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# Rethinking the Role of Languages in the US: Toward a More Diverse Cultural Identity

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**Abstract**—This article examines the English-only post-colonial narrative that has driven the development of US cultural memory and cultural identity does not sufficiently allow for the presence of other languages and cultures that form part of our diverse cultural identity -- past, present, and future. It finds that the current US foreign language deficit, including both lack of necessary foreign language skills among Americans and lack of motivation among Americans -- believing that English is the global lingua franca -- to learn other languages, impacts national and economic security as well as our communities and our society. The author concludes that the resurgence of Spanish, French, and other languages as our languages, rather than foreign languages, empowers us all. Access to foreign language learning from the earliest grade levels for all interested students will not only impact our economic and national security, but will create a new, and more diverse and sustainable "English plus" American identity for generations to come.

**Index Terms**—foreign language learning, bilingualism, multilingualism, immersion

## I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of foreign language learning for American students has long been a topic of discussion among scholars, and research reports and government hearings have added to the conversation on the scope and impact of the lack of foreign language skills on Americans.

Scholars have long discussed the importance of foreign languages for American students (Kettelkamp, 1940; Pei, 1956; Huebener, 1961; Simon, 1980; MLA, 2007; AMACAD, 2017), and a series of research reports, and even government hearings (NAFSA, 2003; CED, 2006; O'Connell & Norwood, 2007; Language Flagship, 2009; GAO, 2010; US Senate, 2012; New American Economy, 2017), have examined the impact of this foreign language deficit on our economics and national security.

In the global era, foreign language skills and knowledge of other cultures are more necessary than ever, as multilingualism is yet another advantage in our role as global citizens, in addition to the cognitive, cultural, and career advantages long associated with foreign language skills.

The disconnection between languages spoken and language learning in the US is evident. While more than 60M, or over 20%, of the US population speaks a language other than English in the home, fewer than 20% of K-12 students, and only 7.5% of college and university students are learning another language (Ryan, 2013; Grosjean, 2018; American Councils, 2017; MLA, 2018).

The reasons for this "legendary" (Stearns, 2009) reluctance to learn other languages have included the role of English as a global *lingua franca*, but the challenges faced by those who work to increase interest in foreign language learning in the US point to a deeper reason for resistance to language learning – our monolingual collective memory and collective cultural identity.

A more cosmopolitan, and at the same time, more authentic, collective memory and cultural identity could empower us to embrace both the local and the global aspects of other cultures (Gunesch, 2004, 2013), developing more interest in other languages and becoming better language learners.

## II. THE MELTING POT METAPHOR AND OUR MONOLINGUAL COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND COLLECTIVE CULTURAL IDENTITY

Memory plays an important role in the transmission of personal and collective cultural identity, but memory may not always be accurate and/or complete – for individuals and for groups. Autobiographical memory, or what we believe ourselves to be, may be incomplete or inaccurate. Even what we believe to be true memories are sometimes at least partially reconstructed, as we try to create meaning from incomplete data (Mazzoni, 2018).

What we believe to be a monolingual cultural identity may be the result of the information that has been transmitted to us, and this information may not always have been complete and may not always have included the many stories that make up our complex history and culture.

The collective memory and the resulting collective cultural identity of many in the US are largely based on a traditional narrative of British colonies, later independent, yet retaining the English language and many British-oriented traditions, and many Americans are even ardent anglophiles. Popular examples of this identification with British

tradition yet today would include the number of Americans who traveled to Britain to see the royal wedding of Will and Kate, or the 30M who watched the wedding of Prince Harry and Megan Markle.

Even though we may be aware that our American culture is one of many stories, many of us may still assume that English is the official language, and relatively few are even aware that the United States does not have an official language. Even fewer may be aware that bilingual education has always existed in the US, since the colonial era (Goldenberg & Wagner, 2015).

Other languages flourished to some extent in the early years of our history in many parts of the US, but during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, historic language communities dwindled in number, with the US losing part of its linguistic identity and tradition. There is even a linguistic urban myth, the Muhlenberg legend, about the possibility of German becoming the official language of the young nation.

The melting pot metaphor, routinely used to describe American culture, had become increasingly English only, and the importance of French, Spanish, and many other languages moved to the periphery of the public conversation and of the US media.

A more accurate collective memory would include the presence of others throughout our history, and across what is now the US, including the fact that the many French and Spanish place names across the country are clear indicators of other presences in what is now the United States, and that among the top 15 surnames in the US, 6 are Hispanic (Census, 2016). Place names across the country, including Bismarck, Stockholm, Carlstadt, and Swedesboro are just a few of the many indicating the diversity of our collective heritage and history.

### III. LANGUAGE AND OUR PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE CULTURAL IDENTITY

The significance of language, as both a means of communication and transmission of culture, as well as a symbol of belonging, in both our personal and collective cultural identity, should not be under-estimated.

However, in addition to the significance of language, it is important to consider how best to sustain and foster use of other languages as part of our personal lives, in our society, and as global citizens. Important issues to consider are how to develop awareness of the different languages and cultures that have played, and continue to play, a role in the US, and how to create and sustain interest in language learning. In addition, it is important to consider the role of language, not only in terms of communication and of relationships with others, but also as part of a larger system, or environment, in which the whole person lives and functions.

Another element to consider is the continued ability to read news and literature and to understand film and other media that not only are in another language, but that also generally represent another worldview. Americans, confined to the English language space, miss out on the adventure of other perspectives.

In addition to its use as a means of communication, language also plays a symbolic role in establishing a sense of community, and loss of the mother tongue, or community language, can have an adverse effect on self-esteem. It is also the means of expressing this culture through literature, vocal music, etc. This is yet another reason why heritage language education is so important. It is also the means of conveying, preserving, and transmitting the culture, or cultural continuity.

Languages also express things differently, depending on concepts and tangible objects that may exist in particular cultures, if at all, to varying degrees. The formal versus informal forms of address expressed by *vous*, *Usted*, *Sie*, *Lei*, etc., versus *tu*, *du*, etc., are examples of relationship concepts either more important in particular cultures than in others, or expressed more specifically in certain languages and cultures than in others.

Languages in contact, either in the community, or within a particular family or individual, offer a bridge and an intermediary between cultures and an opportunity for the development of a more complex cultural identity resulting from an ongoing conversation, or dialogue of sorts, among the languages present. Languages are also linked with different decision-making and problem-solving styles.

By choosing to remain monolingual, we miss out, not only on the enjoyment of communicating and interacting with others in their language, but we also miss out on opportunities for self-actualization. If our personal cultural identity is viewed as many elements that work together as part of one system, the addition – or suppression – of a language impacts the whole person.

### IV. TOWARD A NEW MULTILINGUAL AND DIVERSE CULTURAL IDENTITY

If a new multilingual and diverse cultural identity is to be developed, a paradigm shift in the collective memory and cultural identity needs to occur, and this change needs to occur in our communities and in our schools, and through print, online, and social media. Language advocacy needs to be strategic, and to be informed by theory and best practices in change management, social marketing, the psychology of influence and persuasion, disruptive innovation, and even blue ocean theory, as well as other theories and best practices, in order to advocate for languages to be part of education for all from the earliest ages. In addition to this campaign for languages, the use and learning of other languages need to be fostered and encouraged in our communities, schools, and in the workplace.

However, in a globalized world, the creation of a new cultural identity transcends its historical roots and embraces our future as global citizens, with a cosmopolitan and multilingual identity able to envision multiple worldviews.

The process of developing a broader cultural identity has been described and can be envisioned in three stages. During the first stage, cultural identity is "unexamined", not part of our day-to-day thoughts. At a second stage, prompted by a personal or educational experience, often during adolescence, an individual may begin to explore their personal heritage. At a third stage, the individual will have developed understanding and acceptance of a broader, more complex version of their cultural identity (Phinney & Rotheram, 1987; Phinney, 1989). A parallel process at the national or regional level could be envisioned as having three very similar stages.

Many of us are relatively unaware even of our own individual heritage, absorbing the monolingual cultural identity of anglophone American through our communities, schools, and media. This unexamined cultural identity would be the norm among children, but also exists in many adults. A search for one's personal cultural identity could be the result of a personal or educational experience making the student or adult more interested in digging deeper into an area that had previously not been given serious thought, and would typically involve exploring, finding out, and learning more about one's heritage. The ideal end result of this process could be imagined as the development of understanding and acceptance of one's heritage as part of one's personal cultural identity.

Overcoming language-resistant behavior among Americans calls for discussion of and learning about other languages and cultures from the earliest grade levels, as well as discussion of the contribution of other cultures to our American experience. Two levels of change -- within individual students, and within the general narrative of our communities, schools, and media -- are needed in order to effect a paradigm shift in attitude toward other languages and toward multilingualism.

The issue becomes one of change management -- how best to work toward a change in how we -- as individuals, and collectively, as Americans, envision our collective memory and our collective cultural identity.

As a result, it is possible to adapt the best theories and practice in change management, social marketing, cause marketing, disruptive innovation, blue ocean strategy, and more to drive a new conversation on a new, more complex, cultural memory and cultural identity reflecting our diverse heritage and history.

Kotter's 8-step theory of change management begins with establishing "a sense of urgency," which is of critical importance in driving a public conversation of such magnitude. It is essential that including all Americans -- past, present, and future, in our collective memory and cultural identity, become a priority. It is indeed, urgent, in both our increasingly multilingual and multicultural society, and in the globalized world and workplace, that we develop the necessary language skills and cultural knowledge.

Because development of a complex and diverse cultural identity reflecting our history and our society is of the utmost social benefit, social marketing -- employing strategies and tactics of business marketing for the social good, and cause marketing -- developing partnerships based on corporate social responsibility, including those in business and industry, to broaden support would also be used to good effect.

The creation of a more diverse sustainable cultural memory and identity would also be an example of disruptive innovation. Not only would a more inclusive cultural identity disrupt the current narrative, it would also disrupt education, specifically foreign language education, as we know it. Awareness, interest, and engagement with other cultures would begin early, across disciplines, ideally in an immersive intercultural environment.

Blue ocean strategy, an approach centered on developing interest among new markets, or "blue oceans," as opposed to the red oceans of cutthroat competition, would apply to the challenge of fostering interest in other languages and cultures among individuals, communities, and organizations hitherto unaware and uninterested in them.

Foreign language educators, advocates, and stakeholders should view the current moment, with bilingualism on the rise (Grosjean, 2018), along with awareness of the importance of foreign languages here at home and in the globalized world as a tipping point, where our individual actions can, indeed, "make a big difference" (Gladwell, 2002).

## V. MULTILINGUALISM AND A MORE COSMOPOLITAN CULTURAL IDENTITY

"Language is a critical instrument that shapes one's view of the world. Understanding the meaning of the words other people use yields perhaps the most insight into cultural differences. Language both describes and limits what we see" (Adams & Carfagna, 2006).

The phrase "at home in the world" has often been used to describe a cosmopolitan, or global citizen (Brennan, 1997; Olson et al, 2007), and language is an important part of this ability to understand, appreciate, and effectively navigate other cultures.

Just as language skills can help us to more fully develop and understand our personal cultural identity, our heritage, and our national cultural identity as Americans, they can also help us to develop a more cosmopolitan cultural identity as the global and the local become more interconnected.

The ability to understand information from the perspective of another culture through print, online, and social media, and to communicate directly with others without translation or other language barrier, is a significant factor in developing an international and global citizenship mindset and in being able to play an active role as global citizens in effectively addressing complex global issues.

As knowledge of other languages offers personal and professional benefits, parents and families can consider encouraging use of their mother tongue or heritage language in the home so that their children, grandchildren, and

future generations will enjoy not only the cognitive and professional advantages of bilingualism, but also so that they will continue to be able to fully participate in both cultures and understand and appreciate their identity and heritage.

Research confirms that bilingualism does not confuse children, but that – as language learning is a long process – children learning and using more than one language may take longer to reach certain milestones. In addition, both the quality and quantity of input in both languages plays an important role, and bilinguals may, in fact, have different skill levels in each language, depending both on input received and their use of each language (Hoff & Core, 2015).

(Gunesch, 2004, 2006; & Ros i Sole, 2013) build on the fact that – far from being a detriment – multilingualism empowers us as global citizens to develop cosmopolitan cultural identities, perhaps even developing multiple identities, as our mindset changes when we change languages.

An example of the role of multilingualism in global citizenship is the Many Languages One World Essay Contest and Global Youth Forum (MLOW), in which college and university students from around the world submit essays written in a learned second language, which is also one of the 6 official languages of the United Nations. Winners, generally 10 for each of the 6 languages, spend a week on a US campus and have the opportunity to present in the General Assembly Hall of the UN, in the language of their winning essay, generally on the sustainable development goals, the UN global development agenda 2015-2030. In addition to the use of a learned second language by these multilingual students, the teamwork and camaraderie displayed by these transnational teams as they developed their group presentations, as well as the lasting friendships formed across cultures, are inspirational.

Ensuring that all our children – from the earliest grades, as well as interested adults, have the opportunity to learn additional languages, will empower us as global citizens, transcending a local, monolingual paradigm to develop a truly global mindset and vision, in a world where – rather than having one *lingua franca*, generally English, there is a “*multilingual franca*” (Janssens & Steyaert, 2014).

## VI. LANGUAGES AND LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE US – MOTIVATION AND ENVISIONING THE MULTILINGUAL SELF

Motivation is considered key to language learning success, and a trait generally shared by successful language learners (Mackey, 2014; Dornyei, 1998; Ramage, 1990; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Many Americans are not motivated to learn another language, and do not even see any reason to learn another language because of our monolingual anglophone collective memory and cultural identity, and our mistaken belief that English is the global *lingua franca*. In addition, US students are often not required to study another language, and many do not even have access to foreign language learning and the opportunity to learn another language.

As the collective memory and collective cultural identity in the US are predominantly monolingual and anglophone, many Americans cannot and do not envision themselves speaking another language fluently or even holding a conversation in another language

This ability to envision oneself fluent in another language is sometimes referred to as the “L2 motivational self,” and a lack of ability to envision oneself as a successful language learner may actually play a significant role in our difficulty in learning another language and is related to motivation (Mackey, 2014).

While some 60M speak a language other than English in the home, relatively few English-speaking Americans, as few as one in four, are able to hold a conversation in another language (Ryan, 2013; McComb, 2001). Most monolingual English-speaking Americans may not even envision, or be able to envision, themselves conversing in another language.

In addition to the tendency not to envision ourselves as speaking other languages and lack of motivation, reasons for this disconnect between languages spoken and language learning in the US include the fact that fewer than 20% of K-12 students study another language and that only 7.5% of college and university students are enrolled in a course in a language other than English (American Councils, 2017; MLA, 2018). Compared to Europe, where virtually all students study at least one additional language beginning at an early age, the relatively small percentage of US students learning another language is noteworthy (Devlin, 2015, 2018). In addition, it is important to remember that a relatively small percentage of US students is even afforded this opportunity.

Another reason for the disconnection between languages spoken and language learning in the US is that many US students are not required to study another language. Foreign language requirements vary from state to state, and even where requirements exist, they are often minimal, or can be selected cafeteria-style among several non-language options (ECS, 2007). A conversation with a local school administrator or decision-maker may often yield general and noncommittal responses. Even students enrolled in foreign language study often opt for an elementary course for a relatively easy A and abandon language study at the earliest opportunity, or undergraduates register for an elementary foreign language course even after several years of study in high school. College foreign language requirements for entrance and for graduation vary as well (MLA, 2012).

The challenge is to determine the cause, or source, of this language-resistant behavior in order to effectively address it. While languages are spoken by large numbers in the US, and are increasingly important in the workplace, the fact remains that many Americans never even begin study of another language.

This paradoxical pattern of language-avoidance behavior is taking place outside the classroom, before actual foreign language study, so it is not a question of curriculum or of the individual teacher, and the reason often given that English is enough, and that if one speaks English, the global *lingua franca*, no additional languages are needed. However, while

English is widely studied and learned around the world, three-quarters of the world's population does not speak English (British Council, 2013). In addition, in many US communities, knowledge of a second language is an advantage. From a workplace perspective, it is important to note that many job openings of all types require foreign language skills and cultural knowledge (New American Economy, 2017).

The decision to learn another language may be driven by a variety of reasons, and motivation is considered the major factor in successful language learning outcome. The strategies used by the language learner, and by those who support the learning process in the classroom, at home, at work, and in the community also impact potential success.

Current research on motivation in second language learning, which is generally considered to have begun in officially bilingual Canada with the work of Gardner and Lambert, is sometimes referred to as being from the social psychological or the cognitive period. (Gardner & Lambert, 1972) examine language learning from a social perspective, driven most effectively by integrative motivation, a desire to communicate and interact with the target culture. Cognitive research, often associated with the research of Dornyei and Ushioda, examines L2 learning through learning behaviors during different stages of the language learning process.

In terms of language learning as a function of our interest in other languages and cultures as part of our individual personal cultural identity and our collective cultural identity as Americans, the socio-cultural model is the more applicable in building and sustaining motivation. Cognitive theories of motivation are useful to both the learner and the classroom teacher in empowering students to persevere during the inevitable challenges of learning another language.

Learning a new language involves the whole person and transcends both disciplinary boundaries and the confines of the classroom, and language is part of everything we do. Daily life is infused with language, so language learning needs to be part of everything we do throughout the day. This holistic aspect of language learning is one of the reasons that family and community support are so important in the success of immersion programs. However, without sufficient motivation, that level of dedication and concentration is difficult to achieve and to maintain.

