discusses how religious beliefs intersect with teacher identity, pedagogical practice, and language learning context (Wong & Mahboob, 2018). Moreover, Baurain (2012, 2016) explored the influence of Christian beliefs on TESOL teachers' knowledge, including their teaching philosophies, curricular selections, pedagogical commitments, and relationships with students. This study demonstrated that Christian values such as respect, love, and student-centeredness are integral to the development of teacher knowledge. Additionally, the influence of Islam on teachers' professional practices and decision-making has been aptly examined by Karimpour et al. (2022) and Vaccino-Salvadore (2021). Some scholars also discuss how other religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, can influence pedagogical strategies and choices in the classroom. For example, teachers could employ “spiritually motivated activities and materials” that are drawn from the Hindu concept of life in their classroom to foster ecological attentiveness and peace (Sharma, 2018, p.98). Also, Brown (2018) notes that a teacher's religious beliefs can shape their vision of pedagogy and student growth, influencing the strategies and resources they provide in the classroom. The scholars have clearly pinpointed the connection between religious beliefs and ELT, as well as how religion helps shape the normative horizon within which pedagogical strategies are designed, chosen, critiqued, and implemented, which is not often reflected in professional literature on language classrooms (Smith, 2018).

The abovementioned literature have shown the importance of investigating, discussing, and debating religious beliefs in the field of English Language Teaching, rather than dismissing or stereotyping them as taboo or private concerns (Baurain, 2012; 2016). Baurain (2016) asserts that due to the vital relevance of religious beliefs in human mind and culture, they should be incorporated into TESOL research, emphasizing the significance of teaching and learning. Also, the literature has clearly shown that many teachers believe that their personal religious beliefs is inextricably linked to how they learned what they know and why they teach in the manner they do as educators, and these beliefs should be considered as important elements of professional roles and work (Baurain, 2012; Chow, 2020). This suggests that the well-known pedagogical truism "we teach who we are" (Baurain, 2012, p. 328) extends to religious beliefs, as well as other aspects of identity and action. Additionally, Wong (2018) also suggests that philosophical changes in human inquiry from positivistic views to social constructivist orientations allow for the consideration of religion in language teaching and learning contexts. In this case, new understandings of teaching and learning as a developmental process value the significance of teacher identities.

**Religion in Malaysia**

Chew (2020) asserts that sociolinguists have recently started investigating the connection between language and religion, a subject that has traditionally been studied by anthropologists,
philosophers, psychologists, and theologians. The study of religion and language is important because they are interconnected in Asia and other parts of the world. English is considered a lingua franca, a holy language, and a tool for proselytizing. In order to attain a comprehensive understanding of Asian society, it is imperative to recognize the significant impact of religious beliefs in countries such as Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Taiwan (Chew, 2020). Therefore, research centered on Malaysia as the research context could potentially expand the existing literature on this topic.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2022), this country has a population of 29.8 million consisting of 69% Malays and Bumiputera, 23% Chinese, 6% percent Indians and less than 1% of other ethnic groups. Malaysia's distinctiveness lies in its diverse population, which comprises people of different races and religions (Sulong et al., 2019; Ibrahim, 2007). While race has become a prominent characteristic for Malaysia since the 1950s, religion has become increasingly significant since the 1980s (Ahmad Fauzi, 2018; Ibrahim, 2007). It appears that religious identity has supplanted ethnic identity as the key component of national identity (Barr & Govindasamy, 2010). Currently, Malaysia consists of 63.5% of Muslims, 18.7% of Buddhists, 9.1% of Christians, 6.1% of Hindus and 2% of others (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020). In this scenario, a person's ethnicity may not always indicate their religious affiliation, which is why their religious identity can be a crucial aspect of their identity (Liow & Noor, 2011). For example, some non-Malays are also Muslims, Chinese are Christians, Hindus are Buddhists. In this case, it might be problematic to identify an individual's religion with ethnicity (Ibrahim, 2007). With that being said, religious identity is important for Malaysia.

Religion has been a prominent factor in Malaysia's social, political, and personal spheres, serving as a personal identifier for Malaysians. Religion has consistently held significant importance for most Malaysians, serving as a means of identity and an indicator of political, sociocultural, and personal affiliation. (Means, 1978; Barr & Govindasamy, 2010). Similarly, religion emerged as a significant factor in the process of constitution-making and, indirectly, in defining the legal and political relationships between Malays and other ethnic groups (Means, 1978). This is because the Malaysian Constitution holds the position of primacy in shaping and directing public policy, which respects ethnic and religious diversity but accords Islam a prominent place. According to Article 3(1) of the Federal Constitution (1957) Malaysia, “Islam is the religion of the Federation”, while other religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, and Hinduism are freely practised by non-Muslims in this multireligious society as mentioned in Article 11, which has grown in numbers from the original seven million in Malaya at independence in 1957 to now over 30 million in 2020 in Malaysia (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020).

This situation creates religious pluralism where diversity is a “living reality”, freedom of belief is inevitably an integral part of that conceptualization of the role of religion in society (Sofjan, 2017). In this case, religion serves as “one of the principal sources of identity” and “fixes the tone of life” (Nagata, 1987, p. 37). Religion is not only capable of shaping the form of an individual's identity, but also of constructing the national identity of a nation state (Sabri et al., 2014). Having said that, religion plays a prominent role in Malaysians' life and it is a crucial identity marker for them regardless of which religion they are inclined to. The literature reveals that Malaysia is a multicultural and multireligious society with a diverse religious landscape that includes Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, and other religions. Given the significance of religion in the lives of many Malaysians, it is likely that religious beliefs play a considerable influence on ESL teachers' identity and pedagogical approaches. This is because religious beliefs
do have an impact on how teachers think and behave in their roles as educators (Almayez, 2022; Karimpour et al., 2022; Kubanyiova, 2013; Wong et al., 2013).

According to Mahboob and Courtney (2018), the discussion on the interconnection between ELT and other belief systems is under-researched. Moreover, Wong (2013) also proposes that additional study is needed to include non-Christian religions, non-Western contexts, and non-Western educators. In addition to that, the situation where some studies only examine one religion in each paper such as Islam (Almayez, 2022; Karimpour et al., 2022; Vaccino-Salvadore, 2021) and Christianity may limit its applicability to other contexts with different religions or cultural norms (Baurain, 2012; 2016). This research gap highlights the need for a comprehensive investigation of the potential interplay of religious beliefs between the identity of ESL teachers, particularly in Malaysia, a multicultural and multireligious context. This is because religion in Malaysia is viewed as a cultural aspect that pertains to fundamental aspects of life and death, right and wrong, as well as success and failure - essentially, the significance and ethics of existence (Ibrahim, 2007). Examining how teachers incorporate religious experiences into their professional lives can facilitate the development of a more thoughtful, introspective, and mindful teaching practice among educators and researchers (Canagarajah, 2018). Hence, undertaking a study on the influence of religious beliefs on ESL teacher identity in Malaysia is not only a logical decision, but also a vital and an essential endeavour that may provide valuable insights and enrich the literature on language teacher identity, inform ELT practices and teacher training and professional development, as well as contribute to the broader field of language teaching in multicultural contexts.

**Approach to ESL Teacher Identity**

This paper suggests that the study of religion and ESL teacher identity can be conceptualized by transidentitying, introduced by Richards and Wilson (2019) to show the interaction between ESL teacher’s religious identity and professional identity. This concept not only exemplifies the dynamic nature of teacher identity but also counters the traditional notions that regard individuals shift between multiple separate identities (Richards & Wilson, 2019).

**Transidentitying**

Transidentitying is a newly constructed concept that suggests that language teacher identity can be viewed as a "unitary underlying multidimensional identity" (Richards & Wilson, 2019, p. 182). This means that it emphasizes the holistic nature of teacher identity, which can be both unstable and multiple, as well as stable and unitary. It combines the concepts of identity that are constructed by identity Bucholtz and Hall (2005) together with Blommaert and Varis (2011), as well as translanguaging (Garcia & Wei, 2014). It dismantles the traditional view of identity, where individuals move back and forth between different identities (Richards & Wilson, 2019). They view identity as a unified underlying multidimensional identity, achieved through interactions. In this case, transidentitying is a situation where a teacher has a repertoire of teacher identity and "adjusts or makes transitions between distinct identity-markers, traits, or processes within a given social interaction to reflect changes in roles, social relationships, affinities, positions, meanings, and intention" (p.182).

Richards and Wilson (2019) elaborate on the concept of transidentitying by demonstrating the identity markers, processes, or features that cause teachers to position and reposition themselves according to these six circumstances during social interactions: "teacher-learning,
teacher-to-student interactions, teacher-to-teacher interactions, and social media interactions" (p.183). These categories include: to illustrate the changes in social proximity, which refers to a instructor adjusting himself from the vantage point of being an educator to a persona that is more casual and friendly as a mean to create rapport with college students in English classes; to show authenticity, which refers to a transition of a mere language instructor to that of a competent, functionality and expert in the English language; to establish a status, which refers to an instructor using a title or volunteer information to mirror his or her occupational repute; to show a change in roles which refers to teachers oscillating between a formal to casual settings or vice versa during interaction; to acknowledge the audience, which refers to an English instructors making an attempt to acknowledge the students’ culture and mother tongue an ideal way to establish a positive rapport with them; to show stance and affiliation, which refers back to the manner teachers made their opinion clear and express their stance during an interaction which handles discussions associated with politics and religion. These categories could serve as a guideline for researcher study in interpreting the scenario and why ESL instructors trans-identity themselves.

As noted above, teacher identity construction involves two dimensions of a teacher: personal and professional (Arvaja, 2016; Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Day et al., 2006; Pennington & Richards, 2016). As the combination of the two notions forms a cohesive and complete teacher identity (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017), teacher’s personal and professional identities are inseparable from teacher identity (White, 2009; 2014). This is because teacher connects the features and aspects of personal identity to work-related identity – professional identity while constructing teacher identity (Pennington & Richards, 2016). This situation suggests that teacher identity development is dynamic and complex. It is a product of a complex combination of personal and professional notions that interact and influence each other (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017), and subsequently lead to an interrelationship of teacher personal and professional identities (Day et al., 2006). With that being said, teacher identity consists of multiple identities, yet they should not be seen as fragmented. Richards and Wilson’s (2019) transidentitying that captures teacher identity as "a unitary underlying multidimensional identity" (p. 182) explains the interrelationship of multiple identities.

![Diagram of transidentitying in this study](Adapted from Richards & Wilson, 2019)

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**Figure 1.** Application of transidentitying in this study (Adapted from Richards & Wilson, 2019)
Applying transidentitying to examine religious beliefs’ impact on ESL teacher identity.

Moreover, religious orientation is included in the personal dimension of teacher identity and affects personal and professional dimensions interaction (White, 2009; 2014). White (2014) maintained that religion is a component of a teacher’s personal core self (White, 2014) and thus religious beliefs influence teachers’ personal notions such as thinking and action (Johnston, 2003; White, 2014) and inform professional notions (White, 2009, 2014). Having said that, religious beliefs may impact both personal and professional identities interaction during teacher identity construction.

According to Varghese et al. (2005), identity refers to an individual’s ‘understanding of self’, which is not solely determined by the individual but is also shaped by various social, political, cultural, and religious contexts. Religion, in fact, constitutes an identity referred to as religious identity. With that being said, teachers who are inclined to religious beliefs will inculcate religious identity in themselves, and thus religious beliefs are directly associated with religious identity (White, 2014). In this sense, religious beliefs are inseparable from religious identity because beliefs are inseparable from the ‘self’ (Hartse & Nazari, 2018). This implies that religious identity could be considered as an identity marker (Kubota, 2018) from the personal dimension that permeates an individual’s professional experience and is intertwined with professional identity (Vaccino-Salvadore, 2021). The need to investigate a teacher's entire identity implies a reciprocal interaction between religion and teacher identity, where religious beliefs can influence a teacher's professional identity and practice, and professional context can also impact a teacher's religious identity (Vaccino-Salvadore, 2021). This shows the interrelationship of a teacher’s personal and professional notions. If a teacher's identity is considered holistically, religious beliefs can impact professional identity and practice, and concurrently, professional context can also influence religious identity (Vaccino-Salvadore, 2021). This is because, religious identity is inconsistent and difficult to disentangle from other influences (Mahboob & Courtney, 2018). Thus, teacher’s personal and professional dimensions intertwine to produce teacher identity.

While Vaccino-Salvatore's (2021) study has shown that a teacher's religious identity intersects with their professional identity, the intricate process of how these identities interact with each other has not been thoroughly examined. The application of the concept of transidentitying may capture how teachers integrating their personal notions of religious identity, which foreground their religious stance and affiliation, into their professional identity, and how they trans-identity themselves in the process.

In essence, utilizing this concept enables researcher to capture the negotiation between a teacher’s religious and professional identities. Transidentitying may serve as a lens to understand the process how ESL teachers negotiate, adjust and position themselves when striking coherence between personal self in religious identity and professional self in professional to construct a unitary multidimensional teacher identity through social interaction. The six circumstances of transidentitying may also guide the researcher to identify the situations in which teacher trans-identity themselves when connecting personal notions to professional notions. Since this is a newly constructed concept, there is a need to explore how, why and when the selected ESL teachers trans-identity themselves. This may also contribute to the literature of TESOL research.

Conclusion and Implication

This article seeks to investigate the relationship between religion and the identity of ESL instructors. Religion, as an integral component of human existence, can be a central aspect of
teachers' identities, influencing their self-perception, worldview, and interactions. Religion may also influence ESL teacher's moral and ethical values, as well as their instructional approach and topic selection. This article proposes a conceptual framework that highlights the relationship between personal and professional identity by investigating the role of religion in ESL teachers' identity negotiations. Specifically, the study focuses on the religious beliefs of English teachers and utilize Transidentitying to capture the influence on teacher identity. The findings from such study may assist ESL teachers in better aligning their personal and professional development. Moreover, it can also inform teacher professional development and curriculum development in Malaysia. Future research in other cultural contexts may expand on these findings by comparing and contrasting results to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how religion influences ESL teacher identity and practise. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the effect of religion on the identity of ESL teachers in multicultural contexts such as Malaysia.

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About the Authors
Lee Yii Tyng is currently pursuing her PhD in education at University of Malaya, majoring in TESL. She is also working as a lecturer in the department of English for academic purposes (ESAP) in Sunway University. Her research interests include; teacher identity and teacher professional development. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9920-0181

Dr. Fatiha Senom is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Malaya's Department of Language and Literacy Education. She specializes in second language teacher education and professional development, TESOL, instructed second language acquisition, content and language integrated learning, and teaching English for young learners. Her projects include exploring ESL novice teachers' professional identity, internationalizing second language teacher education curricula, designing a CLIL module for primary Science instruction in English, and implementing alternative assessment through plays for young learners. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0096-1875

Dr Lim Jia Wei is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Language and Literacy Education, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya. She lectures, supervises and publishes research related to English literature in education. Having completed her PhD in Cambridge University where she researched the development of STPM Literature in English in Malaysia, she has since been involved in projects to promote the teaching and learning of Literature in English, including literature in language education, in Malaysia. Her areas of expertise are reading, post compulsory education and literature education. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9097-0729

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Humor in The Stand-Up Comedy You Wanna Hear Something Crazy?: A Universal Pragmatic Study

Zainab Ahmed Mohammed
Department of English, College of Education for Women
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq
Corresponding Author: zainab.ahmed2103m@coeduw.uobaghdad.edu.iq

Nawal Fadhil Abbas
Department of English, College of Education for Women
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq

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Abstract
Humor is an interesting phenomenon that has been studied widely, yet it is considered a universal trait that cannot be an old subject for a study. This study is conducted to investigate humor from a universal pragmatic lens in a stand-up comedy show, namely, You Wanna Hear Something Crazy?. It aims to study humor as a coin with two sides, the production side and the understanding side. To achieve the aim of the study, the researchers use an eclectic contains Grice's CP model (1975) and Habermas's UP model (1979, 1984, 1987, 1998). The study has noted that while using the observance and the non-observance of the cooperative maxims to produce humor, the universal validity claims of truth, sincerity, and normative rightness for reaching a mutual understanding with the audience are raised. The study concludes that more than one maxim can be used, whether it is observed or non-observed, to produce humor. Besides, humor can be produced through the combination sequence of the observance and the non-observance of maxims. It is also shown that humor has adhered to the universal validity claims of truth, sincerity, and normative rightness. On the whole, humor is used communicatively to get the hearer into a mutual understanding.

Keywords: Cooperative Principle, Humor, Stand-up Comedy, Universal Pragmatics, Validity Claims, You Wanna Hear Something Crazy?.

Introduction

The word "humor" is seen as a technical term that encompasses anything that is (or maybe) perceived as amusing, hilarious, or laughable (Attardo, 2020). It is a frame of mind, a style of viewing and experiencing life, it is a kind of outlook, sharing a distinctive point of view and one which has excellent therapeutic power (Midness, 1971 as cited by Abbas, 2019). Meyer (2000) urges that humor is a social phenomenon that could be a weapon of clarification that allows people to express their thoughts creatively, as well as a tool of differentiation and enforcement that will enable people to criticize people or issues through contradiction and sarcasm. At the same time, Martin (2007) states that humor is a broad term that covers everything perceived as funny and makes others laugh, as well as the mental processes involved in creating and recognizing such an amusing stimulus and the emotive reaction involved in appreciating it. However, humor and other related terms that cause laughter are universal human expressions and aspects of human experience. Nevertheless, one of the rules of humor telling is that speaker should not laugh while the joke is being told, and the hearer should behave cooperatively with what has been suggested, i.e., it is opposed to the formal rules of behavior or what we refer to as "Good manners" (as cited in Abbas, 2019). That is why, for ages, researchers have drawn their attention to the study of humor. However, the humor genre has been the subject of many studies, but stand-up comedy has received little attention; more specifically, no attention has been paid to the American stand-up comedy, namely, You Wanna Hear Something Crazy?.

In the following study, the main aim will be shed on linguistic aspects of verbal humor in stand-up comedy, namely, You Wanna Hear Something Crazy? To explore how stand-up comedian raises clues for the audience to get them to a mutual understanding to elicit laughter and make the work appreciated. Humor can be divided into two phases: humor competence and humor performance. Humor competence refers to the speaker's and listener's ability to create and recognize humor in a context. Humor performance, on the other hand, is defined as the desire and willingness to perceive humor. As a result, a variety of linguistic and pragmatic processes have to be used by both the speaker and the hearer that aid in the accurate interpretation of the humorous utterance in the communicative action (Attardo, 2001, as cited in Abbas, 2021). In the present study, the researchers have an interest in showing how humor is produced by using Gricean Conversational Maxims (1975) and how it can be understood by the audience by using the Universal Pragmatic Theory (1979, 1984, 1987, 1998). As such, the current study aims to evaluate the two parts of humor: production and understanding, utilizing an eclectic model in Universal Pragmatics to answer the following questions for this study:

1. What are the cooperative maxims used by the speaker to produce humor in the selected stand-up comedy?
2. How does the speaker get his audience to a mutual understanding, i.e.,? What are the validity claims that are raised by the speaker to get the audience to a mutual understanding?

Literature Review

Universal Pragmatics

The power assigned to language is magical. It can be used to carry out a variety of actions because it is the human mind's mirror; as Austin (1962) stated "Saying something is doing something" (p.101). Thus, using and understanding language is dependent not only on grammatical correctness or the users' vocab bank but also on the given situated context. This appropriate use of
language within the given context is the primary concern of pragmatics. While pragmatics is the study of meaning in speech contexts (Leech, 1983), universal pragmatics is the study of understating this meaning, i.e., is the study of how a speaker offers clues in his/her speech to get hearer/s for mutual understanding in a specific context (Habermas, 1979). However, Habermas, in the 1970s, proposed the program of "universal pragmatics", in his later work called "formal pragmatics" to capture the study of language in use differently.

Humans have a deep-seated urge for mutual understanding. We are one another's harvest. We are the magnitude and connectedness of one another. Universal Pragmatics (UP) is found to identify the universal conditions of reaching a mutual understanding as well as to reduce the world's social struggles - confrontations, competitions, war, avarice, perplexity, and so on that arise from people's misunderstanding (Habermas, 1979). As a result, any approaches or projects aimed at developing understanding can significantly minimize these social conflicts.

However, UP distinguishes between communicative action and strategic actions; by this term, communicative action refers to the social action in which participants work to achieve mutual understanding and to coordinate the group actions through deliberation, agreement, and cooperation rather than acting alone to achieve their individual goals. In contrast, strategic actions refer to social situations_ as when one tries to influence others' mind and practice power over others through using tactics of persuasion (Habermas, 1984).

In contrast, strategic action needs to hide the reasons behind one's intention to influence others; communicative action needs to understand the reasons behind one's intention. That is, it needs to raise the universal validity claims behind one's utterance. By 'understanding', Habermas does not only mean raising justification for accepting a claim; rather he refers to the process of participation in which participants assess the justification for the claim. The participant decides whether the reasons raised are acceptable, and if questioned, the participant can defend his/her justifications for the rating.

The contrast between communicative and strategic action is at the core of Habermas' thought. Those who engage in strategic action pursue their goals. They might work together or compete in this process, depending on whether their goals conflict or frequently match. Their cooperation is driven by empirical factors; they want to maximize their profit or minimize their loss. Their participation in a communicative action demonstrates their desire for mutual understanding, as seen in Figure One. To say that, the motive for cooperation is logical rather than empirical, as proven by people responding to requests when they believe they are legitimate (Habermas, 1984).

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**Figure 1.** Orientation of action (Set by the researchers)

Note. This figure demonstrates an explanation for the two main orientations of actions. To understand the figure in general, read the description above regarding strategic activities and communicative actions. Set by the researchers.
Validity Claims

The term Validity Claims (VCs) is a central point in Habermas's work. It opposes Searle's Speaker Oriented Theory (Habermas, 1984). Instead of this one-sided theory, Habermas aims to develop an approach to communication to reach a mutual understanding. To achieve such mutual understanding, the speaker and hearer must agree on universal VCs raised in communication. This is how Habermas describes it in his UP: "The aim of reaching an understanding [verständigung] is to bring about an agreement [Einverständins] that terminates in share knowledge, mutual trust (...)the agreement is based on recognizing the corresponding validity claims of comprehensibility truth, truthfulness, and rightness"(Habermas, 2001, p. 23).

Habermas' theory is that understanding the meaning of an utterance entails understanding and accepting the reasons behind that utterance. This is why Habermas views his theory pragmatically since the "internal Connection" between meaning and understanding relies on the speaker and hearer, who provide justifications or arguments while they are engaging in communication (Finlayson, 2015). That is, to reach mutual understanding, a speaker needs to practice the art of being communicative, hand in hand; raising the following VCs is a must for acting communicatively:

1. uttering something understandable;
2. giving the hearer something to understand;
3. making himself understandable;
4. coming to understand another person. (Habermas, 1979, p. 2)

VCs are to be observed in every communication that intends to achieve mutual understanding. Coming to an understanding is the process of reaching an agreement based on mutually recognized validity claims. Habermas has outlined his three primary claims for the validity claims:

1. The truth claim is related to the external world.
2. The Sincerity claim is associated with the speaker's subjective world.
3. The Normative claim is related to others.

Based on the fact that any speaker raises the validity claims while he is acting communicatively, on the other hand, any hearer can challenge the acceptance of the speech based on the three universal VCs. Habermas uses the example of the professor who asks his students to bring him a glass of water to clarify the challenges that could be raised by the student who refuses to do the requested action of the professor. The student can refuse the professor's request based on a) the fact that there is no water around, b) his Sincerity; the professor may be testing the student to see how he reacts in front of the others, c) normative grounds, as the student can argue that it is inappropriate to ask him this (Habermas, 1987). Once this agreement is broken and the assumption that specific validity claims are satisfied (or perhaps justified) is abandoned, the goal of mutual understanding is to arrive at a new account of the situation that all participants can agree on. If their attempt fails, they cannot communicate further (Habermas, 1979).

Speech Acts

To reach mutual understanding and to identify mutual social goals through rational discourse, which is free from deception, UP recognizes that speech acts as the ground for universal VCs. Wuthnow (1984) states that the speech act is a tangible cultural unit that is examined to identify the conditions that make its use meaningful. Speech acts range in complexity from the more basic to the more complex. There are certain situations where just one word or phrase may
be regarded as a speech act. In contrast, in other situations it may be more acceptable to consider an entire conversation, book, or event (p.199). Thus, various speech acts are used in different speech settings and events (Wales, 2011, as cited in Muhammed, Hasson, & Thalab, 2022).

Interlocutors may give advice, threaten, warn, or issue orders to accomplish their goals. According to Austin's (1962) theory, saying something is doing something. Searle (1969) offers modifications to this idea by proposing four felicitous conditions—propositional, preparatory, sincere, and essential—for the successful performance of an illocution. At the same time, Habermas's taxonomy (1998) is entirely based on the speaker's dominant claim to get the hearer to mutual understanding rather than his intentions only. To avoid confusion with Searle's taxonomy, Bannon, Robinson, and Schmidt (1991) use Latin terminology for Habermas's taxonomy which comprises Imperativa, Constativa, Regulativa, and Expressiva. They are explained as follows:

**Imperativa**

In this class, S aims to lead H to do him an act that serves his desires. For example;

1. Shut the door.

   The power claim is the prevailing claim. The reason behind denying an Imperativa implies rejecting the power claim.

**Constativa**

In this class, S makes a claim about what is going on in the objective world that is in the real world. The claim to truth is the dominating claim. Typically, denying a Constativa means that H opposes the claim to truth. For examples;

2. It is raining.

**Regulativa**

Here S refers to an everyday social world in such a way that he attempts to develop a legitimate interpersonal relationship. The claim to justice is the most important. Denial of a Regulativa usually means H questions the claim's normative justice. For example;

3. I promise you to take the horse away.

**Expressiva**

In this category, S refers to his inner world so that he shares a lived experience with the public. The claim to sincerity is the dominant claim. Typically, denying an Expressiva signifies that H denies S's sincerity in expressing himself. For example;

4. I congratulate you on winning the race.

**Pragmatics**

Pragmatics is an aspect of the study of language in use. It concerns how language users connect, communicate, and understand linguistic activity (Chapman & Clark, 2014, as cited in Ibrahim & Abbas, 2016a). According to Majeed (2021), "Pragmatics is the study of meaning that systematically relies on the use of language"(p.19). It is the scientific study of meaning in the social, textual, or situational environment in which a person speaks. It also requires that the participants have a common background (Paltridge, 2012).

There are four regions in the pragmatic inquiry, as Yule states (1996). The study of the hidden meaning is the first part of pragmatics. Second, pragmatics is the study of meaning in a
given circumstance. It exemplifies pragmatics' capacity to examine how speakers order their words in response to the circumstances and environment in which they speak. Third, pragmatics studies how communication occasionally lacks a speaker's direct expression. The fourth one is that pragmatics demonstrates how communication can differ depending on how near speakers and listeners are to one another. To summarize, pragmatics is the study of speech meaning. People can learn about the meaning of communication, the assumptions that emerge from speech, and the behaviors that people perform when they engage in a conversation. In a nutshell, it provides a comprehensive picture of speech production with whatever aids are used to provide meaningful explanations. However, there are many theories under the umbrella of pragmatics. Among such theories is the Cooperative Principle Theory by Grice (1975).