As Americans are such reluctant language learners, it is interesting to examine not only the reasons for this reluctance, but also strategies to increase both the number of Americans learning another language and their level of success. The answer, at least in part, may lie in the fact that language is generally considered part of one's personal cultural identity, based on memories of family, friends, and experiences, and this memory and identity vary from individual to individual, and may include – or not – more than one language. Perhaps the reason for our reluctance to learn another language lies, at least in part, in our collective cultural identity.

However, our cultural identity, and the memories that build, support, and sustain it, is also collective, and our tenacious monolingualism may result from the fact that our collective memory is monolingual and anglophone.

Memory plays a significant role in learning a language. Without memory, we would not be able to sequentially build linguistic skills, remember vocabulary, etc. Memory also plays a significant role in the development and understanding of our identity, and in our ability to form and maintain relationships. Our collective memory, transmitted through generations by parents, communities, schools, and the media, is at the heart of our cultural identity, both as individuals and as members of our local, regional, and national communities.

Americans are known to be reluctant language learners, with relatively few Americans fluent in one or more additional languages, and a reason often given by way of explanation is that many believe that English is the global *lingua franca* and that there is little reason to learn another language. While English is widely studied and spoken, 75% of the world population does not speak English. While a case could be made for a special status for French, along with Spanish and other languages, as US historical and heritage languages, a serious challenge to language learning is the anglophone narrative of our history and culture – in essence, our collective memory. This collective memory, at the core of the transmission of our cultural identity, is overwhelmingly anglophone, and young Americans learn about the British colonies and Shakespeare, rather than learning about the historical and enduring importance of France and other cultures in our past, present, and future.

However, memory – whether individual or collective – is not always accurate or complete, and transmission of our collective memory is generational, taking place through the family and community, schools, and the media, and memory can be updated and completed by including other voices to develop a more nuanced narrative and more authentic narrative.

## VII. FRENCH -- AN EXAMPLE OF AN AMERICAN LANGUAGE

One example of this is the lack of general knowledge on the French presence in the US, and the same could be said for other languages and cultures. In a typical K-12 education, American students learn relatively little about the historic French presence in North America, about the impact of the ideas of the French Enlightenment on our own American Revolution, and the significant presence of the French language today through millions of French language speakers in the US, and through the French ancestry and heritage of over 10M Americans. The 2018 acceptance of Louisiana into the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* may have even been a surprise to many Americans, unaware of the scope of the French presence in Louisiana, as well as in New England, both historically and at the present time, and of its current presence in South Florida and New York City.

To follow this particular example, from the earliest grades, the contributions of France, Franco-Americans, Francophone cultures, both locally and globally, need to be part of the curriculum. This is especially facilitated when

students have the opportunity to begin continued foreign language study at an early age, as cultural skills and knowledge are generally infused into the foreign language learning process, whether through traditional foreign language learning or through an immersion program.

In order to support the growth of opportunity for foreign language study, a conversation on the role and importance of multilingualism in a globalized world needs to be developed and expanded to include parents, communities, and the general public, in addition to scholars and educators.

In addition to books for school-aged children, the media also needs to better reflect the voices of French-speaking communities, as well as those where French is in danger of being lost or forgotten, reaching out with a variety of offerings to respond to different interests.

While French culture is amazingly present throughout the US, attention also needs to be paid to the language itself, developing proficiency and fluency through heritage language learning, and developing a new generation of French-speakers through FLES and immersion programs.

A similar case could be made for Spanish and other languages and cultures within the US.

Once a decision is made to opt for a broader narrative of our American cultural identity, it is important to consider the significance of language in our personal and collective cultural identity and the factors that foster language learning success.

The motivation-driven decision to learn another language is only the first step. As language is part of our personal cultural identity, and plays an important role in communication, learning, and self-expression, just as the elements of our personal cultural identity are related, so too are our languages, and the ways of learning language are related to everything else. These include ecological and holistic theories of language learning, as well as experiential learning. Learning another language is an example of transformative learning, as it impacts and transforms the whole person.

For these reasons, language learning that builds on the connectedness of language to all areas of life, with authentic situations and language, along with experiential learning, are generally the most effective. This is where the effectiveness of immersion programs, especially dual-language immersion, is highlighted.

#### VIII. FROM THE MONOLINGUAL TO THE MULTILINGUAL AMERICAN – ENCOURAGING LANGUAGE LEARNING AND THE USE OF LANGUAGES

In order to encourage the development of language skills, it is necessary to encourage language learning from the earliest age, and at any age, as well as the use of languages at home, at school, in the workplace, and in the media and public life.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is a theory built on 4 steps toward developing the ability to effectively navigate another culture, and while CQ is generally considered part of the world of international business and management, its 4 steps – CQ drive; CQ knowledge; CQ strategy; and CQ action greatly resemble the steps needed to sustain or revive language learning within our society (Livermore, 2016).

The concept of translanguaging, with involves the inclusion of all the learner's linguistic skills and knowledge, rather than limiting the student to the use of only one language, is an example of the interrelatedness or connectedness of everything, and a bilingual is not "two monolinguals" (Grosjean, 2018).

Encouraging use of more than one language in the home requires a long-term family commitment from earliest childhood through adolescence and young adulthood, with different challenges during each developmental stage requiring a variety of strategies by parents and other caregivers in order to encourage and support bilingualism at home.

Tokuhama-Espinosa (2008) includes aptitude, timing, motivation, strategy, consistency, and opportunity among important factors in raising multilingual children.

Parents and communities wishing to encourage the use of their home language may also want to consider the establishment of a language program in the local public schools. These may be heritage language programs or bilingual programs. The model of bilingual program likely to lead to sustainable bilingualism by developing skills in both the home language and the school language is two-way (TWI) or dual-language immersion (DLI). Heritage language programs are intended to support language learning among learners who have a connection with another language and culture.

"Dual-language education is a universal good that ought to be developed everywhere, as it can positively transform a child, a family, a school, a community, or even a nation" (Jaumont, 2017).

Circling back to the importance of language in our personal and collective cultural identity, teaching and learning environments that engage the whole person, notably immersion programs, would be indicated.

In addition, building on the power of integrative motivation in language learning, both holistic approaches and ecological approaches, which consider language to be part of the ecology, or environmental system, of person or of a community, would be indicated.

#### IX. CONCLUSIONS



The problem is that our current cultural identity model is monolingual. Therefore, other languages lack appeal, and many Americans lack the motivation to learn another language. If we can develop a cultural identity more reflective of our diverse society, foreign language learning has a greater possibility of appealing to a larger number of students.

The challenge is to change our collective cultural identity so that students can envision being of, or interested in, another culture -- and by extension, in learning another language.

If our collective memory and cultural identity remain resolutely monolingual, even the best efforts of our foreign language educators, stakeholders, and supporters will face virtually insurmountable odds.

In order to effect the needed paradigm shift in attitudes toward other languages, a re-thinking of our collective memory and cultural identity is an essential first step, to be followed by its representation in the classroom through authentic learning situations, and an early start to foreign languages and to learning about other cultures.

Building foreign language skills in the United States involves changing how we think about ourselves, both at the very deepest, most personal level, and as a society, and re-imagining our personal and collective cultural identity as one with many stories. It is about developing a more flexible and inclusive personal cultural identity -- with room for our heritage, our aspirations, and our role as global citizens. This new personal cultural identity, one that we create and build ourselves, is no longer static and one dimensional, but rather it is dynamic and multidimensional, expanding as we meet new ideas, new situations, and develop a new and evolving idea of our own selves, with multiple personal cultural identities, not mutually exclusive, coexisting and complementing each other.

This new and re-imagined cultural identity and memory can be reflected and supported in the classroom by an early start to foreign language learning and to learning about other cultures, where L1 and L2 are seen in relationship to each other and to a broader vision of community and citizenship, and by fostering bilingualism through immersion (Jaumont, 2017). Immersion offers the best learning environment for this to occur, and partnerships between language stakeholders in education, business, government, and the community are essential.

Multiple languages have always co-existed in what is now the US, and there is actually a strong American historical tradition of bilingual education, lost in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and re-imagined beginning in the 1960s (Goldenberg & Wagner, 2015). By embracing immersion education, we are actually returning to a traditional vision of American cultural identity.

As Appiah (2006) wrote, "boundaries can be delightful, or just vexing: what they mainly are, though, is inevitable."

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# Music in the Foreign Language Classroom: How and Why?

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**Abstract**—Despite a positive attitude towards the use of music in the foreign language classroom, teachers rarely integrate music into their lessons. Studies suggest two main explanations for this discrepancy: a limited knowledge of adapted material and a lack of theoretical grounding to support the use of music in the foreign language classroom. This article aims at examining how and why music can be used in the foreign language classroom. The first section describes some musical methodologies frequently used for language acquisition over time and provides references to resources containing music-based exercises for foreign language learning. The second part reviews research studies about the potential benefits of music-related methodologies for language acquisition and for specific linguistic skills.

**Index Terms**—music, songs, foreign language teaching, methodology

## I. INTRODUCTION: TEACHERS' ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE

Teachers are mostly positive about the incorporation of music in foreign language (FL) classes. In different surveys (Engh, 2013a; Jamouille, 2017; Tse, 2015), teachers mentioned that they believe music can be beneficial for foreign language acquisition, for language skills as for motivational or cultural aspects. They also indicate that it creates a good, enjoyable, relaxing atmosphere and that it lowers stress levels or affective filters. Despite this positive attitude, the use of music in the language-learning classroom appears to be rather occasional. Through an online questionnaire about the practices of foreign language teachers in 2005-2006 compared to 2013-2014, Ludke & Morgan (forthcoming) examined if the increased scientific interest in research about music and FL learning has been reflected in the extent and the ways teachers from different countries use music in the classroom. They reported that the actual use of music has not notably changed between the two periods and that songs were mainly used with young beginners. This was also stated by Jamouille (2017) who examined the incorporation of music in English classrooms in Brussels Secondary French-speaking schools. From a sample of 54 teachers, she found that music was not often incorporated in the English classroom and that, if it was, music was mostly used as a fun activity.

Two main reasons could explain 'the lack of crossover between stated teacher attitudes and stated teacher present classroom practice' (Engh, 2013a). First, adequate material is not always easy to find. In his paper, Tse (2015, p. 88) mentions that more than 60% of the surveyed teachers (N=60) claim that they 'do not have enough resources', that 'there are inadequate song materials', and that they 'find it arduous to find suitable songs for classroom use' (Tse, 2015, p.88). Creating new musical material can however be very challenging for teachers (Engh, 2013): lyrics of existing songs are not always appropriate, developing materials requires additional preparation time and leading singing, creating music or encouraging students to sing are for some teachers not so comfortable. Secondly, teachers sometimes lack theoretical grounding that could help guide the decision to use music in the classroom. In this regard, Engh (2013b) states that:

[...] while many teachers intuitively felt music was beneficial in teaching English language, there was also the perception that there was a lack of understanding of the theoretical underpinnings that supported such a choice. Therefore, some educators felt unable to defend the decision to champion use of music in the classroom to administrators, business English students or those in a predominantly exam focused environment (p.113).

All in all, teachers seem to be positive about the use of music in the FL classroom, but the incorporation appears rather occasional. A lack of resources and a lack of theoretical grounding could explain this discrepancy. In order to remedy this scarcity of information, this paper aims to state *how* music can be used in the FL classroom by describing some methods and by giving some resources, and *why* music can benefit foreign language learning by reviewing research about the impact of music-related methods on FL acquisition

## II. HOW CAN MUSIC BE USED IN THE FL CLASSROOM? SOME METHODS AND RESOURCES

When we review the literature about the use of music in the FL classroom, it appears that music-related teaching methods can be classified in three main categories: the use of music without lyrics (sounds or background music), the use of songs and the use of rhythmical activities. The following section gives a short description of these different approaches, and provides references to resources containing exercises to use these music-related methods in the FL classroom.

### A. Sounds and Background Music

Different linguists and researchers have advocated that listening to non-linguistic sounds or having background music during a task could enhance performance, among others at the linguistic level.

In Tomatis' methods, active listening to sounds is supposed to train the ear to perceive specific frequencies. Alfred Tomatis, an otolaryngologist, stated that 'the voice only contains what the ear hears' (Tomatis, 1991, p. 210), which implies that one can only vocally reproduce what one can hear. For Tomatis, this is also relevant for the perception of foreign languages: he claims that languages have different frequency ranges, which makes the perception and production of a language with a large frequency range impossible for a native speaker of a language with a short frequency range (Tomatis, 1991, p. 129-137). In order to establish or re-establish the full potential of the human ear, he developed the 'Electronic Ear'. With this ear, participants can hear music (often Mozart) or speech, whose sound has been modified to train the ear to correctly hear sound, in particular high-frequency sounds. Thanks to the listening to modified sounds and classical music, 'the adult learner recovers the ear s/he possessed in childhood and is able to hear correctly the appropriate foreign-language sounds' (Brancroft, 1999, p. 212). This methodology has also been used in other fields than foreign language acquisition (e.g. to treat dyslexia, autism, motor or attention disorders), has often been criticized, and has been subjected to many meta-analyses (Corbett, Shickman, & Ferrer, 2008; Gilmor, 1999).

Besides this active listening to specific sounds, non-lyrical music has been played in the background to improve language skills. In the late 1960s, Lozanov (1978) developed the *Suggestopedia methodology* which made use of classical music in order to relax the student's state of mind and make the brain more receptive to learning: while the teacher reads, music – often baroque – was played in the background (Brancroft, 1999; Lozanov, 1978). In the 1990s, the popular media widely spread the 'Mozart Effect': listening to Mozart would make you smarter. This popular belief derives mainly from a scientific study which tested the effect of listening to music on IQ spatial reasoning tasks (Rauscher, Shaw, & Ky, 1993). Participants were given three sets of IQ spatial reasoning tasks, each preceded by either listening to Mozart, or to a relaxation tape or to silence. Results showed that participants 'performed better on the abstract/spatial reasoning tests after listening to Mozart than after listening to either the relaxation tape or to nothing' (Rauscher et al., 1993, p. 611). Journalists reported these results stating that 'listening to Mozart actually makes you smarter' (Ross, 1994). This popular misinterpretation led to many new studies on the impact of Mozart or other instrumental music on cognitive tasks. Even if there is little evidence left for a specific performance-enhancing Mozart effect (Pietschnig, Voracek, & Formann (2010), Steele, Bass, & Crook (1999), Thompson, Schellenberg, & Husain (2001)), background instrumental music, in general, seems to affect learning (e.g. foreign language vocabulary (de Groot, 2006)). Today, thanks to the new imaging technology, researchers can anatomically analyze whether background music can improve abilities and which specific process is affected and how. With this objective in mind, Ferreri, Aucouturier, Muthalib, Bigand, & Bugaiska (2013) examined the neurological process when background music is played during the encoding of a verbal memory task. Music facilitated the retrieval of the encoded material and results suggest that the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC), a region known to be usually crucial during memory encoding processes, was deactivated during word encoding in the musical context, and that music helps verbal encoding by facilitating associative and organizational processes.

### B. Songs

Another and more frequent way of integrating music into the foreign language classroom is the use of songs. This utilization has evolved over time to become a multi-level and multi-skills methodology. From the 1950s through the 1970s, songs were sometimes used with the *Audiolingual Method*, which is an 'approach in the teaching of foreign languages based on a system of drills in which the student repeats or adapts model sentences delivered orally or played aloud by the teacher' (Oxford English Dictionary). In this approach, singing songs made the repetitive drills possible, since songs contain redundancy, and at the same time reduced the boredom of this drill method (Kanel, 2000). When some language teaching approaches became more pervasive, such as the *communicative language teaching* and the *task-based language teaching*, 'there was a sudden demand for pedagogical material for the use of songs in the language-learning classroom' (Engh, 2013b, p. 113). Different teachers developed their own FL teaching approaches including songs, such as the *Contemporary Music Approach* of Anton (1990), which uses songs to train grammar skills or the *Melodic Approach* of Mora (2000), which uses songs and melodic emphasis on language. Except for these specific methodologies, songs can be used in many different ways in the FL classroom, whether using the song as such, the context, the singer, etc.

### C. Rhythmical Activities

Teachers sometimes intuitively use music-teaching methods to train oral FL production. For example, they clap their hands to emphasize the rhythm of the speech, they make gestures that illustrate the speech intonation, they annotate written sentences to indicate the position of the stress as in a music score, etc. Some of these intuitive rhythmical activities have been formalized. For example, Graham (1993), an English teacher, linked the rhythms of spoken American English to the rhythms of traditional American jazz, creating the *Jazz Chants*. These chants are rhythmic presentations of natural American English that emphasize natural stress and intonation. The same kind of rhythmic presentation exists for Dutch, with the *Taalriedels* (Deen, Van Veen, & Schutte, 2014) or *Taalraps* (Verboog & Ader,

2016), short rap-songs with useful everyday language. In French, Llorca (2008) developed a similar method in her *Ritmimot*, which emphasizes French rhythm and prosody.

#### D. Useful References with Music-based Exercises for FL Classes

Table 1 lists references to different resources that contain exercises using music or rhythm for foreign language teaching. The table mentions the kind of resources (e.g. book, article, website...), gives a short description of the resource, and details the target language, the skills and the level of the resource.