**Cooperative Principle**

Grice (1975) asserts that four fundamental rules for communication collectively represent the Cooperative Principles that must be followed while speaking with someone, and these rules can be expressed as guidelines for successful and efficient language use (As cited in Hussein, 2020). He highlights the importance of cooperation in conversations and lays out four rules, called "maxims": quality, quantity, relation, and manner. These maxims apply purely to language use intended to be informative, such as small talk and snap chat (Renkema, 2004, as cited in Ibrahim & Abbas, 2016b). However, there are two ways to apply these adages. The first method is to carry out the maxim's observance, and the second is to carry out the maxim's non-observance. The speaker refers to practicing a maxim observance if they successfully apply these maxims. Meanwhile, when the speaker entirely ignores the rule, this is referred to as the non-observance of a maxim.

**A: Observance of Maxims**

In the case where the speaker sticks to the rules of communication to get an efficient conversation; the observance of the maxim happens. Grice (1975) classifies the four maxims as follows:

1. **Maxim of Quantity**
   In this maxim, speakers must keep their speech as it is needed in conversation, no more or less than it is required.

2. **Maxim of Quality**
   Holding this maxim requires the speaker to be honest and explicit. In other words, speakers must not say what they lack adequate evidence for or what they believe to be false.

3. **Maxim of Relation**
   As for this maxim, the speaker must offer something related to what has come before.

4. **Maxim of Manner**
   Whereas the last maxim asks speakers to avoid obscurity of expression, avoid ambiguity, and be brief, and orderly (pp.45-46).

**B: Non-Observance of Maxims**

When the speaker completely ignores or fails to observe the maxims, non-observance occurs. There are four ways to avoid the following maxims: opting out, violating, infringing, and flouting (Cutting, 2002).
(1) Flouting: Maxim flouting occurs when a speaker intentionally refuses to follow a maxim for specific goals. He/she may flout any of the observance maxims; that is, flouting can occur in manner, quantity, quality, and relation.

(2) Violating: refers to situations in which the speaker intentionally offers false, insufficient, or non-existent information, and the audience incorrectly assumes they are cooperating. According to Cutting, breaching a maxim is frequently done to mislead or deceive.

(3) Opting out: When the speaker refuses to participate, the speaker opts out of a maxim. Occasionally, the speaker cannot answer as intended for legal or ethical reasons.

(4) Infringing: The speaker violates the maxims due to her/his poor linguistic performance. In other words, a speaker violates the maxims when he or she has an imperfect knowledge or performance of languages, such as a foreign language student or a young child (pp. 36-41).

Method

In this study, the researchers use a qualitative method for the analysis. Having a qualitative analysis enables the researchers to expand the scope of their analysis to examine the examples with more depth. According to Torihin (2012), qualitative research examines phenomena such as behavior, perception, motivation, and action that research subjects encounter (as cited in Hamood & Challob, 2023). It usually ends up with naturalistic, interpretive rather than statistical outcomes (Mackey & Gass, 2005, as cited in Abed Al-Hussein & Al-Saaidi, 2022).

Due to the nature of the current study's design, which is qualitative, the procedure for data analysis begins early in the data collection process and continues throughout the project (Wimmer & Dominick, 2010). This means that when the researchers do the data collection in this type of research, they have already begun data analysis by using the data sheets in the form of tables as a guide for processing identification and analysis. However, the form of the data sheet of the present study is presented in Table One.

In this study, the researchers employ the content analysis of the spoken words in the Stand-up comedian show and the written text of the show script to find out the universal conditions that are raised by the comedian to get their audience to a mutual understanding. Besides, the production level cannot be out of the project; that is, how the comedians produce humorous utterances by the observance and non-observance of the Cooperative Principle and its maxims, using an eclectic model for its analysis. An eclectic model is a term that indicates the employment of multiple models in the analytical section in a way that fits the selected data and study's objectives. The eclectic model employed in this study contains Grice's CP model (1975) and Habermas's UP model (1979, 1984, 1987, 1998). However, several remarkable points must be taken into considered; since the main objective of this study is to identify the universal conditions for reaching a mutual understanding, gender, and cultural variations are not taken into consideration; thus, they both can be beneficial suggestions for future studies.
Table 1. The form of a datasheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract N0.</th>
<th>Pragmatics</th>
<th>Universal Pragmatics</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Production Level</td>
<td>Process Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OM</td>
<td>NM</td>
<td>VC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ms. Pat produces humor throughout the combination of violating the quality maxim and then keeping the quality maxim. She uses the assertive form of the constativa act "I thought …… but that's not what it was". According to Habermas' (1987) theory, this indicates that the speaker makes a claim about what is happening in the objective world, or the actual world, as Ms. Pat did.

Data Collection

The primary data source in this research is the stand-up comedian show entitled You Wanna Hear Something Crazy. The secondary data source is the script of the show, which is retrieved from https://www.netflix.com/iq-en/browse/genre/2867892. The selected show is one of the top shows according to the IMDB ranking in Jardon Woods's article in 2022.

To obtain the data, the researchers used the Simak and Catat (read and write) technique and careful observation (Sudaryanto, 1993). This technique aims to collect valuable data related to the research questions and objectives. Since the research data are in the form of utterances, these strategies are appropriate for use. According to Sudaryanto (1993), the simak approach is made by paying close attention to the use of language. Thus, when observing humor understanding, the researchers carefully observed the audience's response while listening to every word the character spoke. Using this method, the researchers focused on the use of humor in four extracts. The selected extracts are (a) written scripts done manually by the researchers and (b) representative of various ideas Ms. Pat tries to take her audience with to qualify as analytical materials.
Show Description
This show is about Ms. Pat's personal experience; she takes the audience through her parenting days and how she was raised. She speaks out on various problems, including pretentious dog lovers and today's unfortunate lip trends. Ms. Pat makes her audience laugh hard by filming her experiences as a black child and her children's adventures ranging from five days in a juvenile detention center to getting baptized over a hundred times at local churches.

Data Analysis
In this section, the four selected extracts from the aforementioned show "You Wanna Hear Something Crazy?" that hold various ideas Ms. Pat tries to convey will be analyzed. These extracts are contextualized and analyzed in an elaborated manner to examine the UP principles of understanding humor and humor production. This examination is based on certain steps: identifying exactly where the humor lies in the utterance and then specifying the mechanisms of production and understanding.

Extract One:
Ms. Pat: My mom was very particular about the houses she rented, y'all. She used to love to rent a house with a chimney, and I thought the reason why she wanted the house with the chimney is because she wanted Santa Claus to come see her Black kids, [pause] but that's not what it was.

Audience: [laugh]

Ms. Pat: The reason why she wanted a house with a chimney, 'cause we were poor as fuck and we couldn't afford light and gas, so she would always keep the fuckin' lights on, and we would have to cook in the fuckin' fireplace……

Audience: [laugh]

Contextualizing the Extract
Ms. Pat is telling her childhood memories as an innocent child in a poor family knowing nothing about the true situation of renting a house with a chimney. She makes a laugh out of her suffering as a poor black child waiting for Santa Claus to make her dreams come true from the poor chimney. The audience laughs due to the dark comedy of the poor child.

Linguistic Analysis
The extract above shows the non-observance of the quality maxim carried out by Ms. Pat through violating it and holding the observance of the quality maxim. Ms. Pat produces humor throughout the combination of both violating the quality maxim and then keeping the quality maxim. She draws her audience with storytelling about her childhood when her mom used to rent a house with a chimney "My mom was very particular about the houses she rented……", they used to live in a house with a chimney. Then she tells them why her mom used to do so when she says "because she wanted Santa Claus to come see her black kids" That is neither true nor related to the actual cause for renting a house with a chimney. Santa Claus does not even exist. By doing so she violates the quality maxim when she gives a reason that is not true. Thus, the audience is aware of her violation of the truth maxim since they share almost identical background knowledge about Santa. But this violation does not create humor alone. She uses her style as a comedian and draws her audience's attention to an actual incident that occurred in her life that
makes them laugh. Humor is produced when she says "but that's not what it was....the reason...... 'cause we was poor ..... and we couldn't afford light and gas......", she keeps on the observance maxim of quality by acknowledging what has been said is not the truth and the reason behind renting a house with a chimney is that they are poor to the extent they can't afford gas and light. By doing so, she takes the darkest in her life and turns that into laughter, because when you can laugh at it that means you get control of it. That makes her audience laugh loudly.

Hand in hand goes with the production level through violating then keeping the maxims, validity claims of uttering something understandable and giving the audience something to understand have been met here to represent the understanding level. Ms. Pat's desire to be a successful comic necessitates her ability to practice the art of communication and establish a mutual understanding with her audience by raising the validity claims to achieve mutual understanding. It goes further to say that there is a shared knowledge between Ms. Pat and her audience about "chimneys, Santa, and childhood imagination, gas, and lights payments" that she uses to hold the validity claims in her utterance.

Another part of Habermas' UP theory is to achieve understanding, a successful speech must meet three more claims. One of the claims is that the speech must be valid in the sense that it reflects something in the objective world of the audience. In this regard, Ms. Pat addresses issues about "chimneys, Santa, and childhood imagination as well as being a poor black child" that are related to human lives which meet Habermas's truth condition. Moreover, when the speaker raises a claim of truth, willingly, a constativa speech act will be present in his/her utterance. As for Ms. Pat, she uses the assertive form " I thought", which indicates her constativa speech act. In Habermas's theory, the constativa act means the speaker claims what is going on in the objective world, that is, in the real world, as Ms. Pat did. She addresses a universal issue that can be understood by all, which is being poor to the extent you can't afford light and gas because they cost an arm and a leg for poor families; besides, what has been told about Santa Claus is not true, and life is harsh not only for adults but even for children. Furthermore, she raises the sincerity claim since what she is talking about is her own experience with her audience. This can be noticed when she uses the possessive pronoun "my" and the pronominal pronouns "I" and "we" for a deictic purpose to refer to her own story.

Extract Two:

Ms. Pat: you would come over to our house in the summertime. It's a hundred degrees,
Audience: [laugh]
Ms. Pat: we got a Cracker Barrel fireplace going with a whole rack in there, frying chicken on pine wood. The walls sweating, and we sweating. We're in our underwear, looking like we just got off a fuckin' boat.
Audience: [laugh]
Ms. Pat: My mama got the only fuckin' fan in her face, watching the "Young and the Restless". We back there, "Mommy, it's hot, it's hot". She'd be like, "Take it like a man". I'm like, "Bitch, I am a girl".
Audience: [laugh]

Contextualizing the Extract

Ms. Pat keeps holding the same story as a child in a low-income family when her mom used to rent a house with a chimney. At the beginning, she gives the fact behind having a house
with a chimney, but there is more to tell her audience about her darkest moment with a chimney, especially in the summertime.

**Linguistic Analysis**

The extract above shows the non-observance of the quantity, quality, and relation maxims and shows the observance of the maxim of relation carried out by Ms. Pat to tell her audience how is the status of living in a house with a chimney.

When Ms. Pat gives too much information about; living in a house with a chimney, summertime temperature, her mom's favorite show, and even their outfit when they are at home, she violates the maxim of quantity. Therefore, she is not being informative as she is supposed to be. Simply, she could have said that living there is hot. Starting that by pointing to the summertime temperature in their house when she overstates the true incident by saying "It's a hundred degrees" cause it is impossible to live in less than a hundred degrees, she violates the quality maxim. However, when she says, "We got a Cracker Barrel fireplace....." she uses an analogical description to say that their house is as hot as this place, but they use it to fry chickens and not biscuits. By doing so, she keeps observing the relevance maxim since both places are used for cooking though they differ in what they are used for cooking. She uses this analogy and adheres to the observance of the relation maxims to make the picture clear for her audience. Besides, she violates the quality maxim in an ironic form when she says, "The walls sweating, we sweating…….looking like we just got off a fuckin' boat," using this form to describe the weather in their house in a funny way. When she says, "My mama ….. watching the "Young and the Restless," she observes the relation maxim since the show talks about restlessness and suffering, just as their life was at that time. Finally, when she keeps complaining to her mom that it is hot, her mom tells her to act like a man, as if a man is not a normal human and he could endure a hundred degrees there. In this sense, she gives a truthful statement to her mom, holding the observance of the quality maxim when she says, "Bitch, I am a girl," which triggers humor.

Hand in hand goes with the production level; validity claims of uttering something understandable, giving the hearer something to understand, and making oneself understandable have been met here to represent the understanding level. As universal pragmatic theory requires, Ms. Pat builds a foundation for legitimate interpersonal relations with her audience when she says the invitation form" you would come over our house ...." to raise the claim of rightness in the regulativa speech act. In Habermas's theory, the regulativa act means the speaker claims to develop an interpersonal relationship with the hearer; that is, to build solidarity that is free from any kind of deception or power. Besides, she builds an intersubjectivity sense in communication with her audience by using the possessive pronouns "our" and "my" to raise the sincerity claim in her expressiva speech act to indicate her intention to share her memories with her audience. Thus, in Habermas's theory, expressiva speech act means the speaker refers to his intentions in such a way that shows a lived experience with the public.

To make the long story short, Ms. Pat raises the rightness claim in a regulativa act that matches the social world with her audience, which causes mutual understanding, as well as raises the sincerity claim in her expressiva act that matches her subjective world, which clarifies her free deception utterance . The only intention she has is sharing her story with her audience without any attempt to change the world according to her words.
Extract Three:

Ms. Pat: I get to school, y'all, and my principal comes up to me, a big old, tall man with thick-ass glasses. Looked like if he couldn't read, he could have made it to the NBA. He come up to me and he was like, "Young lady, I need to speak to you in the office". So I walk in the office, and no lie, the police there, the counselor there, my teacher there, and he's there, and all these motherfuckers standing there looking at me. I'm like, "What the fuck is going on"? 'Cause you know I have been cussing my whole damn life. And he looked at me. He said, "We noticed that you got a bunch of bruises and blisters and burns all on you." We wanna know what's going on at the house. Are you a cutter? I'm like, [pause], nah. " I was frying chicken in the chimney".

Audience: [ laugh]

Contextualizing the Extract

On the same rhythm, Ms. Pat takes her audience with her school's memories. She hits a susceptible point about a big challenge in communities where a child could face poverty and suffering. As they were all there, the police, the counselor, the principal, and the teacher, all noticed a bunch of bruises, blisters, and burns on her body. They were asking if she was a cutter. In fact, she was burned by the chimney, i.e., because of poverty. However, they took no action to pick her up from her suffering.

Linguistic Analysis

The extract above shows the observance of the quality and relation maxims carried out by Ms. Pat. She tells her audience a story to jot down the school community's reaction when they see her with a bunch of bruises, blisters, and burns on her body, carrying no action toward her suffering. Ironically, all those responsible people didn’t even try to pick her up from her suffering. However, she gives a full description of everything there and keeps observing the quality maxim when she says "..... and no lie.....", on one hand. On the other hand, she holds all the observance maxims when they ask her "Are you a cutter?" she says, "I was frying chicken in the chimney". By doing so, she keeps her answer as true, relevant, ordered, and brief as it is supposed to be, to trigger humor.

While she produces humor by using her techniques, she raises the universal validity claims in her utterance to get the goal of reaching a mutual understanding with her audience; uttering something understandable, giving the hearer something to understand, and making oneself understandable all have been met as her audience responds by uttering a laugh. This can be explained when the pronominal "I" occurs frequently in her utterance; it is made for the deictic purpose that has the effect of foregrounding the sincerity of Ms. Pat in what she wants to address. She shares her story with her audience with no form of persuasive or power over them. On the contrary, using discourse markers such as "....y'all, ....' Cause you know..." can be considered positive expressions when she uses them to pretend shared knowledge with her audience and build an intersubjectivity sense.

In a nutshell, Ms. Pat raises the sincerity claim in her expressiva act that matches her subjective world, which clarifies her only intention to sharr her story with her audience without any attempt to change the world according to her words. In Habermas's theory, as mentioned
previously, *expressiva* speech act means the speaker refers to his intentions in such a way that shows a lived experience with the public.

**Extract Four:**

Ms. Pat: I gotta keep it real 'cause I love everybody….White women, I love you to death….but you gotta stop doing nigga shit. Y'all gotta stop going out here buying these nigga-lips, white women [pause]they're too big for your fuckin' face. If you're gonna buy these nigga-lips, you need these African cheekbones …stop that shit.

Audience: [ laugh ]

**Contextualizing the Extract**

From her life experience to the trendy lips filler, Ms. Pat hits nowadays lips fillers that don’t suit all women.

**Linguistic Analysis**

The extract above shows the observance of all the cooperative maxims carried out by Ms. Pat. She keeps her utterance as true, relevant, ordered, and brief as it is supposed to be. From the very beginning, she declares her desire to follow the cooperative principles when she says, "I gotta keep it real…...", that is, I am going to tell only and only the truth. Besides, when she compares white women's lips filler to the lips of women of color, she keeps her utterance related to the intended topic that both lips, lips with filler and black women's lips, are big. By making this similarity, she keeps her utterance not only related but also true since black women naturally have big lips that technically suit their facial features. Hence, if a white woman does not have black features, it is better to stop following surgical trends on her face. That is what Ms. Pat tries to hit cooperatively.

On the universal pragmatic theory, she raises various validity claims to keep herself understandable and communicative. She raises claims of truth, rightness, and sincerity that represent different worlds and speech acts by using multiple techniques. Firstly, she uses the pronominal "I" when she says, "White women, I love you to death " for the deictic purpose, which has the effect of a sincerity claim. She wishes to express her love toward white women and to establish a friendly conversation that is free from any form of red flags; she only wants to express her opinion toward nowadays trends without any attempt to offend white women or be racist. Secondly, when she asks white women to stop following the filler trend, using the *constativa* speech act " they're too big ...." claims what is going on in the objective world, that is, these trendy lips are too big for white women's face with an objective justification that they need African's cheekbones " need these African cheekbones". The claim to truth is the dominating claim in this act. As she talks about an already known trend, it already exists in the objective world that all the audience can comprehend. Moreover, repeating the word "stop" stresses the shared background knowledge about lips filler, facial features, and women's obsession with trends. Thirdly, giving a logical justification for unsuitable big lips for white women raises not only a claim of truth but also a claim of rightness. Ms. Pat has no right to prevent white women from doing so. Thus, white women have the right to choose what they like, and they have the right to question Ms. Pat because it is none of her business.
Discussion

Starting from this quote, "the whole universe is in us," the present paper explores that understanding humor starts from "us" as speakers. It begins by raising some clues to get the hearer for a mutual understanding. The present paper provides a universal pragmatic analysis of the stand-up comedy show, namely, You Wanna Hear Something Crazy? The analysis goes on two levels; the production level by using the cooperative maxims, proposed by Grice 1975, and the understanding level by using Habermas's theory of UP (1979, 1984, 1987, 1998).

The two research questions have been addressed using the present study's eclectic model of which; the first being, What are the cooperative maxims used by the speaker to produce humor in the selected stand-up comedy? It shows that humor can be produced by the non-observance of all the maxims or by violating them. Interestingly, the observance of the maxims can also be used to produce humor, as shown in the four selected extracts. Moreover, it is shown that more than one maxim can be used, whether it is observed or non-observed. Besides, humor can be produced through the combination sequence of the observance and the non-observance of maxims.

As for the second, it was: How does the speaker get his audience to a mutual understanding, i.e.,? What are the validity claims that are raised by the speaker to get the audience to a mutual understanding? It shows that humor has adhered to the universal validity claims of truth, sincerity, and normative rightness. It also shows that more than one claim can be raised respectively. Besides, it meets three of the universal pragmatic conditions; uttering something understandable; giving the hearer something to understand; and making himself understandable. While "Coming to understand another person" requires a process of arguments between the speaker and the hearer to reach a mutual agreement on what has been uttered, and for this show, there are no arguments between the speaker and the hearer. Moreover, it shows that raising the sincerity claim is not only used to talk about the discrimination she faced in her life, i.e., her experience and emotions but also to assure that she is not a racist. She doesn’t want to be misunderstood as if she is saying, "Do Not Get Me Wrong."

Conclusion

This paper provides a universal pragmatic and linguistic analysis of humor in the stand-up comedy show, namely, You Wanna Hear Something Crazy? The study goes on two levels; the production level by using the cooperative maxims, proposed by Grice 1975, and the understanding level by using Habermas's UP model (1979, 1984, 1987, 1998). The researchers have come up with the following findings: the observance and the non-observance of the cooperative maxims can produce humor. The analysis demonstrates that more than one maxim, whether observed or non-observed, may be utilized to produce humor. Additionally, a combinational sequence of the observance and the non-observance of maxims can produce humor. Besides, the researchers found that humor has adhered to the universal validity claims of truth, sincerity, and normative rightness.

Moreover, it has shown that more than one claim can be raised to get the audience's understanding of the humorous utterance.

About the Authors

Zainab Ahmed Mohammed is an M.A. candidate in the Department of English, University of Baghdad, College of Education for Women. Her major is Linguistics, and she is interested in several fields within linguistics, including pragmatics and universal pragmatics. ORCiD: https://orcid.org/0009-0002-3456-6814
Humor in The Stand-Up Comedy You Wanna Hear Something Crazy?

Mohammed & Abbas

Nawal Fadhil Abbas is a professor with a Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics. She teaches in the Department of English, University of Baghdad, College of Education for Women. Her research interests include Pragmatics, Stylistics, and Critical Discourse Analysis. ORCiD: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2608-6909

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Humor in The Stand-Up Comedy You Wanna Hear Something Crazy?  

Mohammed & Abbas


Tertiary Indonesian EFL Learners' Learning Style in Reading Hypermedia Material

Erni Erni
English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Riau, Indonesia
Corresponding Author: erni@lecturer.unri.ac.id

Maslawati Mohamad
Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Malaysia

Fadly Azhar
English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Riau, Indonesia

Wandi Syahfutra
English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau, Indonesia

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Abstract
Technology, learning environment, and e-sources have shifted learners' learning styles in academic reading courses. The study aimed to explore tertiary Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles in reading hypermedia material since it benefits teachers in determining teaching approaches, assessments, and tasks in teaching reading courses. This study answered the research questions about tertiary Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles and gender differences in their learning styles in reading hypermedia material. Seventy-one first-grade learners were selected randomly as the sample from the 141 learners who enrolled in the Academic Reading course. The four types of learning styles, concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented, were employed as the categories in this study. Descriptive statistics and t-tests were applied for the data analysis. The study revealed that the tertiary EFL learners' learning styles were concrete and authority-oriented. Concrete and authority-oriented styles were the highest, the communicative style was the second, and the analytical style was the lowest. The t-test result showed no significant difference in learning styles between gender. The successful implementation of this descriptive quantitative research and the design of research instruments for learning styles contribute to expanding the research methodology in this digital era. The research result can help tertiary Indonesian EFL learners understand their learning styles. It also allows teachers to develop classroom activities, tasks, reading material, and media. Specifically, the use of hypermedia material and the changes in the learning environment mode has changed learners' learning styles in Reading courses, which lead to a change in teachers' teaching approaches. Keywords: learning style, Reading, hypermedia material, tertiary Indonesian EFL learners

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Introduction

Learning style is a general approach learners use to learn a new language or other subjects. Learning styles influence students' learning, while learning outcome is widely determined by students' ability to apply multiple learning styles (Mulalic et al., 2009; Reid, 1987). It is heavily influenced by cognitive, motivational, and physiological elements and the sociocultural environment (Keefe, 1985; Liu, 2012). The learning styles employed are unique for each learner. Some learners prefer to learn using pictures and concrete objects, while others prefer to learn orally (Riazi & Riasati, 2007). Understanding students' learning styles will enable teachers to develop learners' skills more effectively through various teaching approaches to achieving the targeted learning objectives.

Teachers should understand that although learners showed high similarity, they still have different trajectories in learning (Lowie & Verspoor, 2019). Learners' personalities, needs, interests, motivation, learning readiness, and learning styles correlate to their academic success (Khatibi & Khormaei, 2016; Knowles, 1985). Understanding students' performance regarding individual differences will provide insight into possible interventions (An & Carr, 2017). Teachers/educators can match their teaching approaches to help learners improve their learning performance. In conclusion, environment, socio-culture, individual differences, and learning objectives affect learners' learning styles.

Many studies have been carried out to examine how tertiary Indonesian EFL learners read materials in foreign languages. However, limited studies focused on how learners learn in Reading courses in the EFL context, particularly in Indonesia (Erni, 2021). Many tertiary students in Indonesia were less motivated in reading course activities. Their reading test scores were also below the expected result, whereby 64% of the students failed (Academic Department, 2022). The lecturers may be unaware of learners' learning styles, so their teaching approaches do not meet learners' learning styles. The lecturers focus more on their teaching approaches, assessments, media, and students' achievement, but less attention is given to learners' learning styles. Learners' learning styles have been ignored and considered an insignificant component of the learning process (Dunn & Grims, 2001). Insufficient knowledge of students' learning styles may lead to unsuitable teaching approaches and aids that could negatively affect students' reading performance (Hayashi & Cherry, 2004). Understanding and considering learners' learning styles would support learning and improve the lecturers' teaching effectiveness.

The study aimed to explore tertiary Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles in reading hypermedia material. These research findings could benefit educators or teachers in identifying students' learning styles, particularly in the EFL context, and determine the suitable teaching approaches, hypermedia material, assessments, and tasks to be employed in teaching reading courses. The research objectives were to: a). identify tertiary Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles in reading hypermedia material; b). discover the significant difference between tertiary Indonesian EFL male and female learning styles in reading hypermedia material. This study had two research questions: a) how are the tertiary Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles in reading hypermedia material? b) Is there any significant difference between tertiary Indonesian EFL male and female learning styles in reading hypermedia material?
**Literature Review**

**Learning Styles**

Learning styles deal with how individuals concentrate, process, internalize and retain new and complex information (Dunn & Grims, 2001). Learning style is a preferred or habitual pattern of mental functioning dealing with further information (Ehrman, Leaver & Oxford, 2003). Learning styles refer to sensory preferences, personality types, the desired degree of generality, and biological differences (Oxford, 2003). Learning styles are specific approaches based on intellectual schemes, personal cognitive processing, a typical personal approach to learning activities, and habitual mental behaviors to problem-solving (Reid, 1987). Learning style is the biologically and developmentally imposed characteristics that make the same teaching method wonderful for some but terrible for others (Dunn & Grims, 2001). Learning styles are particular ways of learning, mode of learning, and an individual's preferred manners to think, process information, and demonstrate understanding or habitual mental behaviors.

In employing teaching approaches, teachers must consider learners' learning styles, types of tasks, media, and teaching sources (Reid, 2005). Learning styles appear relatively stable and will be deployed by individuals regardless of the subject being studied or the skill being mastered (Wong & Nunan, 2011). However, technology, learning environment, and interactive media have shifted learners' learning styles. The differences in cultural or language backgrounds and disciplines often play an essential role in identifying types of learners' learning styles (Gündüz & Özcan, 2010; Nelson, 1995; Reid, 1987). Teachers must acknowledge and identify learners' learning styles to match their teaching approaches, visual aids, and assessments.

Many studies have explored learning style categories and its implication for teaching English in the EFL context. Reid (1987) states that learning style categories are visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group, and individual. Red discovered that tactile and kinaesthetic were the students' most preferred students' learning styles. Rainey and Kolb (1995) divided the learners' learning styles into divergers, assimilators, and convergers. On the other hand, (Cohen & Oxford, 2001) mentions learning styles categories as sensory preferences, psychological types, and cognitive styles. Other prominent scholars, Knowles (1972), categorized learners into goal-oriented, activity-oriented, and learning-oriented. Knowles (1982) proposed learning style categories as concrete, analytical, communication, and authority-oriented (as cited in Richard, 2007). Willing (1988) classified learners' learning styles into concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented.