TABLE I  
REFERENCES TO RESOURCES CONTAINING EXERCISES USING MUSIC FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Kind of resource</i>	<i>Short description</i>	<i>Target language</i>	<i>Skills</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Background music or songs</i>	Griffie (1992)	Book	Description of activities using songs or instrumental music to learn a foreign language	English	Vocabulary, listening, writing	Varia
	Murphey (1992)	Book	Description of 85 activities about songs. Section 'Just music' describes activities with background music	English, but can be used for other languages	Varia	Low to advanced
<i>Songs</i>	Arnold & Herrick (2016)	Book	Collection of 101 adaptable activities	English	Reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, vocabulary, cultural exploration	Varia
	British Council – Songs for kids <a href="https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/songs">https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/songs</a>	Website	Animated and subtitled songs with activities	English	Varia	Children
	de Vries & van Loo (2004)	Book	Songs written for FL learners, with typical structures, collocations, intonation patterns. The book contains different exercises using the songs	Dutch	Varia	Mainly beginners
	Génération française <a href="https://www.leplaisirdapprendre.com/portfolio/cansons-generation-francaise">https://www.leplaisirdapprendre.com/portfolio/cansons-generation-francaise</a>	Website	17 pedagogical forms, each based on a popular French song	French	Varia	A2-C1
	Lennaert & de Bonski's <a href="http://www.bonski.be/">http://www.bonski.be/</a>	Book & CD	Songs written for FL learners. Each song is accompanied by specific pronunciation exercises	Dutch	Pronunciation/prosody	A1/B1
	Lorenzutti (2014)	Journal article	Description of 7 activities using authentic songs	Varia	Varia	Varia
	Ludke (2009)	Workbook, online available	10 lessons using authentic songs, each focusing on one specific skill	French, but can be used for other languages	Reading, writing, listening; speaking; vocabulary; pronunciation; grammar; culture	Varia
	Lyrics Training <a href="http://lyricstraining.com">lyricstraining.com</a>	Website/App	Fill-in exercises with songs	Varia	Varia	Low to advanced
	Mishan (2005)	Book	Book about the use of authentic material in the FL classroom. One chapter is about music and contains theory, followed by some exercises (pp. 207-2013)	English, but can be used for other languages	Varia	Varia
	Tefl Tunes <a href="https://teftunes.com">https://teftunes.com</a>	Website	Ready made ESL song lessons (! some are not free)	English	Varia	Low to advanced
<i>Rhythmical activities</i>	Briet, Collige, & Rassart (2014)	Book	Theory about pronunciation, followed by pedagogical forms using rhythmic and music-related activities	French	Speaking (prosody/consonants/vowels)	A1-B2

Deen, Van Veen, & Schutte (2014)	Book & CD	Rap songs with typical sentences about many topics	Dutch	Pronunciation & vocabulary (phrases)	Low to advanced
Graham (1993)	Book	Rhythmic presentation of American English	English	Pronunciation	Varia
Lorca, R. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/rlorca100">https://www.youtube.com/user/rlorca100</a>	Online video's with games	Video's explaining short games using gestures and voice about the rhythm of French	French	Pronunciation, intonation	Beginners
Verboog & Ader (2016)	Book & CD	60 rap songs about specific topics Each song is accompanied by an activity (speaking, writing, grammar...)	Dutch	Mainly pronunciation (phonemes/intonation), but also grammar	Low to advanced

### III. WHY SHOULD MUSIC BE USED IN THE FL CLASSROOM? BENEFITS OF MUSIC USE ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Besides a lack of resources, teachers seem also to need some theoretical grounding about the effect of musical methodology on FL acquisition. Research reveals that music can be beneficial for foreign language acquisition, both for specific linguistic skills (e.g. vocabulary, listening skills or pronunciation) as for more general aspects, such as motivation or attention.

#### A. Non-linguistic Aspects

Several factors have been stated to influence (language) learning, such as motivation (R. C. Gardner & Lambert, 1972), anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986), personality (Gardner, 1983), etc. The use of music can have an impact on many of these factors, which will in turn affect foreign language acquisition.

According to Mora (2000), one non-linguistic benefit of using music in the classroom concerns the learning styles. As Gardner (1983) pointed out, there exist multiple intelligences: people have different types of intelligences and learn in different ways. In this context, the teacher should vary activities to develop the different intelligences. Using songs makes it possible to address the musical intelligence. Second, using music can reduce foreign language anxiety. It is a proven fact that a feeling of nervousness or apprehension in learning a foreign language is linked with poor foreign language performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Dolean & Dolean (2014) and Dolean (2016) analyzed the impact of using songs on foreign language anxiety. They concluded that teaching with songs decreased foreign language anxiety, especially for students with rather high anxiety. As Engh (2013) mentions, ‘music lowers affective barriers and assists in making students more relaxed, thereby more receptive to language learning’ (p. 117). Third, music in the classroom can increase motivation. Since ‘authentic materials are a motivating force for learners’ (Gilmore, 2007), music, which is an authentic activity, and songs, which use authentic texts and language of native speakers, can support the motivating factor (Mishan, 2005). Fourth, the use of music can sustain attention: Wolfe & Noguchi (2009) observed that the participants in their study were more attentive, focused and engaged when listening to a musical story compared to a spoken story. Finally, the use of music and songs in the FL teaching methods provides cultural knowledge of the target language: the context, the singer, the musical style, etc. are culturally rich resources for language lessons.

#### B. Linguistic Aspects

Many studies examined the potential benefit of music-based FL materials on different language skills, such as vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, writing skills or phonetic acquisition. The following section reviews the main results.

##### 1. Vocabulary

The potential effect of musical FL teaching methodology on vocabulary recall has been analyzed in several studies. Results are given for the three main approaches, namely music in the background, songs and rhythmical activities.

De Groot (2006) analyzed the effect of background music on vocabulary recall. 36 university students were presented several times L1 – FL pairs of words, followed by different vocabulary recall tests. Half of the students learned the pairs in silence and the other half learned while a Bach’s concerto played in the background. Recall scores were higher for the musical condition compared to the silent condition.

Concerning the use of songs in the FL classroom, Murphey (1990) argues that songs could help to easily remember vocabulary or phrases: this author stated that the ‘involuntary mental rehearsal’ (i.e. a ‘phenomenon occurring after a period of contact with a foreign language in which the new information repeats without the speaker’s intentional effort’ (Salcedo, 2010, p. 22) exists - and is even stronger - with songs. He argues that the rehearsal of language from music, the *Song Stuck in My Head Phenomenon*, may be triggered with a much smaller amount of input time. Different class intervention experiments confirm this phenomenon. In Medina (1990), participants having heard a sung story obtain higher scores on a multiple choice vocabulary test than participants who heard a spoken story. Similar results were found by Salcedo (2010) who observed that text recall was better when students heard a recorded song, than when

students heard a recorded spoken version of the song. Legg (2009) tested the impact of the song on text recall through an active production of the students: participants had either to rehearse and perform a musical version of a poem or either to answer questions and play memory games. Results show that the students in the musical condition obtain higher results on a translation task than the students in the non-musical situation. However, contradictory evidence was found in other studies. In order to examine word recall in the mother tongue, Racette & Peretz (2007) tested university students in three conditions: either they heard the song and they repeated singing, either they heard the song and they repeated speaking, either they heard the spoken lyrics and they repeated speaking. Unexpectedly, participants recalled fewer words when singing than when speaking, whereas the presentation mode (song or spoken lyrics) had no influence on lyric recall. The authors concluded that 'the best strategy for learning song lyrics is to ignore the melody. The melody seems to interfere rather than facilitate word recall in songs [...]' (Racette & Peretz, 2007, p. 250). As Ludke, Ferreira, & Overy (2014) write 'one possible explanation for this unexpected result is that the folk songs used by Racette and Peretz had complex, nonrepetitive melodic lines' (p.43). Furthermore, a non-beneficial effect of songs was also found by Kilgour et al. (2000). They tested lyrics recall with sung lyrics and spoken lyrics. They first observed better recall with the sung than with the spoken version. In a second experiment, they manipulated the presentation rate, so that the duration of the sung and the spoken versions were identical. They found that with an equal presentation rate, there was no advantage for sung over spoken lyrics and suggested that '[P]revious findings of melody's aiding text recall may be attributed to presentation rate' (Kilgour et al., 2000, p. 700).

Regarding the impact of rhythmic activities, the experimental study of Ludke, Ferreira, & Overy (2014) gives interesting results. They analyzed vocabulary learning in three listen-and-repeat conditions: participants heard either sung phrases, rhythmic spoken phrases or spoken phrases. A significant difference between the sung/rhythmical and spoken conditions was found for the tests in which the participants had to speak in the foreign language (Hungarian), although performance was highest in the sung condition for all tests.

## 2. Writing fluency

Alisaari & Heikkola (2016) analyzed whether writing fluency, viz. the number of words produced in a written text, can be influenced by musical pedagogical methods. In this classroom intervention study, students heard different sung or spoken versions of songs seven times during 15 minutes. The first group just listened to the sung songs, the second listened and sung the song and the third listened to a spoken version of the songs and recited them. At the end of these seven sessions, as in the pretest, students wrote two stories, based on comic strips. The authors observed that the number of words produced increased more in the singing group than in the reciting or listening group, but the differences were not significant.

## 3. Listening abilities

Kanel (1997) examined whether song based tasks would be as effective at improving listening comprehension in a standard listening test as conventional listening tasks. During this classroom intervention, one group of 10 classes heard regularly songs and made gap-fill quizzes while the other group of 10 other classes was taught listening with nonmusical materials, such as textbooks. The results indicate significant improvement for both groups, but neither treatment was more effective than the other. Furthermore, the participants answered a follow-up questionnaire about the learning methods. Even if there was little variation between both groups about the educational benefits of the respective listening training, it seems that the regular practice, the value in time spent on the quizzes and the interest in English were higher in the song group.

Another important listening skill in foreign language acquisition is the ability to segment speech into words. Sch ñn et al. (2008) performed an experiment to determine whether songs can help learners segment foreign language speech. One group heard a continuous spoken stream of syllables, a second group heard a continuous sung stream of syllables with an association syllable/pitch (e.g. syllable *gi* = C), a third group also heard a continuous sung stream of syllables but without association syllable/pitch. After this training phase, they heard words and had to mention whether these were present in the stream that they have heard. The percentage correct responses was the highest for the group who heard the sung stream with an association syllable/pitch and the lowest for the group who heard the spoken stream.

## 4. Phonetic skills

Different studies examined the impact of musical FL methodologies on phonetic skills, both at the segmental and suprasegmental level.

At the segmental level, Lakshminarayanan & Tallal (2007) analyzed whether phoneme discrimination can be trained by listening to stimuli which are non-linguistic but which imitate the acoustic characteristics of linguistic stimuli. Therefore, they tested 19 students divided in a training and a control group. The pre- and posttests were same/different tasks for pairs of stimuli (e.g. *ba/da*). During the training period (30min per day during five days), the training group heard pairs of frequency modulated sweeps rising or falling in pitch. The participants had to mention the order of the falling and rising sweeps. Observing a significant improvement in *ba/da* discrimination for the training group, Lakshminarayanan & Tallal (2007, p. 270) concluded that 'non-linguistic acoustic perceptual training can impact syllable discrimination'.

Moradi & Shahrokhi (2014) examined the impact of using songs on both segmental and suprasegmental production. During 25 sessions of 20 minutes, the musical group listened to songs with music, repeated and memorized them, whereas the control group listened to spoken versions of the songs, repeated and memorized them. The results of the



pre- and posttest – in which participants read aloud words and sentences of the songs in a new context – indicate that the pronunciation of phonemes, the intonation, and the stress patterns were better for the musical group than for the control group.

Different researchers tested the efficacy of music use on FL suprasegmental abilities. Degrave (submitted) examined whether melodies or rhythm can help French-speaking university students to perceive lexical stress in Dutch. 46 French speakers (25 non-musicians and 21 musicians) performed a discrimination task in which stimuli were either naturally spoken, either spoken with a beat on the stress, either sung. Scores were higher for the sung stimuli and for the spoken stimuli with a beat, compared to the spoken stimuli. Heidari-Shahreza & Moinzadeh (2012) focused on the impact of listening to melodies on stress perception. Participants were divided into two groups and were taught four stress patterns of two- and three-syllable English words<sup>1</sup>. The experimental group heard first musical stimuli that are acoustically similar to word stress patterns (see Figure 1 for an example).



Figure 1 Musical stimulus acoustically similar to a two-syllable word with the stress on the 2<sup>nd</sup> syllable

After having heard the musical stimuli, the related target words (e.g. Japan, hotel) were introduced and practiced<sup>2</sup>. This procedure was repeated for the four stress patterns. The control group listened first to each group of target words, then the placement of the primary stress was indicated and finally, the participants repeated the target words. After a short diversion activity, participants heard sets of four words and mentioned which has a different stress pattern. The experimental group obtained significantly higher results than the control group. A more detailed description of the methodology used would be needed to correctly evaluate the findings reported in this paper.

Finally, Fomina (2000) examined how the quality of the songs can impact the acquisition of FL intonation. In her study, participants heard songs that had either concurrent or non-concurrent melody with natural speech intonation. For example, in the song ‘Tom’s diner’, some melodic lines have a falling intonation, whereas the spontaneous speech intonation should rise (e.g. before a subordinate clause). Participants, who had to reproduce lyrics from the songs in another context, reproduced the phrases with the intonation of the song, even if it was wrong. Fomina (2000) concluded that ‘there exists a certain influence of song melody on speech intonation memorization’ and that ‘song material for teaching and developing different language skills should be carefully selected’.

5. Various skills (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, listening comprehension)

Some researchers measured the impact of their musical classroom interventions on different FL skills.

Ludke (2016) conducted a study in two classrooms of English speakers learning French. One group had French lessons that integrated different musical activities, such as creating (rap) songs, singing, listening to music, creating and performing a musical theatre piece. The other group received French lessons that were supplemented with visual art and drama activities, e.g. exercises with pictures, drawing, reading cartoons, write and record a script for a dramatic play. The pre- and posttests measured 12 language skills, as described in Figure 2.

Measure	Test	Description
1	Spoken responses	Respond to questions in French about a photograph
2 and 3	Productive vocabulary and pronunciation	Produce the French words for food items in a photograph
4	Conversation	Respond to questions in French about what the student likes to eat and drink for different meals
5	Receptive vocabulary (picture matching)	Match a list of French vocabulary words with photographs
6	Reading aloud pronunciation	Read a list of French words aloud
7	Grammaticality judgments: listening	Listen to French sentences and identify whether or not there was a grammatical error
8	Grammaticality judgments: reading	Read sentences and identify whether or not there was a grammatical error
9	Written grammar: masculine to feminine	Read short sentences and transform masculine words into the feminine forms
10	Written grammar: statements to questions	Read French statements and write a question that someone might ask to result in that response
11	Listening comprehension	Listen twice to an audio-recorded conversation and answer English listening comprehension questions
12	Intonation and flow of speech	Intonation and flow of speech ratings for the two speaking tests (measures 1 and 4)

Figure 2 Description of tasks on the pre-and posttests (Ludke, 2016, p.7)

Similar results between the two groups were found for productive vocabulary (task 2), receptive vocabulary with a picture-matching task (task 5) and grammaticality judgments when reading (task 8). The music group obtained lower scores than the visual art group for their pronunciation when reading aloud a list of words (task 6), a slightly higher

<sup>1</sup> The four patterns are: 1. two-syllable words, stress on the 1<sup>st</sup>; 2. two-syllable words, stress on the 2<sup>nd</sup>; 3. three-syllable words, stress on the 1<sup>st</sup>; 4. three-syllable words, stress on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> The authors do not describe what ‘introduce’ and ‘practice’ exactly imply.

score for the pronunciation of individual words from photographs (difference of 1.3% - task 3), but got higher scores than the visual art group for the seven other tasks.

Good, Russo, & Sullivan (2015) investigated the effect of a classroom intervention on the pronunciation of phonemes and vocabulary recall. Two groups were trained during four sessions of 20 minutes. The singing group heard a song, repeated the song singing and translated words; the spoken group heard a text, repeated the text and translated words. After the training sessions, the participants took part in four tests: 1. a pronunciation test in which they reproduced the lyrics (singing or speaking), 2. a vocabulary recall test in which they mentioned as many words as they could, 3. a vocabulary translation test which consisted in the translation of given words and 4. a test 6 months after the training in which students had to recall the lyrics and translate words. Results showed that the singing and spoken group equally performed for the pronunciation of consonants and for the translation of words after 6 months. The singing group outperformed the spoken group for the other tasks (pronunciation of vowels, recall, and translation on short term).

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The present article aimed to provide information about *how* and *why* music can be used in the FL classroom, since studies revealed that the discrepancy between the teachers' positive attitude toward music use in the FL classroom and its limited actual use could be explained by a lack of resources and a lack of theoretical grounding.

The first section provided a short review of music-related methods used in the FL classroom over time. Three main approaches have been described, namely listening to non-linguistic sounds or background music, practicing lyrical songs and using rhythmical activities. Moreover, some references to resources were gathered in order to provide teachers with adapted material to use music in their FL classes.

The second section examined why music can be beneficial for foreign language acquisition. Studies reveal a positive effect on general learning aspects, such as increased motivation and attention, reduced anxiety and cultural enrichment as well as on different linguistic skills. In terms of linguistic improvement, some results state that foreign language performance was higher when methodologies incorporated music, either in the background, through songs or in musical and rhythmical activities, than when no music or other artistic intervention was used. These findings are promising for both teachers and learners: using music for foreign language acquisition would have numerous learning and linguistic benefits and has not to be simply reduced to a 'fun activity'.

Despite these positive results, it seems that empirical research about the relation between music-related methodologies and FL acquisition is still in its recent years. Hence, there is little published data for some skills or there is contradictory evidence between studies. For example, concerning vocabulary acquisition, Legg (2009), Medina (1990) and Salcedo (2010) reported higher vocabulary scores in the musical groups compared to the control groups, whereas Kilgour et al. (2000) and Racette & Peretz (2007) did not observe any advantage in the musical condition or stated a musical benefit explained by the presentation rate. More research would be needed to enlighten these findings and to fulfill results about other skills, such as listening comprehension, phonetic proficiency or writing skills. In this respect, Ludke (2016) points out: 'To date, relatively few published, empirical studies have investigated the effects of FL learning through singing and song activities in the classroom, particularly for grammar or pronunciation skills' (p. 2).

In addition to the need for further research, the present findings must be interpreted with caution. Most studies reviewed here were comparisons or correlational studies. Inferring causation would thereby be unfounded. Such as described in the article, many external factors could explain the improvement of foreign language abilities with musical intervention, e.g. reduced anxiety or the increase of motivation and attention.

Finally, the question arises whether musical methodologies are adapted for every language learner. Personality, hobbies, and interests can positively or negatively interfere with the use of music for foreign language acquisition. For example, De Groot, (2006) reports findings of Furnham & Allass (1999) that stated that introvert persons performed better in observation or recall tasks in silence condition, whereas extraverts 'generally performed better in the music condition' (de Groot, 2006, p. 496). Musical training or aptitude could also be an influential factor. Many studies revealed a better performance of musicians compared to non-musicians in language tasks (for a review see Chobert & Besson (2013) and Magne, Schän, & Besson (2003)). In Degraive (submitted), results show that musicians benefit more from the use of melodies or rhythm for word stress detection, compared to non-musicians.

In summary, even if research about the use of music in the foreign language classroom is still in its recent years, this paper contributes to our understanding of FL methodology, giving different ways and resources to use music in the classroom and showing that music can benefit some foreign language skills. Teachers have now to carefully choose, structure and sequence their musical material and methodology in order to fully take benefit from the music-based lessons.

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# Linguistic Interpretation of Proverbs in the Kenyang Language

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**Abstract**—Much has been written in the Kenyang language as far as descriptive grammar is concern, but there is still a lot to be done concerning its vocabulary and semantic analysis. Thus, this paper aims to analyze and explain the linguistic features that the Kenyang proverbs process. It equally seeks to discuss the functions and uses of proverbs taking examples from the language in question. The findings demonstrate that the Kenyang proverbs are characterized by linguistic features such as, metaphors, ironies and ellipses. The main functions of the Kenyang proverbs are to criticize, advice, warn and to give moral lesson to the hearers. Kenyang is a language spoken in the South West region of Cameroon precisely by the people of Manyu division.

**Index Terms**—proverbs, functions and uses, speakers intended meaning, irony, Metaphor

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to the Oxford dictionary, the word “proverb is from a Latin word “pro-verbium” (“pro” meaning “in front of” and “Verbium” meaning “word”). This suggests that proverbs can take the place of ordinary words. However its study has received little attention up to now.” (Fergusson, 2000: 137-138), says that, every culture and language has their own proverbs, which belong to the popular culture and tradition of their language. There are proverbs dating from ancient history such as “while there is life, there is hope.” (Fergusson, 2000: 137-138). We also have sayings such as “An apple a day keeps the Doctor away”. (Fergusson, 2000:131). Some of them became an important part of the society. Consequently, there are several origins of proverbs. But in spite of their different beginnings, many proverbs still belong to the current oral tradition and they are well known in modern society.

The fact that proverbs belong to oral tradition makes the task of finding when they were first used difficult. Before they were recorded in written forms for instance, introduced in literature or included in a document, they were already well-known in oral tradition. Since they spread by words of mouth from generation to generation, it is very difficult to know exactly when they first came out or their initial forms were. For example the proverb “Adversity makes strange beds fellows”( Fergusson, 2006:2) was first recorded by Shakespeare in *The Tempest* (1611).

(Gibbs, 1994), However, argues that until very recently, proverbs had not been addressed from a linguistic point of view. In the same line of thinking, Gibbs, Strom, and Spivey-Knowlton, (1997.) also discussed about the metaphorical nature of proverbs and its influence on the mental images of proverbs in the people’s minds. . (Bock and Brewer, 1978) are other works that discussed how the figurative and literal meanings of the proverbs interacted in people’s minds to produce an accurate and proper interpretation. ( Ayeni, 2011, Odeunmi, 2008), had also tried to look at the pragmatic function of proverbs in specific instances of literature from different cultures.

Olabode B.O and Siyanbola S.O (2013:56) says that in a traditional and modern African society proverbs are generally accepted as the quintessence in the passage and communication of ideas and ethics among both old and the young. In fact, a scenario is best explained where a speaker encapsulate his thoughts in a suitable and appropriate proverb. Thus the saying, proverbs are palm oil with which words are eaten (Achebe, Chinua, *Things Fall Apart* p. 25). Hussein ( 2005:18 ) underscores the point made above when he observes that , Africa is a continent known for its rich oral arts and that proverbs are the most widely used in the continent’, long tradition for oral arts . (Hussein, 2005: 19) argues that proverbs do not play any aesthetic role; they serve as the acceptable means of passing or transmitting knowledge and conversation from generation to generation. The Kenyang speakers give value to their proverbs they are used in every day’s conversation, especially among the elders. The Kenyang people who are the speakers of the language in question are from Manyu division in the South West region of Cameroon. The cultural richness and diversity of the Kenyang people is gained through the love for their culture and language. Using proverbs is therefore a way of cultivating morals and other cultural values in the speakers. Consequently, the purpose of the present study is to give a linguistic interpretation of some linguistic features used in Kenyang proverbs. This is done by showing how Irony, Metaphors and Ellipsis are used in the Kenyang proverbs, and how they affect recognition, interpretation and understanding of proverbs in the Kenyang language. We have done this by dividing our work into four parts. Part one handles the introduction, while, part two focuses on data presentation and discussion. Part three dwells on the findings and results and finally part V is the conclusion.

## II. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES

The data for this research article was collected through verbal discussions with some native speakers of the language. Most of these proverbs were analysed according to the context in which they are used. Each proverb was first taken in the kenyang language, then a word for word translation was given to enable the understanding of the various components of the sentence, and finally a literal translation was given in the English language to enable non native speakers understand the meaning of the proverb. It also draws inspiration from my personal contribution since I am one of the speakers of the language in question. The (IPA) International Phonetic Alphabet was used as the bases for transcription.

### FUNCTIONS OF PROVERBS

According to Ramirez, (2018) proverbs can be defined as a way of saying something implicitly rather than explicitly supporting your arguments in popular wisdom. She further added that, proverbs are considered part of the figurative language because; they are an indirect way of giving a set of assumptions about a shared thought between the hearer and speaker rather than directly stating them. The purpose of popular wisdom to her can be attributed to a wide range of topics that is different and that are other instances of proverbs expressing popular wisdom without any intention against the hearer such as the proverbs related to weather, as month of the year.

Hence, we are going to analyze the three main categories involved in proverb's intension they are: criticism, advice, and warning beside these three, we are also going to discuss the moral values of the Kenyang proverbs.

#### 1) criticisms

As earlier mentioned, most at times a speaker writes a proverb and he or she has the aim of criticizing the hearer or making an accusation against him or her.

We can find this in the following proverbs,

ns Ìàns ìàa â kw ààn ch ìà n áp Ìǎ ò a à pu à kw án ba ìkwa ò

elder s.m fall cop colanut s.m neg fall plum

“An old man can only fall from a cola nut tree and not from a plum tree”

Meaning: there is an age for everything. There is an age where a man is supposed to behave and reason like an elder. If he fails to do so, he is made to reason through this proverb. In other words it is an indirect way of criticizing someone who refuses to reason or act according to his age.

M óík w án a à pu à kw án ách Ìk Ìambinyo àp nd óñ epay

Child s.m neg fall step door time two

“A child does not fall on the same door step twice”

Meaning: you are not supposed to be a victim of the same crime more than once. It is also another way of telling someone that they are not wise because of the fact that they have become a victim of a particular situation more than once. Let us look at another example

m ónda ìk ra àa à nyu ò to àr ìa

Small matter tinny mouth long

“A small problem that is neglected will always grow big”

“Meaning: It is always advisable to solve problems when they are at the beginning”

By using a proverb, the speaker is able to criticize the hearer, but the hearer cannot be annoyed with him, some proverbs rely on Implicate communication that the speaker expresses himself or herself. Looking at one of the aims of proverbs is veiling [odebunmi, 2008/7], that is, the speaker gives his/her opinions but expects the hearer to get his/her critical intension without offending him/her.

Lastly, criticism as a function of proverb helps to emphasize the shared ideas and opinion rather than an offense to the hearer. What is more the use of proverbs and the ironic tone they usually carry out is seen minimized by their popular knowledge. And most of the time they are recognized by the hearer makes their ironic and critical tone less aggressive. Therefore the satirist, humoristic and joking character of proverbs, as well as in irony help us to communicate.

#### 2) Advice and warning

These are other functions of proverbs whose aims are not to be criticized but to give advice or enhance the hearer to do something. Let us look at the examples below

ba àp ók óò á ók ch ìa n ánk Ìǎ ò p áach ìa a ònt ìa

S.m carry town/village cop soldier neg s.m head

“We can only carry a village on the soldier and not on the head”

Meaning: Matters concerning the people or community are not supposed to be taken personal. This is an advice to a leader who forgets the fact that he has some limits as far as exercising power is concerned.

K áach àamu ò many áò a à ñu à

S.m give man advice s.m die

“Don't give advice to kill a man”

This means that It is better not to give somebody advice than to advise them wrongly. It is dangerous giving a wrong advice to someone.

Mo ñk w án òk áò Ì ò a à pu àr óp mo ñka ñ mo ñka ñ

Child neg grow s.m remain small small

“A child that does not grow will always remain a baby”

Meaning: behaving less than your age mates always make you a baby.

Apart from these proverbs for advice, there are proverbs of warning whose goal is to warn us to prevent the hearer from doing something. Example

Nk óck ba àtu àa àÀ òò òk n óck óòch iàm àòm ete òj

Hen ear sm hear prg sm in pot

“A hen that does not listen to advice will always fine itself in a pot”

This proverb takes the form of an advice and warning at the same time. It is warning the hearer against stubbornness and waywardness and its consequences. This utterance is not only mere piece of advice but also a traditional speech. Consequently, proverbs are not only mental representations of once speech, but become a public representation in a given speech community.

The repeated transmission and representations create a chain of mental and public representations casually linked by a culture [sperber 1994.54]

### III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### Linguistic Interpretation of the Kenyang proverbs

We have discussed three main linguistic features that are found in the Kenyang proverbs and we have equally shown how they help in their understanding.

##### 1) Irony and the Kenyang proverbs

Besides the functions of the Kenyang proverbs described above, they also convey an ironic interpretation and tone, such as the example bellow.

Ba à sòt ndán pápáp ba gwáçt àa nñu à aà koòk

They take dress white sm tie sm mouth sm pig

“They have taken a white dress and tied around the pigs mouth”

The pig is use here as an imagery referring to man. Normally in the African tradition, pigs are known to be dirty animals .So it becomes ironical to give a white dress to the pig because it will not know its use. This proverb means that no matter how you take care of a dirty person he will still remain dirty. This is a very clear example of a critical proverb whose explicit rather than Implicit way. Therefore, as sperber and Wilson [1995] claim, ironic statements allow the speaker to express his/her own attitude in terms of the thought echoed or communicated through an ironic utterance.

Because of the ironic tone underlying most proverbs, we apply this feature of irony so that the echoed attitude makes the recognition of the speaker’s intension easier for him/her, to reach the right interpretative of the proverb. Example according to sperber and Wilson (2006:10) the aim of irony is to dissociate the speaker from an attributed thought as utterance which she wants to suggest is more or less of false, irrelevant or under informative, it is my belief that we can apply this to proverbs whose aim is to distract the hearer from their literal Meaning by offering him/her a second meaning given by the familiarity they carry out.

However, the communication of shared thoughts between a speaker and a hearer will be attributed to more factors such as; the implicit attitude of the speaker, the tone of voice, context or other linguistic parameters [sperber and Wilson, 1995.239] verbal irony is achieved through the correct use and interpretation of non verbal and contextual signs; in other word, paralinguistic elements. Actually proverbs intension is made through the tone of voice. [that is] making some sounds longer as emphasizing some specific parts of the proverbs; gestures such as smiling or moving the eyes or body language as pointing to someone or knocking your head. For example

w óàpu àna à n áh iánk óòk ó òk áwa òj n óò

you neg cook egg cock neg kill it

“You cannot make an omelet without breaking the egg”

We tend to make longer the sound of the first part with a knock of the head to make the hearer recognize of our ironical intension.

##### 2) Metaphors and the kenyang proverbs

Furthermore, as a piece of figurative language, proverbs may also have a metaphoric, intension sometimes Richards describes metaphors as a combination of two routs; topic usually the subject of the metaphorical sentence and the vehicle the tern used metaphorical [Bock and Brever, 1978.60 quoted from Richards, 1965].The relationship of similarity between the topic and the vehicle is the key to understand a metaphors [Bock and Brewer, 1978.60]. In this sense, I think we can consider proverbs as metaphors in which only the vehicle – the term used metaphorically- is explicitly stated, but topic-subject of the metaphor-is left implicit [Bock and Brezer, 1978.60 quoted from per 1971]

Furthermore, there is no division line between the literal and metaphorical meaning or between the ironical utterances and their echoic situations, but a continuum of cases ranging from what the subject of the proverb is to how it is expressed. (Sperber &Wilson 1995:243) say that whereas “metaphors plays on the relationship between the propositional form of an utterance and the speaker thought, irony plays on the relationship between the speaker's thought and a thought of someone other than the speaker” . Below are some examples of some proverbs that use metaphors in Kenyand.

m óò n áò ó ch iâm áòn  
child this is goat  
“This child is a goat/sheep”

m óò n áò ó ch iâ ñk óòk  
child this is hen  
“This child is a hen”

m óò n áò ó ch iâ a ãko ãk  
child this is hen  
“This child is a pig”

From the examples above, it is seen that the metaphors in Kenyang language are mostly use to compare that is comparing humans to animals

### 3) Ellipses and the Kenyang Proverbs

Sometimes, it is not necessary to fully utter the proverb for it to be understood. In fact, there are many examples in which just the former part of the proverb is uttered, omitting the last part, since the speaker consider the hearer would recognized the beginning of the proverb. Making thus the stimulus the most relevant one he could chose. For example the proverb

Wóò Bǐò kòrà tòòk bá chǐà ...“if you don’t touch bitter leaf ...” That as soon as the hearer processes the first part of the proverb he/s can anticipate the following a à m óò y iâ a ò pu à n áòn “ his hands will not be bitter” .This might be attributed to the fact that many Kenyang proverbs are so frequently used and so highly familiar that just with the uttering part of it, the hearer will be able to interpret the piece of popular wisdom intended by the speaker, being thus an efficient way of communicating as it is of shared assumptions in the form of cultural knowledge(yus, 2009:317) Due to the frequent use, the given information and the contextual knowledge lead the hearer to recover the rest of the proverb implicitly. In other words, it is indispensable to utter the proverb in a full form to be able to reach the right interpretation.

The aim of ellipses in the Kenyang proverbs is to economize the process involved in proverb recognition and interpretation. The fact that we always omit the second part of the proverb is because in familiar proverbs, just the first part is enough to recognized proverbs intension and therefore it is more economical for the hearer to process just part of it instead of the whole proverb.

Proverbs in Africa are used to guide the behavior of growing children and to help them to mold their characters. Proverbs deal with knowledge, experience, hard work, and human relations. We believe that a study of language and proverbs can help students understand other cultures.

Olabode and Siyanbola (2013) say that the relevance of these proverbs are demonstrated by such sayings as “A proverb is the horse of conversation: when the conversation lags, a proverb will revive it”; “A wise man who knows proverbs reconciles difficulties (Yoruba, Nigeria); and “Proverbs are the daughters of experience” (Sierra Leone).

Kenyang proverbs provide hard hitting messages in a profound way rather than a nasty or demoralizing manner and at times even acts as an advice to the community. For example

1) Nk ãk ba ãtu à a â Äò ãk n ãk ómba ña mem ãtaj no ãk

Hen ear s.m hear prog time s.m in pot soup  
“A stubborn hen always listens in the pot of soup.”

This is to say that any one that does not listen to advice will always find themselves in problems. This is another way of advising the people to always seek to advice before acting.

The Kenyang speakers give a lot of preference to proverbs because for them, proverbs are the easiest way in which the elders use to send a message through. ( Lawal, 1997:637 ) believes that, if young people must resort to use of proverbs, they must defer to the elders let’s look at some examples :

2) M ãkw á n a à n á a à so à a à m óò y i ã a â n á y á ne ba à f ó

Child s.m that s.m wash hands his s.m eat with s.m chief  
“A child that washes his hands eats with the chieves”

Here we are not talking about the physical washing of hands but is a metaphor which means behavior or morals. , In other words, this proverb suggests that if a child behaves well, he will sit in the presence of the elders or gets the admiration of the elders.