The researcher adopted Willing's (1988) categories of concrete, communicative, analytical, and authority-oriented learning styles in this study. Concrete learning style learners use active and direct means of processing information, are interested in information with immediate value, are curious, spontaneous, willing to take risks, enjoy a variety and a constant change of pace, prefer verbal or visual experiences, like to be entertained, and like to be physically involved in learning. They dislike routine learning and written work. Then, learners with an analytical style are independent, like to solve problems, enjoy tracking down ideas and developing principles independently, prefer a logical and systematic, and want their peers to follow up on their own. They are serious and vulnerable to failure. Learners with a communicative learning style prefer a social approach, need personal feedback and interaction, and learn well from discussion and group activities. They thrive in a democratically run class.
Then, learners with an authority-oriented style are responsible and dependable and prefer structure, sequential progression, and traditional classrooms. They like the teacher as an authority figure, like clear instructions, and want the teacher to know what they are doing. They are also uncomfortable with consensus-building discussions. The concrete styles employ straightforward means of processing information. The analytical styles prefer to lead, analyze, and demonstrate significant value and independence. The authority-oriented style does not actively organize information but wants the teacher to show authority, while the communicative style needs relationships and learning through conversations (Wong & Nunan, 2011). Analytical learners are cognitively strong (Kirby, 1988) since they prefer to break problems into smaller sections, write down general information, and learn rules.

The researchers adopted Willing’s learning style because it is relevant to teaching EFL in the Indonesian context, namely for international communication and gaining information and knowledge. Previous studies in EFL/ESL context have also adopted Willing’s categories, such as Wong and Nunan (2011) on learning styles and strategies of effective language learners in Hongkong, Bidabadi and Yamat (2010) on learning style preferences by Iranian EFL freshman university; Hayash and Cherry (2004) on Japanese students’ learning style preferences in the EFL classroom; Fagan and Wooldridge, (2004) on an empirical investigation into the Concept of 'learning style in a Korean university.

Studies on learners’ learning styles in the EFL context in Indonesia have been carried out in different categories. The survey of learners’ styles and preferences in learning English showed that the dominant types of learners were concrete (Masitowarni & Haswani, 2020). Another study on learners' styles in learning English interpreted that 50% of students were visual styles, 33% of students were auditory styles, and 16% of the students were audio-visual styles (Wahab & Nuraeni, 2020). The study by (Ulfatin et al., 2022) on learners’ styles with transactional speaking skills found that learners’ styles were concrete. These studies analyzed learners learning styles in offline learning mode, material, and media. In this digital era, technology has changed the teaching and learning process, where hyper-materials and interactive media are used in teaching and learning activities. These changes were assumed to modify the learners' learning styles which also need different approaches and strategies for effective learning. Consequently, learners' learning styles in reading hypermedia material should be analyzed to help educators/teachers develop suitable teaching methods and tasks, interactive media, and assessments in teaching reading courses.

Reading Hypermedia Materials

Reading at the tertiary level requires critical thinking skills and is academically demanding. Then, the students must consciously find authorial intentions and purposes (Shen, 2013). Reading is a transfer of information or knowledge from writers to readers and vice versa. Transferring information is influenced by the students’ motivation, perceptions, and personal beliefs (James, 2012), and learners' interest in English cultural products affects their motivations for language learning (Kormos & Csizér, 2008). The teaching and learning activities employing blogs, digital tools, and social media have increased student interaction and sharing of ideas.

Currently, many teaching and learning at universities in Indonesia are conducted online, and the teaching materials are also presented online or in soft copy form. Appropriate teaching approaches and practical solutions are required to overcome the challenges of online teaching and learning at tertiary learning institutions in Indonesia (Mazlan et al., 2022). Learning through digital tools and social media can enhance interaction and sharing of ideas among students.
Tertiary Indonesian EFL Learners' Learning Style in Reading  
Erni, Mohamad Azhar, & Syahfutra

2023). Teachers' teaching approach, classroom environment, and activities contributed to teaching effectiveness (Erni & Yamat, 2019). Technology has supported students to access and shape their learning (Lai, 2017) and has changed the habit of reading printed text into reading hypermedia material. Hypermedia material is primarily used in teaching and learning because the class is conducted through online learning. Online tools such as Microsoft Private Chat, has increased interaction among students and teachers in online learning (Binu, 2022). In addition, self-concept, the role of experience, readiness to learn, and orientation to learning changed learners' learning styles (Knowles, 1972). The hypermedia material has improved students' motivation in online reading courses (Erni, 2021), and technological advances positively affect students' performance (Alhajri et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2009).

The massive use of technology has affected learners' learning styles, which automatically makes learners' learning style change. Since the advent of the internet, students have preferred to learn and read from various websites. Reading via websites is also known as hypermedia reading. Hypermedia includes videos, animations, GIFs, tables, text, graphics, etc. Due to the current shift from reading printed text to reading hypermedia materials, this study was embarked upon. Concerning the objectives research, identifying learners' learning styles was crucial because they were in first grade, in the process of mature learning, and conditioned by technological advances, which might change their learning styles. The importance of identifying gender differences in learning style was because the total number of males was smaller in the reading classroom and decreased over the years.

Method

This study applied a descriptive quantitative research method. This study aimed to identify the learning styles of tertiary Indonesian EFL learners and the difference between Indonesian EFL male and female learning styles in reading hypermedia.

Participants

Seventy respondents (47 female and 23 male) academic year 2021-2022 were involved in this study. They were selected randomly from the total number of students enrolling in the 'Reading and Writing' course in Indonesia at a public university. One hundred forty-one populations are distributed in A, B, and C classes. The respondents represented the total population (Borg, 2014). Their age range was about 18-19 years old. The reason for choosing this sample was because they were in the first grade, and their learning styles would be essential in identifying the teaching method, media, classroom activities, and tasks the lecturers need to employ. The information on the respondents' learning styles is also necessary for educators to ascertain whether their students successfully develop practical critical reading skills in reading hypermedia material.

Research Instrument

The instrument of this study was a self-designed questionnaire. The questionnaires consist of four categories: concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented (Willing 1988). The questionnaire comprised 26 items. After developing the questionnaire items, the researchers discussed the items with one expert for validation. The expert is a Ph.D. qualification in Teaching English as a Foreign Language with 30 years of teaching experience. The research instrument was piloted on 37 students out of the population for validity and reliability. The pilot study respondents have similar characteristics to those of the actual study as they are within the same age range and
enrolled in the same reading course. The validity test result at a significance level of 0.05 is displayed in the r-table was 0.325. Pearson correlation formula found that the r-counted of 26 items was higher than the r table, which means that the items were valid. After the pilot study, the researchers discovered four invalid items. These invalid items were rejected. The remainder, 26 valid items, is presented in Table One.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Validity testing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The valid items were then analyzed for reliability and used for the study. Table two presents the result of reliability testing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Reliability testing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Cronbach’s Alpha value for the concrete category was 0.616; for the analytical category was 0.676; for the communicative category was 0.637; and for the authority-oriented category was 0.702. To conclude, Cronbachs' Alpha values of the four categories were higher than a Sig-value of 0.60, meaning that all items were reliable(Quirk, 2019). It is concluded that all the items in the distributed questionnaire were valid and reliable and could be used in this study. A valid and reliable questionnaire helps the researchers understand students' learning styles (Liu, 2012).

The questionnaires were then distributed to 70 respondents (47 females and 23 males) for data analysis related to the research aims. A total of 26 items were distributed in four learning style categories. Concrete styles in items 1-7, analytical styles in items 8-13, communicative styles in items 14-20, and authority-oriented styles in items 21-26. The Likert scale range 1-4 was used. strongly disagree :1, disagree; 2, agree: 3 and strongly agree; 4. Descriptive statistical analysis was applied to analyze Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles. The t-test formula was used to identify the learning styles between males and females in reading hypermedia.

**Results**

This study aimed to explore the Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles and identify the differences between Indonesian EFL male and female learning styles in reading hypermedia. This section presents the research findings in response to the research aims.
Learners Learning Style

The four categories of Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles were concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented. The descriptive statistics of the four learning styles were computed to discover the students' learning styles in reading hypermedia. The one that indicated the highest mean value was the students' preferred learning style.

The overall mean value of the concrete learning style of 3.17 is the highest among the four categories. The highest mean value of 3.41 was "In online Reading. I like to read the subtitle when I watch movies," The lowest mean value of 2.94 was "I like to study reading topics by discussing them with native speakers." Concrete learning is the most preferred style of Indonesian tertiary EFL learners in reading hypermedia. The result of the data analysis is presented in Table three below.

Table 3. Concrete learning styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>EFL Language Learner Preferred Styles</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In online Reading, I like to read the subtitle when I watch movies</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In online Reading, I prefer to read English reading text through games or digital pictures,</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>When I read hypertext (online text), I like to switch on video tools to improve my vocabulary</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>In online reading activities, I like to switch on read aloud button on my device to understand what I read</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I like to study reading topics by discussing them with native speakers</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I like to play scramble games to improve my vocabulary</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I like to practice reading outside the classroom.</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average mean score</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table three shows that the overall mean value of the concrete learning style of 3.17 is the highest among the four categories. The highest mean value of 3.41 was "In online Reading. I like to read the subtitle when I watch movies," The lowest mean value of 2.94 was "I like to study reading topics by discussing them with native speakers." Concrete learning is the most preferred style of Indonesian tertiary EFL learners in reading hypermedia.

The analytical learning style data is presented in Table Four below.

Table 4. Analytical learning styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>EFL Language Learner Preferred Styles</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I used to participate in reading for critical even in and out of campus</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I like reading the newspaper, English dictionaries, anthologies, and journal articles at home.</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I like to pay attention to grammar and vocabulary when I am reading</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I like to study English reading by myself rather than accompanying others</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>In Reading class activities, I like to pay attention to other mistakes and errors</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I like to analyze the reading task by myself without asking others</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall mean scores</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table four, the overall mean value of analytical learning styles of 2.86 was of low level among the four categories. The highest mean value of 3.30 was "I like to pay attention to others' mistakes and errors," while the lowest mean value of 2.41 was "At home, I like to read the newspaper, English dictionary, anthology, and journal article." Analytical learners are critical of themselves, are careful workers, and are interested in specific things.

The overall mean value for the communicative category was 2.90, which was the lowest among the four categories. The highest mean value of learners' learning styles in reading
hypermedia material was 3.16 for the item "I like to hear new words and responses to what someone says to improve my vocabulary knowledge." While the lowest mean value was 2.61 for the item ", I like to read English newspapers or magazines outside the classroom with friends." The result of the data analysis on learners' communicative learning styles is presented in Table five below.

Table 5. Communicative learner styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Communicative Learning Styles</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>In online Reading, I like to learn through communication and interaction.</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I want to talk to friends about what I read in English.</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I like to discuss with native speakers about Reading lesson</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I like to hear new words and responses to what someone says to improve my vocabulary knowledge</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I want to read English e-newspapers or e-magazines outside the classroom with friends</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I like to discuss with friends what I am reading in English.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>In Reading class, I like to discuss and share ideas about what I am reading</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall scores</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table five, the item with the highest mean value of 3.16 was "I like to hear new words and responses to what someone says to improve my vocabulary knowledge." In contrast, the lowest mean value of 2.61 was "I like to read English newspapers or magazines outside the classroom with friends." The overall mean value for the communicative category was 2.90, which was the lowest among the four categories. Communicative learners prefer to read e-magazines and e-newspapers, listen to natives to improve their English and discuss with friends and native speakers using English. They like to learn Reading and discuss their Reading with others.

Table 6. Authority-oriented learning styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Authority-oriented Learning Styles</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>In reading to the class, I like the teacher to explain everything.</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I read many kinds of books to enrich my vocabulary knowledge</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>In Reading class, I like to study words, and sentences, from specific ideas to general</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>In reading courses, I like to have my books to learn</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>In Reading class, I like to take a note to make sure what I am reading</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>In Reading class, I like to write a summary by myself.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall scores</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table six shows the average mean value of the authority-oriented category of 3.17 is the highest category. The highest mean value of 3.39 is the item "In reading the class, I like the teacher to explain everything to me. The lowest mean value of 3.00 is the item "in Reading class, I like to write a summary by myself." Authority-oriented learners are dependable, responsible, good at note-taking, not predisposed to actively organize information, and want the teacher's authority for Reading tasks. They want teachers to explain clearly the reading passages in their Reading course.

The four categories of learners' learning styles (concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented) were computed and analyzed to discover their learning styles. The one that indicated the highest mean value was the students' learning style. The Indonesian EFL learner learning style in reading hypermedia was the concrete type, with a mean value of 3.17, and the authority-oriented type, with a mean value of 3.17, as they were similar in average. The
communicative type has a mean value of 2.90, while the analytical type has a mean value of 2.86. The results of the data are presented in Table seven.

Table 7. Learners’ learning styles in reading hypermedia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning styles</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concrete</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority-oriented</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest average mean values of 3.17 were concrete and authority-oriented learning styles. The second highest average mean value of 2.90 was the communicative style, and the lowest average of 2.86 was the analytical type. They were mostly concrete and authority-oriented. To conclude, Indonesian EFL learners’ learning styles in reading hypermedia texts were concrete and authority-oriented. They were not so communicative and less authority-oriented.

**Learning Style Preferences by Gender**

An Independent sample t-test was applied to identify the mean values of two variables, and normality testing was used to analyze data distribution.

**Normality Testing**

The normality testing of the data was analyzed as the prerequisite of t-test analysis. Due to the small number of research samples, the Shapiro-Wilk was used (Kadir, 2015). There were 23 males and 47 females involved in this study. Shapiro-Wilk data analysis result is presented in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Tests of normality](image)

The normality test of learning style preferences of male students of 0.329 and female students of 0.553 were higher than 0.05 (Sig value 0.329 and 0.553 > 0.05). Both data were normally distributed and fulfilled the t-test data analysis prerequisite.

**Independent Sample T-Test**

The independent sample t-test analysis was conducted to identify the difference between males’ and females’ learning styles in reading hypertext. The result of parametric testing in all categories is presented in Table eight.

Table 8. The Mean differences between males’ and females’ learning styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Styles</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>MV</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Se</th>
<th>Sig(2-tailed)</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concrete</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority-oriented</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.993</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sig value (2-tailed) < 0.05. There is a significant difference.
Sig value (2-tailed) > 0.05. There is no significant difference.