The second Kenyang proverb that explains that the fact that old people are holders or a warehouse were proverbs are stored is

3) á y ñ ñ á n á ns ñ ñ è a à Äò ò tS ó ãk ó à m ãkw á n a à n á a à ch iâ a ò fa ò ta à ñ a ñ ñ a à a à pu à Äò ò

thing that old man s.m see sit child s.m that is s.m up coconut s.m neg see

“What an old man sits and see, a young man on top of a coconut tree can never see it”

This means that, the elders are full of experiences that the young people need not wrestle with them as far as ideas and experiences are concern.



- 4) Ák á á pu à sóńó ná ba ns Íàs ìà tS óák óà  
 House s.m neg burn with elders sit  
 “The roof must not get burnt with elders in it”.

This means that, matters must not get out of hand where an elder is present. The latter part of the proverb is usually uttered as permission, the elders present will reply, ‘Yes’. According to Lawal, (1997; 637), Proverbs are used to show and sustain respect for elders. In a summary, The Kenyang proverbs emerged or evolved from traditional, socio-cultural, philosophical and cosmological belief systems.

The aesthetic functions of the Kenyang proverbs have made them indispensable in oral artistry. This is seen in (Ojode, 2001) when he says, proverbs are the analytic tools of thought, when thought is lost; it is proverbs that are used to fetch it.

## V. CONCLUSION

We set out to discuss and analyse the linguistic features that the Kenyang proverbs contain, and we discovered that they are that part of language that represent and link the people to their culture. We also discussed the Metaphorical and ironical nature of the Kenyang proverbs and we came out with the conclusion that, they help the hearer to recognize and identifier himself with his community and how in the interpretation and understanding of proverbs. We equally asserted that criticism, advice and warning are the main function of proverbs beside the fact that they have an underlying moral tone. Also important is the fact that people also consider the advantage of the implicit criticism they usually express to avoid the annoyance of the hearer, besides we highlighted other minor functions of the Kenyang proverbs such as giving moral instructions.

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# Code-switching as a Linguistic Resource in the Fijian ESL Classrooms: Bane or Boon?

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**Abstract**—Code-switching is an unintentional linguistic phenomenon that defines a shift from one language to another by the speaker of a language. This study will address the role of code switching to students' L1 in their ESL classrooms and whether it expands interaction in these classrooms. Alternative language that is used in this paper for comparison and examples purpose is Fiji Hindi. The gap perceived in this area needs to be addressed towards the domains of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics in the ESL classrooms teaching milieu. Henceforth, the study draws on data collected from lower secondary *ESL* classrooms in the selected high schools of Ba, Fiji. The study has incorporated data gathering procedures: questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings ought to indicate that code-switching should be seen as an optimistic language learning strategic tool as part and parcel of the ESL classrooms discourse. The research is calling for sensitising teachers of ESL about the helpful uses of code-switching knowing the fact that Fiji is a second language speakers' of English country. Therefore, the novelty of this research would call for methods and syllabi of teaching ESL instructions to integrate code-switching in a judicious and occasional manner, wherever possible in the English language curriculum.

**Index Terms**—Code Switching, First language (L1), Second language (L2), English as a Second Language (ESL), Fiji Hindi, *i-taukei*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Schools in Fiji often disallow learners from using a language other than the official medium of instruction, which is English. The paramount aim is to assist the learners to be proficient in the medium of instruction, thus excel in their studies. However, code-switching in between the lessons being taught, especially in *ESL* classrooms is highly evident and students who have low competency rate in English, they are more into using this linguistic feature to make sense with their fellow classmates and *ESL* teachers. In academic discussions, code-switching is particularly apparent during students' group work, whereby the most switching is done either in *Fiji Hindi* or *i-taukei* language.

However, scant research in the field of applied linguistics in the Fijian *ESL* classroom suggests that code-switching is carried out not only to fill the gap, when learners English is weak but also used to achieve a repertoire of discourse functions. The point that is being highlighted here is that learners are making use of the resources of bilingualism (Willians, 2011). This can be perceived as an advantage on the part of the learners', rather than being not in the position to meet the demands of the *ESL* classrooms. Crucially, these fecund patterns of communication are restricted by the English only policy in the classrooms, and thus are only practiced when the teacher is not present, or indirectly involved in the group discussions. Therefore, it could be contemplated that although the principal language of instruction in Fijian *ESL* classroom is English, this is not the language in which majority of genuine academic interaction takes place. So much so, it could be further asserted that the language policy should be reconsidered for the sake of the inclusion of code-switching as a language learning strategy, or else this could be highly detrimental for those, who are mediocre or below mediocre learners'.



## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A person is believed to be multilingual if he or she is competently able to use more than one language. In any given country, irrespective of the native language, multilingualism is usually borne out by results such as, colonialism, intercultural marriages, education, cultural interactions and so forth. According to Hymes (1972), communicative linguistic competence (CLC) looks into a speakers competency level in terms of when to speak, what to talk about with whom, when, where and in what manner.

In this way, a person who is able to converse appropriately into two languages is said to be bilingual. Usually, it has been highly noticed that bilinguals and multilinguals tend to switch languages within the same utterance of the conversation. In linguistics context, this phenomenon is referred to as code switching. Sociolinguists have tried to study this phenomenon and the reasons behind it. Interestingly, there are many factors that are associated with the phenomenon of code switching. Thus, this paper is divided into three parts, which will oversee the definition of the phenomenon of code switching, secondly, the reasons that contributes towards code switching and thirdly, the recommendations and the conclusion.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this research is to examine the phenomenon pertaining to code switching in the Fijian *ESL* classrooms by the teachers of English language. A repertoire of reasons for code switching is identified by collecting and analysing the research questionnaires and through conducting semi-structured interviews. So much so, could code switching be should considered as a possible solution, as a linguistic resource to aid incompetent learners in *ESL* classrooms? These responses for this interrogation are gathered and looked into by the assistance of the English language teachers at junior level *ESL* classrooms.

## IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is going to fill the void and suffice the information towards the existing literature on code switching in the Fijian *ESL* classrooms. The information gained from this research will assist to provide a look into how and why code switching is done by teachers of *ESL* and what are the immediate repercussions of it. It is imperative as bilingual and multilingual teachers then to consider code switching as a language learning tool, which tends to aid the competency level of mediocre and below mediocre learner's. The information gathered from this study will assist to sensitise further research in the field of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics.

## V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the quest to do this study, the following are the questions on which the findings delved:

- a. Why do teacher's code switch in *ESL* classrooms?
- b. What role does code switching play in the meaningful interactions in *ESL* teaching?
- c. How frequently is code switching used by teachers in *ESL* teaching?
- d. When should L1 be used by the teacher?

## VI. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research survey for this study was gathered by opting for a mixed method approach. Research tools such as questionnaire and semi-structured interview was used for data collection. The questionnaire incorporated 5-point Likert scale, which comprised of open and closed ended questions. The items on the questionnaire consisted of five different sections that gathered the data on language use in the *ESL* classroom, teacher's perception, demography, reasons and frequency of code switching.

The research instruments were checked for validity and reliability as asserted by (Cohen *et al*, 2002) that "if a piece of research is invalid and unreliable, then it is worthless". The question of validity is imperative because it tends to ensure that the results of the study can be generalised to population studies. In terms of the interview, a total of eight respondents were taken on board for the interview sessions. Ten questions were created for the interviews, which was based on the four research questions that this study was aimed to investigate. As stated by Creswell (1998), taking consent from the respondents and respecting their anonymity are considered to be assurance for all due ethical considerations. As such, this study has purely applied the principles of ethical considerations in the most judicious manner.

## VII. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review has been surveyed extensively, which covered the reviews that emanated from Asia, Europe, America, the Africans and Middle East. As such, by definition, code-switching generally refers to a shift from one language to another by a speaker in a conversation. After going through various readings, it has been noted there are different, yet similar definition of code-switching. According to Fareed (2016), code switching is generally defined as a

shift from L1 to L2 or vice-versa by the speaker during a speech. In his research, he also mentions that code switching is considered to be an interchangeable of two codes done by transfer, borrowing or mixing of words (Valdes-Fallis, 1978).

Gumperz (1982) defined code switching as the juxtaposition of two grammatical systems or sub-systems. On the other hand, Azlan & Narasuman (2013) asserts that code switching is naturally a shift that occurs “between more than two languages simultaneously, within one conversation”. It is a natural process, which does not require any consciousness but spontaneity.

According to Tamata (1996), a group of speakers who are bilingual is the prerequisite context for the incidence of code switching, that is, alternating between language varieties on the word, clause, phrase or at sentence level (cited in Lynch, 1996). It is further considered to be a natural phenomenon of acquiring a language other than one’s own, only too natural for the speaker would use words and phrases from the native language to supplement the attempts of conversing in L2. Conversely, the speaker can, when speaking his or her native language use the L2 in order to convey the information. While putting the phenomena of code switching, the studies has also dwelled upon the functions of code switching in arrayed aspects. In other words, code switching is seen as an optimistic strategic feature to help those learners, who are having terrible English speaking background and those, who are rather incompetent users of the language itself.

Contrary to above, code switching is also seen as a pessimist approach to learning and teaching of English as a second language. As asserted by Bentahila (1983), Arabic-French bilinguals in Morocco have considered code switching as an impoverished form of expression, which is seen as a “bastard language” and is often considered to be attributed to lack of education, improper control of the grammars and is a “bad manners”. So much so, code switching is seen as a speech for the semi-literates and those who switch “had no sense of identity” and “had a disturbed conscience”. Speakers who switch from one language to another appeared to be rather sophisticated, to show off, and to appear to know L2 more. Such awfully pessimist views may echo attitudes towards English colonialism, whereby those who tend to code switch, do not have any pride in their own native language.

On an optimistic note, code switching can be considered as a language learning strategy to assist mediocre or below mediocre learners. The learners are able to express themselves easily and precisely, thus aiding in communication skills. For many bilingual and multilingual sentient people, code switching is seen as an informal and intimate register, which allows the speakers to converse in a more natural and relaxed manner. If a child converses in the classroom, when communicating to other classmates and even the teacher, it should be seen as a potential code for *ESL* learning and teaching. On a brighter side, code switching should not be seen as a breach of any English speaking policy in the schools, or as an inability of a student to express himself/herself in the language of instruction, English, with which comes the label of academic weakness. But as formal education system in Fiji normally requires teaching a standard language, the paramount achievement is to assist a learner succeed in the L2. As a consequence, any non-standard variety of a language is strongly discouraged because “the classroom has been identified as a domain, wherein a variety of language is used other than that found in ordinary conversation” (Valdes-Fallis, 1978). In a study conducted by Gumperz and Chávez (1972), if a teacher in Black American classroom imposes the use of standard language in the *ESL* classrooms, the communication amongst the students becomes monostylistic, which leads them to feel reluctant as much as frustrated to express themselves freely. The learners are restricted to one language variety and may feel that their variety is subservient and should be considered as a limited resource only.

Throughout the world, *ESL/EFL* classrooms are having optimistic and pessimistic deficiencies towards code switching (Abdolaziz & Shahla, 2015). As suggested by Krashen (1982), the exposure to comprehend the required input is necessary for a successful second language acquisition. If the learners are not in a position to fathom what they are supposed to, they will not be comfortable in proceeding with a task. As such, *ESL/EFL* classroom educator’s sometimes resort to learners L1 to elucidate and manage task with the hope that it will facilitate subtle learning ambience (Ellis, 2015). Code switching occur unconsciously by the teachers as a learning strategy in the amplification of instructions, managing classroom, making learners fathom difficult vocabularies and more imperatively reducing student nervousness (Jingxia, 2010). Code switching tends to serve as a mean towards providence for low proficient learners with the openings to communicate and enhancing of the lecture (Ahmad & Jusoff, 2009).

As asserted by Moghadam, Samad & Shahraki (2013), code switching does not only contribute towards an increase in students’ comprehension and application of the material but it also provides a favorable learning milieu with the assistance of good teacher-student relationships. The below mediocre *ESL* learners think that they are really content that the teacher is elucidating things in their L1, which gives them a rather a solid platform to fathom what is being taught in the classroom (Nordin, Ali, Zubir & Sadjirin, 2013). According to a research conducted by Alenzi (2010), 64 percent of the learners give more respect to the educators, who tend to use L1, while executing the lectures and students feel belonged in that class.

On the contrary, Abdullah (2010) argues that students L1 should not be used in *ESL* classrooms so as to increase the exposure of learning the target language. The more the L2 lessons are conducted, the quicker the learners will learn (Ellis, 2015). Yataganbaba & Yildirim (2015) also recommends that learners L1 should not be used to teach L2. However, a few handfuls of teachers are of the opinion that code switching should be done at lower level and as the child progresses to higher, it should not be considered as a means for enhancing the teaching (Horasan, 2015). Students

tend to highly appreciate monolingual classes as it enhances the learning and teaching the skills of the target language, without the interference of L1 (Tsukamoto, 2012). Some of the learners also believe that code switching is ineffective way to achieve feat in L2 (Ling *et al*, 2014).

### **Types of Code Switching**

Researchers in the field of applied linguistics have come up with a typological framework surrounding the phenomenon of code switching. Claims are being made that there are two types of code switching: metaphorical and situational (Heeti and Abdely, 2016). However, Poplock (1980), having a disparated perspective states a well-known framework that ascertains three dissimilar types of code switching, which are inter-sentential, intra-sentential and extra-sentential (also known as tag-switching). This paper will look into the views of Poplock (1980).

#### **Inter-sentential Switching**

Inter-Sentential code switching involves switching at sentential limits, where one sentence or clause is in L1 and the next sentence or clause is in L2. According to Eldin (2014) and MacSwan (1999) inter-sentential switching entails fluency in both L1 and L2 of the speakers such that the speakers are able to apply the rules of the two languages. For example, *if you are not going to eat your breakfast, tum kamjor mehasuus kare lagega*. (Translation: If you are not going to eat your breakfast, you will start to feel weak).

#### **Intra-sentential Switching**

Intra-Sentential code switching takes place in the middle of a sentence, with no interruptions, hesitations or pauses indicating a shift. Here, the speaker is usually unaware of the shift. Different types of switch occur within the clause level including within the word level. This switching is considered to be the most complex one of all as it takes place at clausal, sentence and word level (Ariffin & Galea, 2009). For example: *You are sleepy veigaunakece because you spend a lot of gauna watching videos on YouTube*. (Translation: You are sleepy most of the time because you spend a lot of time watching videos on YouTube).

#### **Extra-sentential/Tag Switching**

Extra-Sentential or Tag switching usually involves insertion of a short phrase or tag in one language into an utterance, that is, otherwise entirely in another language. This type of code switching is considered to be the most easy to use for the fact that its tagging typically contains minimal syntactical restrictions, thus not violating syntactic rules, when being inserted into monolingual sentences. Tags such as I mean, I wish, you know etc. are considered for this kind of switching. An example for this would be *ee ladki thoh Rakiraki kehai! uutoh ekdam dehaati rakam baat kare hai! Areh gawarin! You know!* (Translation: This girl is from Rakiraki! She is talking like a typical villager! Oh uncivilised! You know!)

### **Reasons for Code Switching**

This part of the paper is going to look into the reasons why teachers switch codes. These reasons have been extensively observed from numerous linguistic perceptions. The reasons are based on the conceptual framework designed by Appel and Muysken (2006) functional model of code switching. The bilinguals and monolinguals are expected to switch from one code to another either to distinguish oneself, to show solidarity, to engage in social interactions, to talk about certain topics, to express affections and feelings and to persuade or impress the audience.

#### **To show solidarity**

Janet Holmes in her book Introduction to Sociolinguistics stipulates ‘a speaker may...switch to another language as a signal to group membership and shared ethnicity within an addressee...’ (Holmes, 2017). Code switching can be used to show solidarity between people of different or similar ethnic group.

#### **To distinguish oneself/engage in social interactions**

It is highly observable that speakers tend to use different languages to relate themselves to certain societal status or distinguish each other from social classes. One interesting reason that has been noticed is that code switching is done by users to sound classy or elitist. In a book written by Professor Auer *Code Switching in Conversation: Language Interaction and Identity*, he has precisely mentioned that, when it comes to switching codes a hidden prestige is made explicitly by the attitudes of the users (Auer, 2013). Another interesting research by Al-Khatib (2003), states that speakers may be doing code switching to show their power over the less powerful.

Therefore, now a connection could be made that switching codes in between the spoken conversation is a means to reflect one’s social class. On the same note, a speaker who confidently switches codes implies that he/she is well educated and by all means is able to competently apply the language skills of L1 and L2 in spoken conversation. Thus, code switching could be looked as a way to distinguish oneself in any given society. In brief, as asserted by Suleiman (1999), the phenomenon surrounding code switching is highly prevalent in any given bilingual and multilingual communities, as it talks about self-prestige, sign of education and a competence in more than one language.

### **Topics**

On the other hand, topic seems to be another imperative reason that makes a bilingual speaker to switch codes. People may tend to code switch within a speech event, mainly to talk on a particular given topic (Holmes, 2000). Thus, speakers may use more than one language within the same utterance suiting the topic of the discussion. In most of the instances, a bilingual speaker chooses one language within one utterance suiting the topic of discussion. A highly observable note which is being made in the Fijian *ESL* classrooms is when students are being counseled for disciplinary cases and the counselor tends to use L2 of the student being counseled. In this way, the emotionally disturbed child

feels belonged and secured, thus the 'topic' of discussion becomes much simpler.

Also, words that are taboo and 'topics' that cannot be discussed openly and freely would require L2 depending on the sensitiveness of the subject (Lueng, 2006). In a study conducted by Abalhassan & Shalawi (2000), twelve students were interviewed and asked a question based on a 'sensitive topic', why did you choose your L1 to give your response? The startling answer which caught the attention of the researchers was that...because I can't say taboo words using my mother tongue.

#### **Affection**

Code switching can also be seen a means to express attitudes and feelings by a speaker during different scenarios. Speakers pour out their feelings and emotions through expressions such as anger, frustration, happiness, sadness, excitement, crying and many other feelings. Why do people come up with these kinds of emotions and feelings? Janet Holmes in her book *Introduction to Linguistics* precisely stipulates that...A switch in a language...is often considered to be a sign of disapproval. For example, when a child creates a tantrum in a supermarket over some exorbitant toys and parents do not have that much money to spend, then out of anger, they start to scold him/her in their L2 to avoid the child from creating a scene.

Another example as highlighted by Al-Khatib (2003) was in a small town of Oberwart, where two Hungarian speaking children were playing and accidentally knocks down a stack pile firewood. Their grandfather walks in and tells them off in Hungarian... 'Szo! Idedzuni! jesztjeramunyi mind e kettutoko, no hat akkor! [Well come here! Put all this away! Both of you! Well now!]. Upon hearing this, when the children did not come, the grandfather quickly switched into German language and it did had a quick effect on the children (Holmes, 2000).

#### **Audience persuasion**

Code switching is applied in order to welcome someone new to a communicative event. According to Malik (1994), this communicative event could take place over different linguistic backgrounds or from the same as asserted by Holmes (2001, p.35). Code switching is also used during rhetoric and speech. The sole purpose of it is to attract and persuade the audience. As highlighted by Nerghes (2011), doing a code switch will draw the attention of the participants and will equally enhance their motivation to cautiously scrutinize the messages being presented. When a speaker is going to use code switching in rhetoric and persuasive language, they will be in a far better position to be successful in serving the purpose of switching codes, which eventually leads to achieve their goal.

#### **Code Switching by Teachers in Bilingual and Multilingual classroom settings**

In any given *ESL* classroom settings, the target language becomes the goal and means of L2 acquisition. However, the existence of L1 in the classroom ambience for both the teachers and learners could substantially influence the spoken behaviour of both the users, which can lead to situations of code switching. As stated by Macaro (2005), code switching is available specifically to bilinguals and is considered to be a natural phenomenon in any given classroom interaction. Although the teachers are expected to execute the *ESL* classes in the target language, most of them perpetually have no option but to resort to L1 to tackle number of classrooms issues surrounding the learners (Makulloluwa, 2013).

Illustrating this, Turnbull & Arnett (2002), had identified three macro-functional categories of code switching in any L2 classrooms. According to Turnbull and Arnett (2002), teachers tend to use learners L1 for various pedagogical reasons, secondly, to build an effective and sound relationship with the students and thirdly to have order and discipline in the classroom. In the same capacity, supporting the functional categories of the above, Polio & Duff (1994) explored the teachers' classroom language in L1 milieu and revealed that learners' L1 was mainly considered for classroom management, show solidarity, aid comprehension and offer translation of words and grammar instruction. On the other hand, Canagaraja (1995) studied the functions of code switching in Sri Lankan *ESL* classroom and identified a division of labour between the two languages, English (TL) and Tamil (L1). According to his findings, L1 was used to maintain a soft personal interaction with the learners, while L2 was seen as a pedagogical need. In short, the functions of code switching identified by Canagaraja refute the claims made by Turnbull and Arnett. Canagaraja has noted many functions of code switching, while Turnbull and Arnett sees code switching only to be used for pedagogical reasoning's.

### VIII. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the questionnaire and the semi-interview are stipulated as follows:

**Elucidating meaning and vocabulary** - The pie chart figure 1.0 below depicts that 68% of the respondents reported that they agreed or strongly agreed to the statement that using L1 assists them in elucidating meanings and new vocabulary, especially to mediocre students in *ESL* classrooms. On the other hand, 32% of the respondents had either strongly disagreed or were neutral with the statement. This suggests that *ESL* teachers consider code switching as a useful strategy in teaching meaning and vocabulary in English language. This assists the students to fathom the lesson in a much better way, as they were able to respond to the teachings, which they could not fully understand by the use of L2. So much so, the teachers also commented that they felt content after getting the optimistic feedback from the students.

This was indeed considered to be a better way to make students understand difficult concepts and at the same time expanding their horizons to know what actually is going on in the *ESL* classroom. However, this was only applicable to one on one student guidance and not for the whole class lesson execution.

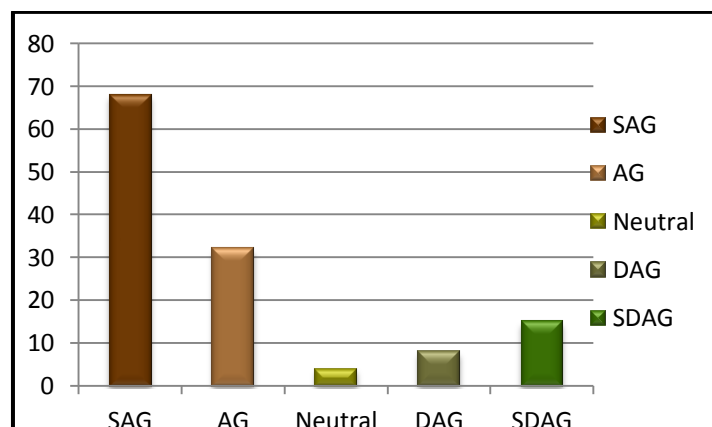


Figure 1.0 Teachers view on using Fiji Hindi in elucidating meaning and vocabulary

**Assisting interpretation** - Figure 2.0 stipulated below explores whether L1 assists learners in fathoming complex contents of English classrooms. 64% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that learner's L1 was highly helpful in comprehending complex topics in *ESL* classroom. On the other hand, 36% were rather neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed.

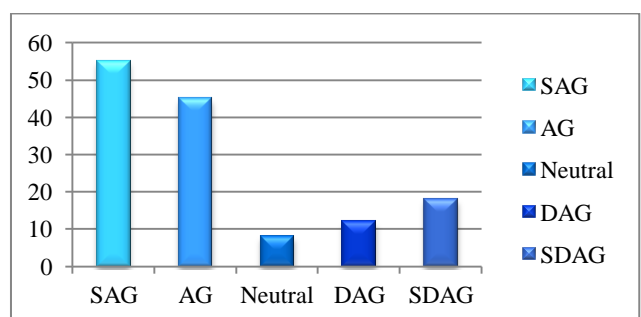


Figure 2.0 The role of L1 in fathoming complex topics in *ESL* Classes

Looking at the following sentential examples, there has been certain focal point that needs to be elucidated by using either one or two words.

T: *haaneela, last point* (Yes, this last point). *Alright! Aur ekko?* (Alright! Any other?). *Haan, isse pahelela* (Yes, before this).

Further, one or two words of Fiji Hindi were used for the students as an assistance to focus on the interpretation of a comprehension passage. Words such as *haa* (yes), *yane* (means), *konla?* (which one?) *hai ki nai?* (is it not so?) *acha! dekhi jaaye* (okay! let's see).

During the interview, some of the teachers claimed that student's L1 was used to provide guidance for the interpretation of sentences, phrases and paragraphs of the particular subject matter.

*The use of L1 in ESL classrooms gives most of the learners any array of opportunity to fathom well.*

These findings precisely depicts that L1 has served a repertoire of pedagogical functions, which also includes guiding interpretation (Adendorff et al, 1993). This particular situation was also proven by the findings of the studies being conducted in Greece by Prodromou (2000).

The findings revealed that both teachers and students alike in Greece tend to use L1 in their English classes for a repertoire of reasons at beginner and intermediate level.

This has been overwhelmingly accepted as a strategy to assist learners in fathoming various contexts in *ESL* classrooms. As such, this purely justifies why Atkinson (1987) and Cook (2001) called for using code switching in *ESL* classrooms with the belief that it is a natural phenomenon, which tends to assist students in terms of comprehending topics, concepts and contexts. Furthermore, as acclaimed by Muir (2001), L1 is seen as a conscious strategy to look into the meanings, hence promoting active classrooms interactions.

**Transmission of the lesson content** - Figure 3.0 below shows that most of the respondents 81% strongly agreed that translating phrases, sentences and words to comprehend the messages in *ESL classrooms* tends to give the assurance that the students have fathomed the lesson. Yet, 19% of them were neutral or undecided, disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.



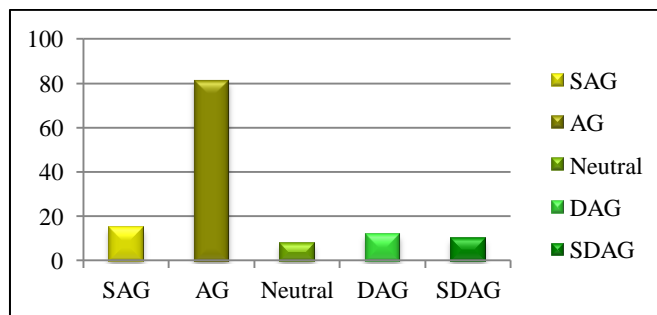


Figure 3.0 The role of translation in fathoming English texts

The excerpt stated in *Fiji Hindi* is used to assist learners fathom the rest of the sentences and the paragraphs. It could be considered as a scaffolding strategy to comprehend the contextualised meaning in the sentence. The below mentioned excerpt has the conversation of a teacher, which takes place between one on one encounter with a student and starts as such:

T: *konchi seekha tum ee short story se?* (What have you learnt from this short story?)

S: *hum seekha ki hum logke kabhi wrong decisions nai banaaye ke chahiye, naithoh fir pachtaaye ke padi* (I have learnt that we should not make wrong decisions, or else we are going to regret).

T: *Acha, theekhai! aur ekko?* (Okay, alright! Any other?)

Interpreting the above excerpt, in the first line *Fiji Hindi* has been used to elucidate the situational context, whereby the teachers asked the student what the message from the short story being studied was. In the second line, the student responds to the teacher’s question, while in the third line the teacher praises the student and asks for any other message from the short story. The *Fiji Hindi* meaning and the English vocabulary were used in the sentences: started with *Fiji Hindi* (for meaning explanation), later English was used for the contextual setting.

Similar studies by Canagarajah (1995) concurred that *ESL* teachers, while considered L1 inappropriate for English classrooms, unconsciously used it in a beneficial way, such as translating language content for mediocre and below mediocre students. As asserted by Adendorff (1993), code switching serves an imperative academic and social function in the repertoire of environment, which includes classroom management, class activity explanation, interpretations and fathoming social relationships.

**Illustrating rules of the grammar** - Figure 4.0 below looks into the analysis of teacher’s use of student’s L1 to illustrate grammatical rules. 55% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they used learner’s L1 to elucidate difficult grammatical rules and points. On the other hand, 45% of the respondents reported that they were either neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed.

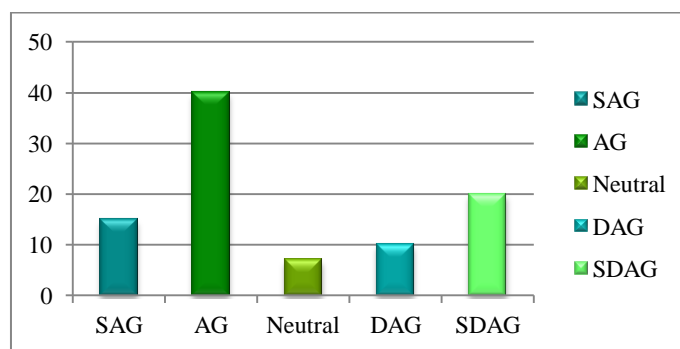


Figure 4.0 The role of translation in fathoming English texts

In some of the interactions, certain *Fiji Hindi* vocabulary shows that there is a discussion, while making students fathom complex grammatical rules. This is in a formulaic form: *waha pe verb hai* (there is a verb), *haa hum logke jane ke chahiye...* (yes, we shall know...), *yaha pe hum log sakta dekhe ki uu aawe hai* (as we can see it comes with) ‘to’, *hai ki nai?* (is it not so?), *theek* (okay), *yaha pe bhi certain expressions hai* (there are certain expression here too), *yaha pe bhi uu bolis hai*(he also said here).

In the following excerpt, it is shown how *Fiji Hindi* words have been used to explain infinitive verb:

S: *yaha pe infinitive verb hai*(here is an infinitive verb)

T: *hum logke jane ke chahiye* (we shall know the) ‘infinitive form’. In English, there are two types of infinitive forms *samjha, acha se!* (understood, well!). Infinitive with ‘to’...

T: *jaise hum log yaha per dekha, ‘to’ with ke sathe aawe hai* (as we noticed here, it comes with) ‘to’, as in ‘enemy decided to...’ *iske matlab hai* ‘decided’, (it means that after the verb ‘decided’, infinitive verb ‘to’ follows).

The results from the above figure and the conversation are precisely supported with some of the statements of the teachers who mentioned in the interview to use L1 in elucidating the rules of grammar in English.

*I mainly tend to use L1 with one on one coaching illustrating the grammar rules, especially those which mediocre students are not able to understand, when it is first introduced to them.*

*I preferred to switch in L1 during the grammar teaching classes, again in one on one coaching.*

The unconscious use of L1 in teaching grammatical rules has been confirmed by some studies relating to bilingualism. As asserted by Prodromou (2000), beginner students confirmed that it was really helpful to elucidate the differences between L2 and L1 grammar. However, highly competence students did not see much effectiveness in explaining the grammatical differences.

**Organising the classroom** - Figure 5.0 below shows the effectiveness of code switching to maintain classroom discipline. 64% of the respondents expressed optimistic attitudes towards using L1 in classroom management, while 36% of the respondents were neutral, disagreed and strongly disagreed. In the process of controlling the classroom management, teachers often go through a lot of challenges. Most of the time many students tend to ignore teacher's instructions and exhibit unwanted behaviour in the classroom. Considering this behaviour, most of the teachers tend to lose out their patience and switch to L1 to make students disciplined. According to the respondents, it was pretty easy to maintain the unwanted behaviour with the use of L1 because the students were disciplined using certain words, which L2 didn't have. As such, most of them listened to the teacher and displayed the accepted behaviour of the classroom.

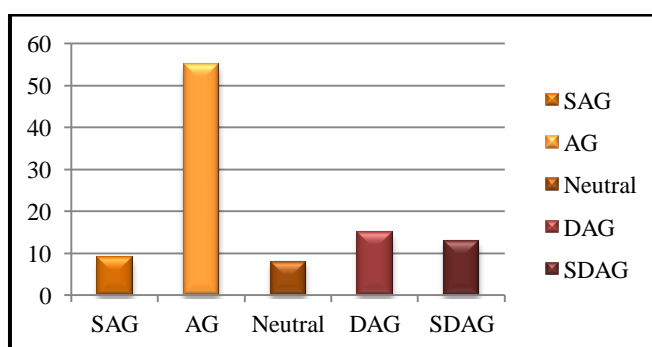


Figure 5.0 Use of L1 for Classroom Management

In the following excerpt the teacher uses L1 with highly blatant students, who exhibited carefree attitude in the classroom.

**T: Rahul! tum kahe waise baat karta hai? Chuppe muh bandh karke group mei kaam nai sakta kare?** (Rahul! Why are you talking like that? Can't you shut your mouth and participate with the group?)

Many studies have supported the claims that using L1 in L2 classroom management will bring in the utmost discipline in the classroom. As argued by Macaro (1997), some educator's switched to learner's L1 after failing to keep up a group activity, when using L2 only. It has been noticed that this was the time, when students would fail to participate in the group activity and start to play around. Macaro also emphasises that excluding learners L1 would lead to deprivation of an imperative vehicle for language learning. Al Dosari and Storch (2010), also mentions that students L1 has been seen as a useful tool in organising L2 classroom discipline. More precisely, Jingxia (2010), found that the use of L1 in L2 classroom was used to manage classes for the sole reason to oversee students would not violate classroom discipline. It was also reiterated that L2 teachers would mainly switch to L1 to criticise and maintain the discipline in the classroom.

## IX. CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this paper, the functions and the need for code switching in *ESL* classroom has received optimistic, as well as pessimistic criticisms. According to the respondents, most of have them believed that the use of L1 is unavoidable in L2 classrooms. In Fijian *ESL* classrooms, where teachers and the students share the same L1, there is a strong tendency that L1 will be used in various activities for effective learning and teaching. For obvious reasons, L1 is used more naturally with others, who share it for easy and effective communication reasons. So much so, the usage of L2 all the time could be a contributing factor towards embarrassment for shy students, particularly those who may not be competent in the target language. Having this mentioned, L1 is crucially imperative in the process of L2's effective teaching execution.