Based on Table eight, the concrete type of male mean value of 3.14 was lower than the female value of 3.18. The analytical type of male mean value of 2.94 was also lower than the female value of 3.11. The communicative type of female mean value of 3.05 was higher than that of males at 2.76, but they were similar in the authority-oriented style with a mean value of 3.01.

The concrete category of the male group had a mean score of 3.14, and the female mean score of 3.18 with a Sig (2-tailed) of 0.633 is higher than the Sig Value of 0.05. The analytical category for male mean score of 2.94 and female mean score of 3.18 with a Sig (2-tailed) of 0.080 is higher than the Sig Value of 0.05. The communicative category for male mean score of 3.14 and female mean score of 2.97 with a Sig (2-tailed) of 0.083 is higher than the Sig Value of 0.05. The authority-oriented category for male mean scores of 3.01, the female mean score of 2.97, and Sig (2-tailed) 0.993 are higher than the Sig Value of 0.05. All the Sig (2-tailed) values were above the value of 0.05. It is concluded that there was no statistically significant difference in the mean scores for male and female students in concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented learning styles.

Discussion

There were two research questions. Firstly, how are the tertiary Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles in reading hypermedia material?

Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles in reading hypermedia texts were concrete and authority-oriented. They were not so communicative and less authority-oriented type. The findings of this study are similar to the research results of (Masitowarni & Haswani 2020; Nur et al., 2022), that learners' preferred learning styles were concrete. This present study was in contrast to the studies of (Bidabadi & Yamat, 2010; Riazi & Riasati, 2007; Suherman, 2018) that the communicative style was preferable for most EFL students. To conclude, the rapid increase of technology integration and the structured learning environment has increased the use of hypermedia material in Reading courses.

Concrete learners preferred a concrete means of acquiring knowledge, being interested in current information, being curious, spontaneous, and willing to be involved physically in reading activities. They prefer verbal or visual experiences, such as being entertained and physically involved in learning, like variety and constant change, but dislike routine learning and written work. Concrete learners disfavor learning monotonously and written work, like variety learning, prefer verbal and visual experiences, and strongly desire to be entertained and be physically involved in learning. Concrete learners strongly want to learn through watching youtube, interactive media games, and digital pictures. They like watching youtube with subtitles, using online media tools on their devices, such as the read-aloud, spelling checker, and grammar buttons, and reading outside the classroom and in natural or contextual settings. Learners show less desire to discuss their Reading with native speakers; instead, they prefer to use interactive media, games, movies, and online tools on their devices. Learners applied fun activities, pair work, games, doing tasks through quizzes and songs, practicing extensive Reading, using the internet/technology, and role-playing (Erni & Yamat, 2019) to acquire higher-order thinking skills (Erni, 2022). Accordingly, the reading lecturers should consider experiential learning, interactive media, authentic reading material, and strategies through interaction and participation.
Authority-oriented learners are dependable, responsible, good at note-taking, not predisposed to actively organize information, and want the teacher's authority for reading tasks. They want teachers to explain clearly the reading passages in their Reading course. They prefer to learn from specific to general and observe structures, vocabulary, words, and sentences in reading hypermedia material. Authority-oriented learner types like to follow some patterns in learning reading. They prefer to make notes while learning reading courses, possess relevant learning devices such as notebooks, smartphones, internet, and apply note-taking activities (Nunan, 1999). According to Knowles (1985), authority-oriented learners are noted to be responsible and dependable, prefer to learn vocabulary and grammar and learn well in conventional classrooms (as cited in Richard, 2007). Authority-oriented learners need teacher guidelines and prefer learning using their e-books, personal property, and a notebook. Consequently, the reading lecturers should properly develop their teaching strategies, assessment, method, and task and prepare teaching equipment to facilitate effective learning.

Analytical and communicative styles were the other types of EFL learners' styles. Analytical learners are critical of themselves, are careful workers, and are interested in specific things. Their higher cognitive ability leads them to analyze carefully, demonstrate significant interest in particular things, and put great value on revealing their independence by performing autonomously. Analytical learners prefer to study individually, from specific to general, learn grammar, read English textbooks and newspapers, find their own mistakes, and work on task problems assigned by their teachers (Nunan, 1999). Moreover, their cognitive strengths guide them to analyze carefully, reveal great interest in grammar and vocabulary, and value showing their independence by doing things autonomously (Willing, 1988).

On the other hand, communicative learners prefer to read magazines and newspapers, listen to natives to improve their English, and discuss with friends and native speakers using English. They like to learn Reading courses and discuss their Reading with others. Communicative learners want to learn by listening to native speakers, talking to partners in English, watching English movies, using English in other places and on public transportation, listening to new vocabulary, and conversing with others in English (Nunan, 1999). The impact of the highly increased technology integration in education and the use of hypermedia in teaching reading courses have changed students' learning styles. Their learning style preferences were social media methods through personal feedback, interaction and discussion, and group work. They go forward in a democratically run class. Extensive Reading, socio-affective strategies, and communicative/collaborative learning are recommended.

In conclusion, concrete and authority-oriented learners types learn well through experiential learning. The four steps of experiential learning, concrete learning, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation, can be used (Kolb & Boyatzi, 2020). Effective learning can be achieved when learners progress through each stage in a comfortable task, with clear instructions, authentic reading material, and interactive media. Teachers should use authentic reading materials to engage learners in reading activities (Zazula, 2017). The teachers should analyze how students construct knowledge and create teaching activities that fit students' age, abilities, and learning styles (Robinson et al., 2022). The rapid increase in technology, cultural changes, and social environment have influenced students' learning styles (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2007). Therefore, the syllabus, strategy instruction, and learning material should meet students' learning styles. However, the type of tasks did not significantly affect students' learning style preferences (Wang et al., 2020). All students should be encouraged to think and create in their
unique styles, regardless of their abilities. They should have opportunities to interact with professionals and peers with similar learning styles while completing their assignments so that the students become responsible for their learning and apply strategies that fit their learning styles.

Secondly, Is there any significant difference between tertiary Indonesian EFL male and female learning styles in reading hypermedia material?

The data analysis concluded that there was no statistically significant difference in the mean scores for male and female students in concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented learning styles. This research result is relevant to the studies of (Bidabadi & Yamat, 2010; Negari & Barghi, 2014), where male and female students have no different learning styles. In reading hypermedia material, males prefer to learn through experience, discussion, and interactive media, while females are more individual, independent, logical, and severe. Males were less concrete and more communicative than females. Males preferred the abstract conceptualization mode of learning to females (Severiens & Dam, 1994), but they had similar authority-oriented learning styles. They were no significant differences between males' and females' learning styles in reading hypermedia material. Consequently, there is no need to employ specific teaching and learning activities for male and female learners.

This study has shown that learners' learning styles were concrete and authority oriented. Hence, the lecturers must employ teaching approaches and strategies relevant to students' learning styles. The teacher should train students to use various reading strategies that match their learning styles (Liu, 2012). Teachers should use the experiential approach and project-based learning, including group work, role play, and experiments with festive activities, regardless of ability and gender.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore tertiary Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles and identify the gender differences in their learning styles in reading hypermedia. The data analysis revealed that the average mean value of the concrete style was 3.17, the authority-oriented style was 3.17, the communicative style was 2.90, and the analytical style was 2.8. It is concluded that tertiary Indonesian EFL learners' learning styles in reading hypermedia were concrete and authority-oriented. Concrete learners prefer to be physically involved in learning and like various changes but dislike routine and monotonous learning. They prefer to learn through video, YouTube, digital pictures, and interactive media. Authority-oriented learners prefer to have their property and apply note-taking in reading hypermedia. They were responsible and dependable but not predisposed to organize information actively. The statistical analysis revealed no significant difference between male and female students in concrete, analytical, communicative, and authority-oriented learning styles. In other words, males and females have similar learning styles in reading hypermedia material.

Implication

The successful implementation of this descriptive quantitative research method and the design of research instruments for learning styles contribute to expanding the research method in this digital era. The research result can help learners understand their learning styles and allows the teachers to develop classroom activities, assessments, and tasks relevant to learners' learning styles. Specifically, the use of hypermedia and the changes in the learning environment mode has changed learners' learning styles in reading courses, leading to a change in teachers' teaching
approaches. Teachers should apply teaching approaches with explicit instructions, more engaging tasks, authentic assessment, and interactive media to facilitate students' involvement in Reading activities.

**About the Author**

**Dr. Erni** is an associate professor at the Faculty of Teachers, Riau University, Indonesia. She received her Ph.D. in TESL from UKM Malaysia and a specialist certificate in Language Testing from SEAMEO-RELC Singapore. Her research interests are English language teaching, language assessment, and second language reading and writing. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2587-3935

**Maslawati Mohamad** is a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. She graduated from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Her main research interests are innovations in teaching and learning in the ESL context, Reading in the ESL context, and English for Specific Purposes. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8979-5895

**Fadly Azhar** is a Professor in Evaluation and Measurement at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Riau. He graduated from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. His research interests are Evaluation and Measurement and Productive Skills Sources. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2568-6435

**Wandi Syahfutra** is a lecturer in the English Study Program at the Faculty of Teachers Training and Education of Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau. His research interests are reading, speaking, curriculum, and teaching practices. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8063-9917

**References**


Tertiary Indonesian EFL Learners’ Learning Style in Reading

Erni, Mohamad, Azhar, & Syahfutra


Asserting Authorial Identity through Stance and Voice: Expert vs. Novice Scientific Writers

Nurul Naimmah Hamdan
Language Academy, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
Corresponding Author: naimmah@utm.my

Ummul K. Ahmad
Language Academy, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

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Abstract
Successful scientific writers make use of various lexico-grammatical features to assert their authorial voice in ways that their target audience finds most convincing. While many studies have focused on the use of stance markers in scientific writing, very few have reported on the voice construction of Malaysian scientific writers. To address this, this paper reports a three-way comparative study of stance-taking made by Malaysian scientific writers, their international counterparts as well as novice writers. Analyses were conducted on a 1.2-million-word corpus of 212 published research articles written by local and international writers and 14 unpublished papers by local writers. Using Hyland’s (2005b) taxonomy of authorial stance markers, we found that both Malaysian experts and their international counterparts displayed similar patterns, albeit different approaches to stance-taking. In particular, Malaysian experts were found to prefer boosters the most when establishing their niche, while their international counterparts chose to use first-person plural pronouns and hedges for positioning their results. Novice writers, on the other hand, consistently showed a lack of strategies but tended to take an attitudinal stance in the discussion and conclusion segments. The differences found in novice and expert writers as well as between Malaysian writers and their international counterparts, point towards the complexity of stance-taking and stance-marking in research writing. This study shows that linguistics devices for marking attitudinal commitments towards propositions possibly mark individual aspects of voice and contribute to a broader conception of a writer’s self-representation within a text.

Keywords: authorial identity, novice vs. experts, scientific writing, stance-taking, voice

Introduction

Research Articles (henceforth RA) is a crucial written academic genre used by many scientific communities to disseminate and ratify new scientific knowledge (Koutsantoni, 2006). RAs are persuasive in nature and a representation “of the writer’s attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about” (Thompson & Hunston, 2000, p.5). The rhetorical maneuvers of positioning have been reported to be challenging among emerging research writers (Tardy, 2005) and, for English as Additional Language (EAL) writers; the difficulties are compounded by many aspects of research writing at advanced levels are linguistically complex and often occluded to the uninitiated (Charles, 2006; Liu & Zhou, 2014). As writing practices vary across disciplinary areas, this advanced writing skill of negotiating for acceptance of knowledge claims can be best observed in, and better navigated by expert writers, as compared to novice writers. Experts established learned authority (Watt, 1982) in their writing based on their degrees of expertise (Yasuda, 2022), where they both demonstrated personal excellence on a branch of knowledge within their discipline and possessed the appropriate textual practices to position their knowledge claims (Paltridge, 2002; Koutsantoni, 2006).

Although extensive research on challenges faced by EAL writers in getting their work published in English has been documented (see for example, Curry & Lillis, 2004; Flowerdew, 2008; Martín, Rey-Rocha, Burgess, & Moreno, 2014), there recently has been a growing number of EAL writers who have successfully navigated these challenges and who have been accepted as full-fledged members of their discourse community. It was reported that the regional growth in South and Asian countries has risen ten-fold within the past decade with Malaysia being one of the major research producers (Adams, Pendlebury, Rogers, & Szomsor, 2019). Successful academic writing, among others, depends on the writers’ ability to appropriate rhetorical conventions and linguistic resources deemed valuable to the discourse community they are writing for (Groom, 2000; Hyland & Tse, 2005). Skilled research writers use various linguistic devices to strategically negotiate and position their findings; they mark their authorial stance in accordance with their proposition while simultaneously claiming the authorial voice to be acknowledged by their peers, all by adhering to the discourse community standards. Asserting an authorial stance, however, has been proven difficult for emerging writers as it is linked to marking identity as an authoritative voice. Previous studies focusing on inexperienced writers have shown that they employed lesser stance-taking devices compared to more experienced writers (Aull & Lancaster, 2014); they tend to take an inappropriate stance (Hyland & Milton, 1997), and they exhibited difficulty connecting to their discourse community (Beaufort & Williams, 2005). As Hyland (2004) showed, many novice writers simply refrained from asserting authority.