The present study findings have also revealed that teachers see L1 uses as an acceptable belief towards the repertoire of pedagogical uses of *Fiji Hindi* to execute interactions of *ESL* teaching, that is, elucidating meaning and newly introduced vocabulary, assisting interpretation, transmission of the lesson content, illustrating rules of the grammar and managing the *ESL* classrooms.

Code switching, then could be seen as a linguistic resource in *ESL* classrooms for the variety of functions that it posits in teaching English as a second language. Consequently, L1 use in the *ESL* classroom should not be seen as something that may discourage the learners from learning L2, in fact, it should be seen as a linguistic tool to assist mediocre or below mediocre students to gain competency in the target language.

Therefore, the notion of total prohibition of L1 in Fijian *ESL* classroom was not favoured by all the respondents surveyed in this study. The implication of this would be that the exclusive use of English only in the class maybe detrimental to effective L2 teaching and learning. Consequently, L1 use in the *ESL* classrooms should not be ignored either, as it tends to allow the learners to help better fathom L2. Cook (2001) ascertains that L1 usage in the *ESL* classroom contributes significantly towards the current teaching pedagogies, which may allow new developments in *ESL* methodologies.

So much so, the findings also imply that there is a dire need for new policies to be included in the existing language policies so that the concept of code switching can be seen as an imperative communicative tool in the Fijian *ESL* classrooms. Having this given the favour, the new implementation can provide remedial measures to most extent in removing potential hiccups that may be experienced in the process of teaching English as a second language, especially for those learners, who are surviving on the brink to achieve the highest level of competency.

As teachers of English as a second language, one cannot deny the fact that he or she does not switch, while executing lessons in *ESL* classroom. Therefore, the English curriculum developers should condone “English only using policy” and pave way for L1 usage for the sole purpose to assist those learners, who are mediocre or below mediocre. In this way, the phenomenon of code switching will be redefined and made practical in the Fijian *ESL* classrooms contributing significantly towards the deplorable state of English in Fiji.

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# Interlingual Interfaces in Chinese Language Learning and Its Use: Exploring Language Transfer Errors in Chinese Writing

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**Abstract**—Adopting Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982), James (1998) and Zheng and Park (2013) 's system of error classification, this study investigates L1 transfer errors from English to Chinese based on Chinese translation texts written by intermediate-level American university students. These errors were identified and co-coded using the NVivo qualitative text analysis software program. For example, 在白天做健康的东~~西~~[事情] (do healthy things in the day.). It is coded under the subcategories of noun and misformation. Using obtained data, the NVivo program presents the frequency of error types and their attributes. The findings contribute to both theoretical and pedagogical issues by focusing on error types common to Chinese L2 learners and typically manifested in Chinese written production due to influences from English. Finally, this study sheds light on implications for instruction on different types of errors in classroom and on intercultural ambiguity.

**Index Terms**—error analysis, error type, first language transfer, Chinese

## I. INTRODUCTION

First language transfer viewed as a cross-linguistic process has been proven to play an essential role in the development of learners' interlanguage proficiency and cross-cultural proficiency (Selinker, 1992). In the domain of L1 transfer errors in second language (L2), many studies have revealed that rules, patterns and habits from L1 interfere with L2 learning and may result in negative effects (Mahmoud, 2000; Wang, W., & Wen, 2002). Therefore, study on L1 transfer error in second languages is of utmost interest or utmost importance. Error Analysis (EA), primarily used as a useful and practical method of investigating ESL/EFL (English as Second / Foreign Language) linguistic errors, can also be considered as a tool for solving theoretical and pedagogical problems of acquisition of other languages (Corder, 1981; Odlin, 1989). Adopting Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982), James (1998) and Zheng and Park (2013) 's system of error classification, this study investigates L1 transfer errors from English to Chinese based on Chinese translation texts written by intermediate-level American university students. These errors were identified and co-coded using the NVivo qualitative text analysis software program. For example, 在白天做健康的东~~西~~[事情] (do healthy things in the day.). It is coded under the subcategories of noun and misformation. Using obtained data, the NVivo program presents the frequency of error types and their attributes. The findings contribute to both theoretical and pedagogical issues by focusing on error types common to Chinese L2 learners and typically manifested in Chinese written production due to influences from English. Finally, this study sheds light on implications for instruction on different types of errors in classroom and on intercultural ambiguity.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Error Analysis

Error analysis is a type of approach to analyze a second/foreign language learner's language performance. It plays an essential role in identifying typical language errors, describing those errors, classifying them according to their nature and attributes, and evaluating their seriousness (Corder, 1967). Corder (1967) also pointed out that students' errors should not be ignored because these errors are developing features for language learners. Therefore, error analysis has the effect of guiding teachers to adopt appropriate teaching strategies to help students to learn better. Error analysis as a fundamental tool in language teaching in order to reorganize a teacher's point of view and readdress his/her methodology for fixing and fulfilling the students' gaps was soon introduced into many domains of second language acquisition (Londono Vasquez, 2007).

### B. Interlanguage/ Interlingual Interfaces

Interlanguage/interlingual study is one of domains where error analysis was applied. "Interlanguage" (Selinker, 1972) refers to a structurally intermediate system between second language learners' first language and target language. It is suggested that L1 interference is a major problem for those who are learning a second language. Overgeneralization generally involves the creation of one deviant structure in place of two regular structures, for example, "He can sings",

“We are hope”, “it is occurs” (Richards, 1974). Selinker even referred to the negative interference from the learner’s first language habits (Selinker, 1972). Along these hypotheses that more research has been conducted into the hypothesis that L1 interference is a major problem for those that are learning a second language., much research has been conducted in the area of interlingual/ interlanguage interfaces (Sorace and Filiaci 2006, Sorace and Serratrice 2009, Tsimpli and Sorace 2006, and White 2009).

### C. Types of First Language Transfer Errors

Interlingual errors, interference error, language transfer error, and cross-linguistic interference error are also known as first language transfer errors. This study adopts Al-Khresheh (2016)’s definition of first language transfer error to identify L1 transfer errors in sample data. He defines that transfer error is error caused by interference from a mother tongue. A student who does not know the rules of a target language will use the same rules as he obtained in his native language. Al-Khresheh also suggested that interlingual errors are committed by literal translation. Therefore, this study aimed at identifying L1 errors triggered by literal translation and classified them according to systems of typical types of interlingual errors.

For error types on L1 transfer error, there are various error types that have been constructed over the years, classified from different perspectives. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) summarized error types using four different taxonomies: error types based on linguistic category (morphology and syntax), surface strategy taxonomy (the skeleton of English clauses, the auxiliary system, passive sentences, temporal conjunctions, sentential complements and psychological predicates), comparative taxonomy (developmental errors and interlingual errors) and communicative effect taxonomy (global errors, local errors and psychological predicates). Built on Dulay and Burt and Krashen’s structure on error type, Kim (1988, cited in Lee, 2001) listed four types of errors: misformation, omission, addition, and other. She conducted error analysis with two-hundred 10th grade Korean EFL learners using their English translations of Korean sentences. Kim identified 1122 errors in which transfer errors resulting from L1 structure were higher (24%) than overgeneralization errors (23%). Furthermore, she identified the 1122 detected errors in terms of six domains and subdivided them into 22 linguistic categories. Her findings revealed that errors in articles were most common (354) and that there were only 8 errors in word order and 2 in voice. This study primarily adopted Kim’s classification of error types, which combined her grammatical error categories and four types of error forms (misformation, omission, addition, and other) as subcategories under each grammatical error node.

### D. The Present Study

Using error analysis is a useful approach; some scholars have applied it in the English as a second or foreign language context. The scholars’ findings are rich and extensive; for example, Chen (2004) studied 710 Hong Kong Chinese ESL students and found that there are 5 types of error in terms of interlingual transfer. Specifically, students used the syntactic transfer from Chinese to English, which resulted in run-on sentences and incomplete ideas. Chelli (2013) found that the students’ errors in the using ‘of’ preposition and article can be identified into interlingual and intralingual errors. The results showed that 79.15% of the errors made in preposition and 72.85% of the errors made in articles are caused by negative transfer of the Arabic language. Additionally, 20.85% of errors were made in the use of prepositions and 27.15% in the use of articles due to overgeneralization and false concepts; Chelli hypothesized that the errors were mainly due to lack of practice. A study conducted by Cabrera Solano (2014) found that the most common Spanish interference errors were misuse of verbs, omission of personal and object pronouns, misuse of prepositions, overuse of articles and inappropriate/unnatural word order. The aforementioned studies show that L1 caused interference in EFL learners when writing in English, which is often due to a linguistic transference from the native language to the target language.

Most of these studies revolve around error types happening in the EFL/ESL context; however, few current studies address error types in Chinese learning. For example, Mochizuki, K., Sano, H., Shen, Y. M., & Wu, C. H. (2015) studied native English speakers’ and native Japanese speakers’ misuse of Chinese as second language. They only present findings on “—+classifier” structure and leave out differences on the “other” category tag. Additionally, the study fails to thoroughly and completely illustrate native English speakers’ typical errors in terms of interlingual transfer. To revise this, this study exclusively aimed at identifying the types of errors American intermediate-level Chinese as foreign language learners made as a result of interlingual interfaces.

### E. Other Recommendations

Use either SI (MKS) or CGS as primary units. (SI units are encouraged.) If your native language is not English, try to get a native English-speaking colleague to proofread your paper. Do not add page numbers.

## III. METHOD

### A. Participants

The participants for this study consisted of 13 Chinese as Foreign Language students in a university in America. Participants spoke English as their first language and were learning Forth semester Chinese as a foreign language at school. Namely, they have developed a certain language proficiency in using Chinese; therefore, they were able to

produce data for analysis.

*B. Data Collection*

A total of 60 passages that involved essay writing and translation homework were collected over one academic semester. The action of administrating assignments was conducted as syllabus plans. Researcher had natural access to data without intervening regular schedule of instruction. The data of assignments is the consequence of students' natural action of writing instead of purposely drafting and modifying. This improves the internal validity of data and functions for the effectiveness of the following data analysis.

*C. Method*

Errors resulting from first language transfer are coded in their respective nodes. Primary categories of nodes are based on grammatical category, including lexical errors, syntax errors, semantic errors and mechanical errors. Under the categories of lexical error and mechanical error, error nodes comprise of the following four sub-categories: misformation, omission, addition, and move. The "misformation" node indicates an error resulting from false use, which could be replaced with another word to reach a correct expression. The "omission" code indicates an error resulting from leaving out certain expressions and inserting a new expression will lead to a correct expression. The "addition" code indicates an error resulting from having extra words and deleting the extra word or words will lead to a correct expression. The "move" tag indicates an error due to disordered word order. Data is coded as multiple nodes (co-occurring nodes) if necessary. For example, 你得重视锻炼, 饭食, 和习惯, 要是你要身体非常好 (You should pay attention to workout, diet and habit, if you want your body to be well. ) is coded under the type of mechanical error (commas-addition) and complex sentence at the same time.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 358 first language transfer errors were identified and coded under primary nodes. Among them, there are 168 lexical errors, 114 syntax errors, 86 semantic errors and 18 mechanical errors. Table I below provides a comparative analysis of the primary errors (lexical error, syntax error, semantic error and mechanical error). It can be seen that lexical errors were the most common first language transfer errors. Syntax and semantic errors came second, and mechanical errors came last.

TABLE I.  
OVERVIEW OF FIRST LANGUAGE TRANSFER ERRORS

PrimaryL1 Error Types	Secondary L1 Error Types	Number of Coding Reference	Number of Items Coded	Percentage of Coding Reference	Example
Lexical	<b>Total</b>	168	55	100%	她每天问我跟肥肥跑步。
	<b>Adjective</b>	15	10	9%	时间和金钱的压力是非常不健康的, 可见做饭很聪明。
	Adj-Addition	0	0		
	Adj-Misformation	15	10		时间和金钱的压力是非常不健康的, 可见做饭很聪明。
	Adj-Move	0	0		
	Adj-Omission	0	0		
	<b>Adverb</b>	23	15	14%	可是我的姐姐说我要注意, 否则我会多像肥肥。
	Adv-Addition	0	0		
	Adv-Misformation	13	10		他想买一套三房一厅两卫的房子, 只有房子在城外, 而且上班不方便。
	Adv-Move	8	6		说在中国学生做太极拳每早晨
	Adv-Omission	4	2		我不喝酒, 吸烟。
	<b>Auxiliary</b>	5	4	3%	毕业以后我的身体可以有很多的问题。
	Aux-Addition	1	1		他们可以看的出来我变胖了
	Aux-Misformation	3	2		畢業以後我的身體可以有很多的問題。
	Aux-Move	0	0		
	Aux-Omission	1	1		你会能不但减肥, 而且更改你的生活方式。
	<b>Classifier</b>	6	5	4%	舅舅告诉柯林她十个年在打太极拳。
	Cl-Addition	4	3		我三个年前以来, 没吃肉。
	Cl-Misformation	0	0		
	Cl-Move	0	0		
Cl-Omission	2	2		之前, 这两习惯我都有。	
<b>Conjunction</b>	38	24	23%	虽然她的存款非常少, 她经常炒股票。	
Conj-Addition	26	20		我的舅舅当大学教授和舅妈当律师。	
Conj-Misformation	27	22		这样我们不必报名旅馆, 还是买门票。	
Conj-Move	14	12		大学生还不用担心发胖如果他们要注意饮食。	

	Conj-Omission	37	24		虽然他们差不多五十岁，他们的身材很好，
	<b>Determiner</b>	0	0	0%	
	<b>Noun</b>	26	15	15%	所以他想买家。
	Noun-Addition	0	0		
	Noun-Misformation	23	15		你可以做很多种锻炼。
	Noun-Move	1	1		所以我看到了很多改变我的身体。
	Noun-Omission	2	2		我们爱绿，不爱白
	<b>Numeral</b>	3	3	2%	人应该试一试天天锻炼伴到一个小时。
	Num-Addition	0	0		
	Num-Misformation	3	3		人应该试一试天天锻炼伴到一个小时。
	Num-Move	0	0		
	Num-Omission	0	0		
	<b>Particle</b>	23	17	14%	她说因为他买车，天亮很少锻炼，变胖。
	Particle-Addition	1	1		我天天分别去了健身房锻炼身体和篮球场打篮球。
	Particle-misformation	2	1		父母看起来他有时会赚钱和赔钱. 很担心.
	Particle-Move	0	0		
	Particle-Omission	20	16		高中我的老师教我们一点儿太极拳
	<b>Preposition</b>	5	5	3%	可以进步的方面，好像少点吃快餐，和早点睡，多喝水等等
	Prep-Addition	0	0		
	Prep-Misformation	3	3		可以进步的方面，好像少点吃快餐，和早点睡，多喝水等等
	Prep-Move	2	2		星期一到星期五我们可以一起住和我的父母还是你的。
	Prep-Omission	1	1		高中我的老师教我们一点儿太极拳
	<b>Pronoun</b>	3	3	2%	人应该注意喝吃什么
	Pron-Addition	1	1		在生活中，发生不良事情时会有很多次。
	Pron-Misformation	0	0		
	Pron-Move	1	1		你注意多少你吃。
	Pron-Omission	1	1		人应该注意喝吃什么
	<b>Verb</b>	57	31	34%	我在网上检查。
	Verb-Addition	9	8		他们的味道是很好。
	Verb-Misformation	44	26		她问了我每天带着我的狗跟着我跑。
	Verb-Move	0	0		
	Verb-Omission	8	6		他的哥哥其实一个模范丈夫。
	<b>Total</b>	114	40	100%	他也赚一些钱炒股票
	Adverbial	19	13	17%	所以我们没有年夜饭在他们的家。
	Attributive	20	17	18%	房子在城市里太贵了。
	Causative Construction	7	5	6%	她问了我每天带着我的狗跟着我跑。
	Cleft Construction	1	1	0%	我在网上看过文章说每天睡七八个小时的觉是最健康。
	Comparative Construction	5	5	4%	一般說來，女人的薪水比男人的薪水那麼低。
	Complement	5	5	4%	不但在舅舅的家里吃很好
	Complex Sentence	15	11	13%	你得重视锻炼，饭食，和习惯要是你要身体非常好。
	Object	4	4	4%	年夜饭的时候我不知道什么菜中国人吃。
	Relative Clause	1	1	0%	可是我的方法使我的身体健康是锻炼身体，注意饮食，和睡够觉。
	Serial-Verb Construction	9	8	8%	他也赚一些钱炒股票
	Subject	3	1	3%	不但锻炼带健康得而且锻炼减肥。
	WH-Question	5	4	4%	我們因该等待在哪儿？
	<b>Total</b>	86	39	100%	我的中文同班請我去她的家吃年夜饭。
	<b>Commas</b>	17	9	95%	除了春节以外，还有元宵节，端午节，中秋节，和清明节。
	Commas-Addition	10	8		可是我最重视锻炼，注意饮食，和睡够觉。
	Commas-Misformation	6	3		除了春节以外，还有元宵节，端午节，中秋节，和清明节。
	Commas-Move	1	1		我一个星期就在哪儿跑三，四次步
	Commas-Omission	3	1		你不可以吃太多的饭否则，不能减肥。
					我最喜欢早晨的时候锻炼因为以后我有很多活力



<b>Dash</b>	1	1	5%	别熬夜还是别吸烟--对身体不好。
Dash-Addition	0	0		
Dash-Misformation	1	1		别熬夜还是别吸烟--对身体不好。
Dash-Move	0	0		
Dash-Omission	0	0		
<b>Chinese back-sloping comma</b>	0	0		
<b>Period</b>	0	0	0%	

The analysis below presents a comprehensive analysis of lexical errors and mechanical errors categorized respectively in terms of misformation, omission, addition, and move, semantic errors, and syntax errors.