Meanwhile, many higher education institutions around the world are now making international publications in English as a graduating requirement for postgraduate students (Lillis & Curry, 2010; Kwan, 2013) and career advancement requirements of academics. It is then unsurprising that novice writers (and early career academics), especially those who come from non-English speaking backgrounds and may be less experienced with academic discourse practices struggle as they attempt to have their original contributions accepted for publication (Flowerdew, 2015). Ivanič (1998) argued that novice writers often struggle to learn the beliefs and practices of the discourse community that they seek to gain membership in. Despite the many studies conducted on problems faced by EAL writers, there is much about discoursal practices of EAL experts and the challenges faced by EAL novice writers in the academy that remain unknown.
This paper aims to highlight the authorial identity construction of expert and novice scientific writers through stance-taking in research article writing. This could provide valuable insights into individual and shared stance practices of Malaysian scientific writers within their discourse community. The research objective set for this study is to compare the strategies of stance-taking and stance-making of Malaysian expert writers with that of their international counterparts as well as to look into similar practices of novice academic writers from the same disciplines using corpus analysis. To satisfy the research objective, this paper will address the following research questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences in stance and voice devices in RA segments among three groups of scientific writers (Malaysian experts, international experts, and Malaysian novice writers) in this study?

2. What are the preferred stance-taking strategies used by three groups of scientific writers (Malaysian experts, international experts, and Malaysian novice writers) when asserting their voice and constructing their authorial identity?

To address these questions, this paper will first outline prominent works in the area of authorial identity which covers both stance and voice. It is then followed by the description of the corpus used in this study. Next, the findings are presented and discussed in relation to patterns of preferences that make up the authorial identity of each group of scientific writers in this study. This paper will be concluded with a summary of the findings as well as the implications drawn from the research.

**Literature Review**

*Stance and Voice Markers as Indicators of Authorial Identity*

There have been many attempts to define the concept of authorial identity, stance, and voice over the past five decades. Perhaps, the best description of this research’s theoretical approach to identity and voice views authorial voice as “the identity of the author reflected in the written discourse” (Mhili, 2023, p. 10) that is displayed through shared use of interactional resources or stance markers (Hyland, 2005a, 2005b) of a particular discourse community (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Ding, 2008) while also taking into account ‘the interplay of cultural and disciplinary factors’ (Lores-Sanz, 2011). Indeed, numerous studies have examined how stance is marked through different linguistic means (e.g., Charles, 2006), across disciplines and genres (e.g., Hyland & Guinda, 2012), and between student and expert writers (e.g., Hyland & Tse, 2005). Despite these studies, stance remains an elusive concept—stance generally concerns the way writers express their personal attitudes and assessments (Biber, 2006) and their authoritativeness through what Hyland (2005b) referred to as “writer-oriented features of interaction” (p.178). In line with Biber (2006) and Hyland (2005b), in this study, we see stance as the writer’s expression of epistemic assessment, personal attitudes, and self-presence, using hedges and boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions.

Hedges indicate writers’ lack of commitment to the certainty of their proposition, while boosters allow writers to express their confidence about the validity of a proposition (Holmes, 1988; Hyland, 2004; Peacock, 2006; Hu & Cao, 2015). Hedges and boosters are crucial in advanced academic discourse as they are seen as resourceful rhetorical devices in scientific discourse to gain discourse community acceptance of knowledge claims and to build interpersonal solidarity with readers (Hyland, 1999; Lancaster, 2016). However, between hedges and boosters,
hedges are found to be the more dominant stance markers in scientific writing (Salager-Meyer, 1994; Hyland, 1999; 2005b) particularly in RA results and discussion sections (Salager-Meyer, 1994) and they mainly function as indicative markers of writers’ research findings allowing room for disagreement. Hyland (1999) also found hedges (such as indicate and suggest) to be used three times more often compared to boosters (such as show and find) as discourse-oriented verbs in his science and engineering sub-corpora.

Attitudinal markers, which express writers’ attitudes towards propositional content (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad & Finegan, 1999; Hyland, 1999), and self-mentions, which project writers’ explicit presence (Hyland, 1999) are not highly expected in the scientific discourse which may favor impersonal constructions (Biber, 2006; Hyland, 2004; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012). However, Harwood (2005) has proven that scientific writers used the personal pronoun we with an active verb (such as in we found that…) rhetorically to indicate their unique procedural choice, describe their work, or as a result of the discoursal function of focus. The use of impersonal constructions when asserting a proposition has also been attributed to a sense of collectivism (Kim & Lim, 2013; Scollon, 1994). Hedges, boosters, and attitudinal markers may sometimes refer to shared implicit assumptions based on tacit knowledge between readers and writers (He, 1993; Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Soler, 2002), and they are most explicitly signaled by lexical verbs (e.g., suggest, show), modal verbs (e.g., could), adjectives (e.g., likely, important), adverbs (e.g., surprisingly), and nouns (e.g., possibility, advantage).

Although these four stance markers may help in revealing the ways writers project their authorial stance as to the proposition and readers, it has been generally acknowledged that authors’ self-representations are also constrained by social and disciplinary cultures (see Hyland, 1999, 2004; Charles, 2006; Lorès-Sanz, 2011, Hu & Cao, 2015). Yasuda (2022) also found that although writers’ evaluatives and attitudinal markers are considered strong markers by experienced Japanese scholars, these experts actually preferred a more objective and neutral authorial stance. Her findings on novice writers also reverberated results from previous studies (Davis, 2013; Crosthwaite, Cheung & Jiang, 2017), where they took a stronger authorial stance, particularly using attitudinal markers.

Comparative studies on stance markers of EAL writers have proven them to be challenging devices to learn and use appropriately. Studies on L1 and Spanish thesis writers by Lee and Casal (2014) have reported that hedges were a dominant feature among L1 thesis writers, while the Spanish writers relied on boosters to express their stance. The variation of hedges and boosters as the main stance markers have indeed been reported to be a discursive characteristic of EAL academic writers from different cultural backgrounds (for example, Bulgarian, Vassileva, 2001; French and Norwegian (Vold, 2006); Spanish (Mur-Dueñas, 2011); Chinese (Hu & Cao, 2011). Hinkel (1997) observed that Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Indonesian student writers used far more indirect strategies in their personal opinions than their L1 peers. The results from these comparative studies on stance markers are far from consistent which suggest that stance-taking may not only represent the writer’s own individual position and language proficiency but also the epistemological beliefs and values of a community (Crosthwaite, Cheung, & Jiang, 2017; Yasuda, 2022). The present paper, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by conducting a corpus-driven analysis to discover the stance-taking practices of Malaysian expert and novice scientific writers and how they compare to international scientific experts.
Methods

The Corpus

The data for this study derives from a specialized corpus of approximately 1.2 million words consisting of two equal sub-corpora of 212 research articles in the field of engineering and technology written by expert Malaysian scientific writers and their international counterparts who published in the same journal issue as well as a smaller sub-corpus of 14 unpublished research articles written by Malaysian novice writers working in the same field of the expert writers. All chosen RAs were published in highly ranked indexed journals in the fields of engineering and technology (e.g., chemical engineering, electrical engineering, biomedical engineering, molecular science/engineering, and civil engineering).

An examination of the selected expert writers’ list of publications was conducted before including their RA in our corpus. Two criteria were used to determine the international expert writers’ status: (i) the institutional affiliations of the writers must be in English-speaking countries when the selected paper was published, and (ii) the articles were written in fluent English with no obvious language errors.

The expert writers’ corpus was gathered by first identifying the 12 most cited papers published by Malaysian experts from 2010 to 2018, along with 12 papers that were published by their international colleagues in the same journal issue, giving us a total of 226 RAs. Meanwhile, the novice writer corpus is a collection of 14 yet-to-be-published papers of Malaysian doctoral students or research workers under the apprenticeship of our chosen expert writers. Both novice and expert writers are active members of several scientific laboratories situated in a major research university in Malaysia. Table one summarizes the total number of words in this study’s corpus.

Table 1. Number of words in each sub-corpora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malaysian experts</th>
<th>International experts</th>
<th>Novice writers (unpublished)</th>
<th>Total no. of words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>577836</td>
<td>583117</td>
<td>56038</td>
<td>1216991</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analytical Framework

To study the stance features representing scientific writers’ authorial voice in their RA, this study adopted a functional framework of Hyland’s (2005b) interactional stance (see Appendix A) as the main analytical framework. For the unit of analysis used in this study, reporting clauses that are attributed to the writers’ self or work (c.f. Charles, 2006; Thompson, 2001) were used. Reporting clauses that comment on the writer’s own research offer an important opportunity for writers to position themselves within their discourse community by presenting their research in a way that will make it most likely to be accepted (Charles, 2006).

A three-way comparison of stance devices for each category used by each group of writers was conducted via generating wordlists using Wordsmith 7.0 (Scott, 2016) for each sub-corpora, and the items were then coded for the relevant stance category. Identified stance devices were then examined for the accuracy of the stance function using the concordance feature in Wordsmith 7.0 (Scott, 2016).
Results

The overall density of stance devices found in each sub-corpora is presented in Figure one, and the distribution of stance devices used by each group of writers across all RA sections can be seen in Figure Two.

As can be seen, the practices of expert writers are clearly different from those of novice writers. Malaysian and international expert writers show almost similar preferences in stance marking, with hedges being the most preferred stance marker and self-mention being the least. Similar to reports on RAs across disciplines, including engineering (see Hyland, 1999; Koutsantoni, 2006), hedges are the most frequently used stance markers by our writers. Note the pattern of stance markers in Malaysian novice sub-corpus. There is noticeably low use of all features compared to expert writers, even though they exhibited a slight preference for using attitude markers. Earlier studies on novice writers, however, have reported preferences for hedges (Koutsantoni, 2006) and boosters (Lee & Casal, 2014). Another noticeable difference between Malaysian writers and international writers is the use of self-mentions—international writers can be seen to use self-mentions eight times more often than Malaysian writers. However, similar reports of lower use of self-mentions among EAL writers have attributed this phenomenon to a culture of collectivism (Kim & Lim, 2013; Scollon, 1994); there is also the argument of EAL writers for not being fully exposed to the individual variations and stylistic idiosyncrasies of the English language and how they serve as a rhetorical strategy in writing (Zhao, 2019).
Figure two above details the employment of stance markers by each group of writers across all RA segments. Here, a more interesting observation can be seen in each group of writers’ preferences in each RA segment. For example, in the RA introduction segment, Malaysian expert writers can be seen to employ stance markers three times more often than other groups. In particular, the Malaysian experts’ use of boosting devices was found to have the highest density, with 54.4 times occurring every 10000 words, followed by hedges and attitude markers. In contrast, international expert writers interacted more in their RA results and discussion segment. As shown in Figure two, international experts used hedges 53.6 times in every 10000 words, attitude markers 46.1 times, and boosters 34.2 times, which overall counts far more significantly frequent than other groups of writers. Another noticeable difference in the use of stance markers between Malaysian experts and their international counterparts can be seen in the RA methodology segment. Here, international experts can be seen to employ four times more hedges and boosters and more than twice the number of attitude markers.

Figure two also reveals the actual distribution of stance markers used by Malaysian novice writers across RA segments. As established earlier, Malaysian novices employed an extremely low number of stance markers in general, particularly in the introduction segment. Interestingly, however, the novice writers showed similar employment patterns with their mentors, albeit in lower numbers in RA methodology and conclusion segments. A closer look into the Malaysian novice sub-corpora revealed that the length of their RA introductions was fairly brief compared to expert writers’ and they focused more on describing the materials used in their research. Although Malaysian novice writers did show almost the same average overall density as Malaysian experts in RA results and discussion (MN=43.11 vs. ME=45 per 10000 words), the novices showed a slight preference for attitude markers when justifying their findings. In the following segments, we detail the employment of each resource as found in our corpus.
Hedges

Myers (1989) points out that features such as hedging, which are considered conventional in scientific discourse, can be reinterpreted as negative politeness devices when they reflect the appropriate attitude for offering a claim to the discourse community. Hedging devices, when used to mark claims or other statements in academic writing normally place the proposition as being “provisional, pending acceptance” by the discourse community members and by journal readers in general (Myers, 1989, p.12). Figure three below shows the lexical categories of hedges employed by writers in our corpus across all RA segments.

![Figure 3. Density (per 10000 words) of lexical categories of hedges found across RA sections](image)

As can be seen in Figure three, hedges are employed differently by both groups of expert writers. On the one hand, international experts employed modal verbs (e.g., can, would) as the main hedging device followed by adverbs (e.g., any), adjectives (e.g., possible), and lexical verbs (e.g., indicate, appear). Malaysian experts, on the other, can be seen to employ adverbs the most (e.g., generally, several) and followed by lexical verbs (e.g., indicate, suggest), modal verbs (e.g., can, could), and adjectives (e.g., potential, possible).

Both expert writers in this study used hedges the most when positioning their research claims in RA results and discussion (refer also to Figure one) with international experts showing a higher frequency. They used hedges mostly to garner readers’ acceptance of their claims, particularly when advancing propositions of greater precision (see example one); hedges are also used to mitigate the strength of their proposition and avert possible negative consequences (as in example two). Expert writers were also observed to hedge while making a personal opinion, explicitly referring to themselves as the source of the claim, showing their respect, and asking for readers’ ratification of their claims (see example three). This last maneuver, however, was found only in the international experts’ sub-corpora.

1. The most likely explanation for the discrepancy is the presence of convection in the liquid tin in the experiments in this work. [ITNL2013_NHABS_RND]
2. Scenario three can be considered the optimal scenario, with the acceptable performance of energy potential and GHG emission and the best economically beneficial result. [MAL2013_NHT_RND]
We believe UVG-CC treatment is likely more effective in a region such as Southern Florida, with high cooling latent loads and possibly more robust and persistent biofilms than in a region such as Alaska with little to no cooling days annually [17]. [ITNL2016_HEA_RND]

A closer examination into the Malaysian novice sub-corpora, on the other hand, revealed that hedges were used rather restrictively. Our novice writers generally used two types of strategic hedges in their propositions: to show agreement with other research (example four) and to show the limitation of the study (example five).

This result was similar to Deitzel et al. [2001] that stated there is a non-linear relationship between polymer concentration and fiber diameter. [NOV4_NHPRD_RND]

In this work, the mixture of 70% nmp and 30% distilled water is the weakest coagulant compared to distilled water and ethanol (Wang & Lai, 2012). [NOV9_NHPRD_RND]

Compared to the expert writers, our novice writers expressed tentativeness by seeking support from external sources while displaying familiarity in the research area at the same time. Given that English is a remarkably hedging culture (Hyland, 1999), it is not surprising then that EAL novice writers find academic English to be perplexing as they struggle to acquire its written conventions, especially when trying to get their work published (Casanave & Vandrick, 2003).

Boosters

While hedges indicate uncertainty, boosters, in contrast, are referred to as emphatics or certainty markers, demonstrating writers’ confidence in a claim and effectively marking involvement and solidarity at the same time. The activity verb show was the most frequently occurring booster found in our corpus (c.f. Peacock, 2006; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Akinci, 2016)

Example six typifies the common occurrences in Malaysian expert writers’ sub-corpora; the activity verb showed is used as ‘evidential or implicit truth’ as means of minimizing the writers’ personal involvement, appearing more objective, and attributing authority to their work.

The results presented in this figure also showed that the combination of active learning with self-training helped to obtain better performance. [MAL2015_NHPRD_RND]

Interestingly, Malaysian expert writers can be seen to deploy boosting devices the highest in RA introduction (54.4 per 10000 words) and followed by an RA conclusion (12.1 per 10000 words) compared to the other groups of writers (see Figure two). In the Malaysian expert sub-corpora, writers were found to subsume their authority in their work by using noun phrases. Example (7) demonstrates the use of a noun phrase referring to the research product with the use of direct and elaborate boosters (italicized) in the forms of adjectives/adjetive phrases, and adverbs.

These appropriate image processing methods can provide a reliable, simple, robust, very low cost and user-friendly approach for exploration geologists to identify hydrothermal alteration mineral assemblages. [MAL2012_NHPRD_CONC]

In example eight, Malaysian experts were found to use text references (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), this + work accompanied by the adjectives imperative to construct an authoritative presence with a confident and strong voice of their propositions (c.f. He, 1993).

This work is imperative to answer the general concern about the potential health effects induced by this novel nanocomposite membrane. [MAL2017_NHTXT_INT]
Malaysian experts can also generally be seen to incorporate boosters to express certainty and authority towards their propositions. A particular boosting feature that is unique to the Malaysian expert sub-corpora can be seen in example eight where the adjectives are stacked as this increases the persuasive force of their propositions.

**Attitude Markers**
Attitude markers are classified as stance markers that encapsulate writers' feelings, attitudes, and value judgments (Hyland, 2005a; Abdollahzadeh, 2011). Figure two also shows international experts used double the number of attitude markers in RA results and discussion compared to Malaysian experts. Evaluative adjectives appear to be the most frequently occurring attitude marker in this study. Adjectives that show writers’ attitudes such as *improved* in example (12) was used to make propositions more subjective as they add judgments to the modified noun (see Soler, 2002).

(12) These results confirmed that nickel provides more stability to TIO2 than copper metal and *improved* productivity. [MAL2015_NHPRD_RND]

Attitude markers can also be used to indicate epistemic stance to reveal writers’ relationship with the information detailed in the proposition (Biber et al., 1999). Here, in examples (13) and (14) taken from expert writers’ sub-corpora, attitudinal stance markers were used to show discoursal functions of highlighting research novelty (13) and indicating the precision of procedures and findings (14), which are all part of writers’ interactional strategy of achieving authorial voice in writing.

(13) The strategy *uniquely* considers the flow of the harmonics in terms of the HS that discerns nodal similarity based on the harmonic magnitudes and harmonic phases. [ITNL2012_NHPRD_CONC]

(14) This preliminary result is *convincing* and a more *thorough* evaluation (involving more QAP instances) will be conducted in the future to further validate the performance of GenANT. [MAL2010_NHA_RND]

In RA conclusion, both Malaysian expert and novice writers, in particular, were seen to employ attitude markers as their stance markers, with Malaysian experts showing a higher preference (16.93 times per 10000 words). A closer examination of the corpus revealed a preferred use of adjectives and adverbs as explicit attitude markers, while attitude verbs were rarely found in the corpus (c.f. Koutsantoni, 2006; Mur-Duenas, 2016).

(15) This study has shown that foam-filled conical tubes appear to be *advantageous* in impact applications where an oblique impact load is expected. [MAL2010_NHT_CONC]

(16) In this study, asymmetric bauxite hollow fiber membrane (BHFM) was *successfully* developed through phase inversion using raw bauxite powders as starting material. [NOV2_NHPRD_CONC]

The examples above demonstrate the use of adjectives and adverbs to express a more effective, personal stance through a positive evaluation of the claim, particularly in the conclusion segment of the RA.

As mentioned earlier, novice writers in this study can be seen to employ a more attitudinal stance in their when discussing their results and concluding their papers. However, some of the use of attitude markers by Malaysian novice could appear inappropriately strong (example 17) or linguistically awkward (example 18).
Meanwhile, this study produced grha/zif-8 nanocomposites with betssa of 1632.1 m²/which has definitely proven that our nanocomposites have an even more enhanced surface area. [NOV6F_NHPRD_RND]

While bioconversion offers faster production and a cheaper way of hydrogen, glycerol reforming also offers a great length of technology, especially because the application itself has been long used and established. [NOV3_NHPR_CONC]

Clearly, communicating new knowledge in research writing that meets the requirements of the disciplinary discourse and its readership is a complex task for all novice writers, especially for those whose English is not their first language (Swales, 1990; Curry & Lillis, 2004). Often the case is that novice writer who may be inexperienced are unaware of the impression conveyed in their writing (de Magalhães, Cotterall & Mideros, 2018).

**Self-Mentions**

In this study, self-mentions that represent authorial voice refer to the use of the first-person pronoun, particularly the pronoun we. International expert writers in this study used the first-person pronoun we eight times more often than Malaysian experts and novice writers, and in RA conclusion we occurred 3.1 times in every 10000 words. In contrast, our Malaysian writers hardly employed first-person pronouns in their RA (refer to Figure two).

The use of the first-person pronoun we may be partly due to that all papers in our corpus are multi-authored, as commonly practiced in the hard sciences. However, the use of we was also observed to bring about an immediate claim for authority to writers as they defend their work (Pennycook, 1994). Perhaps making writers’ role visible suggest the desire to identify themselves with a particular argument while seeking the reputation of being “novelty producers” (Whitley, 2000, p. 11). This move can be predominantly observed in the international experts’ sub-corpora as typified in example (19).

(19) We have proposed a novel science-based, goal-driven, equitable, comparable, and actionable framework for measuring and reporting emissions that enables the cascading of GHGE targets. [ITNL2018_HEA_CONC]

A common reporting structure found in our corpus is essentially we + lexical verb (e.g., we + have proposed), we + mental verbs (e.g., we + hope), and activity verb (e.g., we + formulate, study, utilized) (see Biber et al., 1999).

In general, writers were observed to use the first-person pronoun we to state results and claims, which is the most assertive strategy and may also be face-threatening. This assertive claim staking can be found mostly in expert writers’ sub-corpora.

Based on the discerned discourse functions, all three groups of scientific writers chose to appear in their text when explaining their research procedures. However, the international experts can be seen to show a more dynamic use of self-mentions in both the RA introduction and conclusion segments. The minimal use of self-mentions by Malaysian writers, both in novice and expert writings alike, can possibly be attributed to a preconceived notion that academic writing, particularly in the hard disciplines, should be distant and impersonal (Tang & John, 1999) which may be misguided as not all discourse communities employ the same conventions nor do they have similar reader expectations (Hyland, 2004). Among the preconceived notions held by novice writers found by Chang and Swales (1999) was that the use of self-mentions was thought to be a trait reserved exclusively for senior scholars.
The different distribution of self-mentions between the expert writers in this study may indicate a varied interpretation of authorial presence. Our Malaysian experts write from a peripheral discourse community, and their geo-location may perhaps be a complicating factor in shaping their communicative practices in a significant way and in influencing their preferences for structuring information, including how they establish relationships with their readers, and the extent of asserting author visibility in their writing (see Hyland, 2004).

**Discussion**

Two research questions were posed at the beginning of this paper. The first question has been satisfied with a detailed description of the corpus findings in the previous section. In this section of the paper, we will attempt to address the second and perhaps the more perplexing question posed in this research. To recap, the corpus findings demonstrate the use of stance markers as representative of writers’ authorial voice present in Malaysian and international expert writers as well as Malaysian novice writers. The overall findings seem to reveal a similarity in the use of stance markers by Malaysian and international expert writers indicating their legitimate membership in their discourse community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Malaysian novice writers, on the other hand, showed lesser variation and uneven distribution in the use of stance markers compared to their more experienced seniors. Their inclination for a more attitudinal stance resonates with what has been reported in the literature (Davis, 2013; Crosthwaite, Cheung & Jiang, 2017; Yasuda, 2022) and perhaps reflects a common problem among EAL novice writers in appropriating suitable linguistic resources of the argument genre (Davis, 2013). Apart from possible linguistic deficiencies, novice EAL writers writing from the periphery, such as the ones in our novice sub-corpora, may be underprepared to meet the expected writing requirements of international publication.

While Malaysian scholars have made great strides in the international publication scene, our study has shown their unique strategic preference for asserting authorial identity. Malaysian experts showed a greater propensity for using boosters as means of projecting a strong commitment toward their propositions which also minimizes their role as authors. Boosters were also used to display shared their expert disciplinary knowledge while engaging with the readers in the RA introduction segment. In contrast, international experts generally preferred hedges when persuading their readers of the validity of their claims in results and discussion segments of their RAs and used the first-person personal pronoun we as a solidarity marker with their audience, a strategy rarely found in the Malaysian expert sub-corpora. The differences in rhetorical preferences within the same discourse community indicate both groups of expert writers are positioning themselves in different ways. Future research would be more revealing if the actual reasons behind the decision made by the writers are included.

Authorial identity is not a fixed construct in writing (Flowerdew & Wang, 2015). Successful academic writers learn to respond to the expectation of their readership in different ways while remaining true to their disciplinary convention. Previously, most established linguistic frameworks could only account for limited aspects of the individuality of voice (see Mhili, 2023), and they end up limiting writers’ repertoire; however, through a social constructivist perspective, authorial voice is seen to be related to self-representation and authorial presence, and their realization must take into account the social milieu for and out of which the text is produced (Tardy, 2012). Our Malaysian authors, both expert and novice writers, write from a peripheral discourse community and clearly attempted to position themselves as competent research workers.
of the discipline. This is consistent with findings on L2 writers from previous studies (Hinkel, 1997; Lee & Casal, 2014). While the established Malaysian experts have a clear presence as authors following what they perceived to be the convention of the discipline, their ‘discoursal self’ appeared somewhat distant and indirect compared to their international counterparts who interacted more (c.f Ivanič, 1998). The international expert writers consistently showed clear authorial presence throughout the RAs and demonstrated visible strategic discursive maneuvers while persuading their readers to accept their research claims. This evidence of stance makers by both groups of expert writers when staking their claims correlates to Yasuda’s (2022) findings where authorial voice is not only a discipline-specific discourse (Lave & Wenger, 1991) but also a highly contextual, and diverse while the same time, complex meaning-making process.

Conclusion
This study was set to demonstrate the authorial voice construction of Malaysian scientific writers and compare them to that of their international colleagues in research article writing. The findings revealed overall similarities between Malaysian and international expert writers, but at the same time, each group of experts employed preference for different rhetorical approaches in presenting their propositions across different sections of the RA. Malaysian novice writers, on the other hand, were found struggling with positioning their work strategically, as seen with the consistently low use of stance markers. We believe the difficulties shown by our novice writers are not unique to our institution—similar circumstances could perhaps be drawn from novice research writers from other institutions across the region, if not the world. Even though our novice writers work closely with the experts in their scientific endeavors, the transfer of disciplinary writing practices is not guaranteed nor it is automatic. As Ding (2008) pointed out, imitating the works of experts in the field is only part of a novice writer’s apprenticeship experience; emerging writers still need to be made aware of the complex multi-layered linguistic maneuvers in advanced academic writing. Their difficulties thus, raise a great concern for linguistic support to be made available for emerging EAL research writers. There remain many linguistically sophisticated aspects of advanced research writing which are less apparent to the untrained eyes that could only be extracted from the textual practices of the experts, and subsequently be taught explicitly to help emerging writers become successful authors. Our current paper has only shown analyses of textual practices from outsiders’ perspectives; future studies will be able to offer more layered and richer emic perspectives if the selected writers’ insights are included.

About the Authors:
Nurul Naimmah Hamdan is an English language instructor in Language Academy, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Her research interests include academic/scientific discourse, corpus-based analyses and computer assisted language learning. This research paper is a partial requirement for obtaining a PhD from the same research university. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5816-0347

Dr. Ummul Khair Ahmad is an Associate Professor at Language Academy, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Her main research areas are second language writers, academic/scientific discourse and corpus-based analyses. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9362-0975
References


### Appendix A

#### Table 2. Interactional stance framework adopted from Hyland (2005b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stance devices</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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| Hedges         | Withhold commitment and open dialogue. *E.g., can, may, would, proposed* | • Indicate the writer’s decision to recognize alternative voices and viewpoints.  
• Imply that a statement is based on the writer’s plausible reasoning rather than certain knowledge, indicating the writer’s degree of confidence in their proposition. |
| Boosters                  | Emphasize certainty or close dialogue  
|                         | *E.g., shown, showed, significant, revealed* |
|                         | • Suggest the writer recognized potentially diverse positions but has chosen to confront alternatives with a single, confident voice.  
|                         | • Construct rapport by marking involvement with the topic, solidarity with an audience, and taking a joint position against other voices.  
| Attitude markers        | Express the writer’s attitude to the proposition  
|                         | *E.g., believed, successfully*  
|                         | • Indicate the writer’s affective rather than epistemic, attitude to propositions.  
| Self-mentions           | Explicit reference to the author(s)  
|                         | *E.g., I; we; our*  
|                         | • Marked by first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives (*I*, *exclusive we*, *our*).  
|                         | • Its explicit presence or absence is generally a conscious choice made by writers to adopt a particular stance and a contextually situated authorial identity (*Hyland, 2004*)  