A. *Lexical Errors*

Figure I reveals lexical errors detected in data of L1 transfer errors. Of the 12 categories of lexical errors identified, this study found that students had the greatest problem in verbs. Conjunction errors, noun errors, adverb errors, and particle errors, were also frequent errors found in the data. In contrast, auxiliary errors, classifier errors, numeral errors, preposition errors and pronoun errors were less found, and determiner errors were not detected.

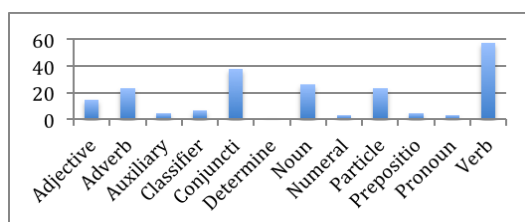


Figure 1. Comparison of Lexical Errors

1. Verb Error

In the analysis (see Table I) of lexical errors, most errors were found from the verb error categories and most verb errors were made in the form of misformation. Specifically, a total of 44 entries were identified as incorrect because of inappropriate verb use, which can be corrected for by substituting the appropriate verb. Meanwhile, 9 references were discovered relating to verb error because of adding certain verbs, and 8 references were listed because of leaving out a verb. Since verb errors in the form of misformation account for the majority of verb errors, it provides clues to understanding constraints in L2 learning.

(1) 每个早晨, 柯林看到林雪梅的舅舅去小区的公园打太极拳, 问 [让] 舅舅叫他。

Every morning, Kelin saw Lin Xumei's uncle practicing taichi in the park of the residential community, so he asked his uncle to teach him.

(2) 请保存[节约]纸张, 不要使用一次性筷子。

Please conserve paper. Don't use one-time use chopsticks.

The two examples illustrate one constraint on lexical development in L2. Both the verb in Sentence (1) and Sentence (2) have two semantic meanings in English: "ask" is associated with "raise" to form phrases like "ask a question" or is synonymous with "have" or "make" to mark a causative structure, like "ask my son to repair it"; "conserve" introduces objects like resources, or objects like energy or strength. These differences are embodied in its equivalents into Chinese. The "ask" in "ask a question" is translated into 问 while the "ask" in "ask my son to repair it" is translated into 让. The "conserve" taking objects of source is translated into 节约, while the "conserve" taking objects of energy is translated into "保存". As such, the errors made in Sentence (1) and (2) are produced because the lexical system in L1 does not completely match the L2 system and students are not aware of these differences, especially slight differences used in different contexts. It is suggested that it is a challenge for L2 learners to extract and create semantic specifications about a word and integrate such information into the lexical entry of the word.

2. Conjunction error

Conjunction error was the second most frequent error in terms of lexical error, and was detected in all of four forms. Among them, errors due to omission of conjunctions amounted to 37 and were the most found, while conjunction errors because of misformation, addition, and move were counted at 27, 26 and 14, respectively. An alternative way to look at the frequent conjunction errors in the form of omission at this stage is to suggest that information in L1 lemmas may be directly copied or attached to L2 lexical forms to form lexical entries that have L2 lexical forms, but not syntactic information of their L1 translation equivalents. This made errors resulting from omitting certain parts of conjunction in Chinese possible. For example,

(3) 除了多锻炼以外, 人[还]应该注意喝吃什么。

Besides more workouts, people [also / still] should pay attention to what to drink and eat.

(4) 虽然她的存款非常少, [但是] 她经常炒股票。

Although her savings are quite few, [but] she often speculates in stocks.

In Chinese, the conjunction words 虽然 (although/though) and 除了 (besides) do not function as conjunctions independently as in English, where the common structure is “Although + clause, sentence” and “Besides+ Noun Phrase, sentence”. In contrast, 虽然 and 除了 work with another word to comprise conjunction in Chinese and the structure is usually “虽然+clause, 但是(But)+clause” and “除了+clause, 还 (also / still) +clause”. Here, the omission of the conjunction in Chinese is because the lexical form in L2 has been activated and L1 lexical information was in use. In other words, consciousness of L1 and L2 difference was not built up. It is the same with errors such as 因为我很重视我的身体, [所以]我每天运动 ( Because I really care for my body, [so] I workout every day. ) and 虽然他们差不多五十岁, [但是]他们有非常好的身材((Although they are almost 50, [but]they have very good figure).

### 3. Noun error

Noun errors, identified as the third most frequent error, were found to be mostly made due to misformation, while noun errors in other forms were much less found. The significant difference of noun errors made because of misformation suggests that students at this stage still use directly through L1 lemmas as the default route. Lexical representation is the weak connection between L2 lexical items and conceptual representations. For example,

(5) 我在夜晚睡觉, 在白天做健康的东西 [事情] 。

I sleep at night, and do healthy things in the day.

(6) 你可以做很多种锻炼 [运动] 。

You can do many kinds of sports.

Students intended to use 东西 in Sentence (3) express things. However, “things” in the sense of semantics is different in Chinese. In Chinese, both 事情 and 东西 have meaning the of things. 事情 is more like a matter or affair, while 东西 is more like a physical thing or object. In Sentence (4), 锻炼 is usually used as verb while 运动 is more used as noun. The common expression connected with the verb 做 is 运动 instead of 锻炼. The two errors illustrate the point that semantic and syntax information which is not shared by students’ L1 language is more likely to be lost in processing an L2 word. An explanation is that words in L2 are only considered to be attached to certain L1 lexical equivalents, and it resulted in L2-specific features being ignored at this stage.

### 4. Adverb error

Adverb errors and particle errors are the less frequent errors detected in data set compared to verb error, conjunction error and noun. Most of the adverb errors were made in the form of misformation. For example,

(7) 可是我的姐姐说我要注意, 否则我会更多[更]像肥肥。

But my sister says I have to pay attention, otherwise I’ll resemble Feifei more.

(8) 他想买一套三房一厅两卫的房子, 只有 [只是] 房子在城外, 而且上班不方便。

He’d like to buy a house. He has his eye on a three-bedroom, one living-room, and two-bathroom house, except it’s outside the city and rather inconvenient to get to work.

Here, misformation errors are made when the L1 word is attached to more than one representation under various semantic or syntax conditions. Therefore, wrong L2 words were activated as L1 translation equivalents. “More” in English can serve as an adjective or adverb. When it modifies a noun as an adjective, it is usually translated into 更多 in Chinese, like “I want more food(我想要更多食物).”, while it is often translated into 更 in Chinese when it is used as an adverb to modify a verb, like “The building looks more like a museum” (这栋楼更像博物馆). Because “more” in Sentence (7) is used to modify the verb “resemble”, it should be translated into 更 but not 更多. “Only” could be used as an adverb, as an adjective (always before a noun), or as a conjunction. In Sentence (6), “only” can be replaced with “but” as a conjunction to indicate contrast. There are many instances where “only” and “but” could be used interchangeably in English. For instance, “You can come; only make sure you’re on time” and “You can come; but make sure you’re on time”. As an adverb, it is translated into “只有” usually. For example, 我只有一个苹果 (I only have one apple). In Sentence (8), “only” functions as conjunction to make contrast. Therefore, its lexical equivalent is supposed to be 只是 in Chinese.

### 5. Particle error

Particle errors in the form of omission are much more than the number of particle errors in other forms. A total of 20 references were identified as particle errors made because of omitting certain morphemes, while only one entry was found in particle error made due to addition and misformation. Specifically, 19 out of 20 errors in form of omission are made because of leaving out the particle 了, and only one error was made because of omitting the particle 上. Their difference in number determines that it is significant to analyze how the errors omitting 了 were possible.

Frequently, English uses the suffix (-ed) to mark an action occurring in the past, namely the past tense. However, past action is not necessarily only represented in the form of past tense, but also can be presented by the perfective aspect particle (-have) to emphasize its property of completion. For instance, “I ate an egg. /I have eaten an egg”. If their minor difference does not evoke L2 learners’ consciousness of making a differentiation between tense and aspect, the distinction between the form of past tense (-ed) and the marker of perfect aspect (-have) can possibly be blurred. In contrast to adding a suffix to a verb to mark its tense in English, Chinese usually has an individual morpheme 了 as

perfective aspect particle to mark the completion of an action. Therefore, L2 learners are likely to drop the particle 了 in Chinese writing under the influence of past tense marker (-ed) in English. For example,

(9) 我的表哥卖[了]他的车。

My cousin sold his car.

(10) 高中我的老师教[了]我们一点儿太极拳

In high school my teacher taught us a bit of taichi.

It can be seen that the above-mentioned examples do not possess any visible perfective aspect markers, like 已经 (already) and 完 (finish). This provides conditions for L2 learners to associate these sentences to past tense instead of perfective aspect. Affected by the suffix (-ed) past tense marker in English, students ignored the marker for completed action 了 in the process of translation.

**B. Syntax Errors**

In terms of syntax, identified errors are concerned with many sentence elements and types of sentence structure. Based on the collected data, the participants had the greatest difficulty in using attributives as a sentence element. Adverbial errors are also significant, as Figure 2 demonstrates. Among errors of sentence structure type, complex sentences are the biggest challenge for students. Serial-Verb construction comes in second as another major error of sentence structure.

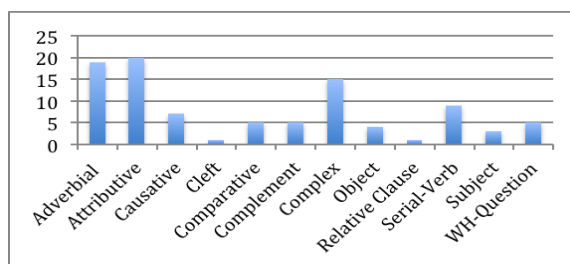


Figure 2. Comparison of Syntax Errors

**1. Attributive error**

A total of 20 Attributive errors were found in data. Among them, errors caused by word order accounted for the majority. For example,

(11) 比如，在农村，女孩子的机会学习[学习机会]比男孩子的更少。

For example, in the countryside, the opportunity to study is less for girls than for boys.

(12) 我的方法使我的身体健康 [使我的身体健康的方法] 是锻炼身体，注意饮食，和睡够觉。

My way of making my body healthy is to exercise, pay attention to diet, and getting enough sleep.

These two examples illustrate how established syntax systems in L1 discourage acquisition sentence structure in L2 when their difference is visible in word order. In English, using a noun as a pre-modifier of a noun is done by using the modifying noun as an attributive noun or noun adjunct is common, whereas another common construction simply uses a prepositional phrase as a postnominal modifier. Its construction is usually “noun(head) + of + noun (postnominal modifier)”, like “the list of documents”. In contrast, attributives usually proceed heads in Chinese with the structure “noun (prenominal modifier) + 的 + noun (head)”, like “档案 (documents) 的条目 (list)”. Reversing modifiers and heads resulted in the errors in sentences (11) and (12).

**2. Adverbial error**

A total of 19 adverbial errors were detected and all of them were made because of wrongly placed word order. For example,

(13) 所以我们没有吃年夜饭在他们的家[在他们的家吃年夜饭]。

So we didn't have Chinese New Year's Eve dinner at their home.

(14) 在中国学生做 [打] 太极拳每 [天] 早晨 [每天早上打太极拳] 。

In China students practice taichi every morning.

In English, adverbs of place and time usually come at the end position of a sentence or clause. In Chinese, place phrases and time phrases are commonly placed before predicates in Chinese when they function as an adverbial to modify an action. Therefore, the adverbial “at their home” (在他们的家) in Sentence (13) should be arranged before verb phrase吃年夜饭 in Chinese translation and form在他们的家吃年夜饭. It is the same in Sentence (14), where “practice taichi” should come after the adverbial of time “每天早上” (every morning).

**3. Complex Sentence**

Among errors found in complex sentences, order of clause and the omission of partial conjunction words is the major causes. For the order of clause, the order of independent and dependent clauses in a complex sentence can vary in English, like “I want to be a teacher when I grow up” and “When I grow up, I want to be teacher”. However, the

dependent clause (when I grow up) usually proceeds the independent clause (I want to be a teacher). Sentences (15) and (16) provide examples of errors attributable to clause order in Chinese:

(15) 大学生还不必担心发胖如果他们注意饮食。 [如果大学生注意饮食, 他们还不必担心发胖]。

College students don't need to worry about becoming fat if they pay attention to their diet.

(16) 偶尔他们吵架因为李文炒股票。 [偶尔他们因为李文炒股票吵架]

Sometimes they quarrel because Li Wen speculates on stocks.

In terms of leaving out conjunction words, correlated errors are introduced in conjunction errors. Examples can be found in sentences (3) and (4).

### C. Semantic Errors

Semantic errors found in data are mostly resulted from overgeneralization of polysemy in L1. It covers instances where the learner produces a deviant semantic meaning in Chinese on the basis of his/her experience caused by multiple semantic meanings in L1. For example,

(17) 我也要变化[改变]我的生活。

I will change my life too.

(18) 每天健身我会住 [活] 很久。

I can live longer if I work out every day.

Sentences (17) and (18) provide examples of polysemy of a word in the target language. In English, "change" can function as a verb or noun. Specifically, it works either as transitive verb or intransitive verb. The transitive "change" takes an object and should be translated into "改变", such as in Sentence (17). However, participants translated it into "变化", which is usually the equivalent of "change" as a noun. Compared to the different parts of speech of "change", difference of the semantic meaning of "live" in Sentence (18) is less noticeable. The "live" in Sentence (18) is associated with the semantics of longevity, while the more firmly established semantics of "live" is on residence and dwelling, like "I live in Chicago". In Chinese, the corresponding word for "live" in "I live in Chicago" is "住", while equivalence to "live" in sense of longevity is "活".

### D. Mechanical Errors

Mechanical errors are those of orthography (spelling and capitalization) and punctuation. In this study, only punctuation errors are included in that category since there is no capitalization issue in Chinese. It is seen in Table III that mistakes made in the aspect of commas accounted for the majority of punctuation errors. Meanwhile, very few dash errors were detected. In the collected data set, no uses of Chinese back dash were found and no period errors were identified.

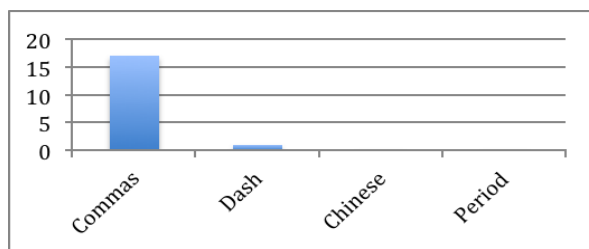


Figure 3. Comparison of Mechanical Errors

Comma addition is the main form of error under the category of comma errors. In English, a serial comma or series comma (also called an Oxford comma or a Harvard comma) is a comma placed immediately before the coordinating conjunction (usually *and* or *or*) in a series of three or more terms. For example, a list of three items might be punctuated either as "A, B, and C" (with the serial comma), or as "A, B and C" (without the serial comma). While in Chinese, only the latter form, namely "A, B 和 (and) C" is formally applied. This interlingual difference generated an error in punctuating Sentence (19):

(19) 除了春节以外, 还有元宵节, 端午节, 中秋节, 和清明节。

Besides Spring Festival, there are Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival and Tomb-Sweeping Day.

In addition to comma errors made because of adding commas, inappropriate application of commas in sentences is also common. Instead, Chinese back- sloping commas (also named Enumeration comma or Chinese serial comma) should replace commas in sentences. For instance,

(20) 春天, [、] 夏天的时候, When it is spring and summer,

(21) 我一个星期就在哪 [那] 儿跑三, [、] 四次步。

I run three or four times a week there.

The Chinese back- sloping comma is unusual to native English speakers because in Chinese, it is used instead of the regular comma when separating words constituting a list. An explanation of the mistakes in sentences (20) and (21) is

that the English custom of a serial comma had a negative influence in applying Chinese back-sloping commas, especially when Chinese as Foreign Language students' consciousness of punctuation use in Chinese has not been engendered.

In all, a large number of errors made by these learners in lexical, syntactic, semantic and mechanical aspects can be explained due to interference from the L1. Many errors are closely related to overgeneralization of application of rules in L1 to contexts where they do not apply. Meanwhile, many mistakes resulted from failure to observe the restrictions of the existing contexts and structures in L2. In addition, L1 transfer errors were identified in various forms: addition, omission, move and misformation. Consequently, it was shown that interference from the mother tongue is a significant source of errors that intermediate-level Chinese as Foreign Language learners make.

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# The Application of Problem-based Learning Approach in English Grammar Instruction: A Pilot Study

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**Abstract**—The study incorporates the problem-based approach (PBL) in the English class with an attempt to improve English low achievers' grammar competence pertaining to relative clauses and their motivation in learning English. Fifty students divided into seven teams with leader for each were recruited. This study adopts the pre- and post-test research design as well as classroom observation checklist and two assignments. The result indicates that the engagement level of the participants is increased by the scenario-based strategy and their grammar competence improves under PBL instruction after being compared with the scores of pretest and posttest, which suggests that the PBL approach really exerts a positive influence on the performance of the participant. The finding also implies that the participants emphasizes, when offering solutions to the scenario, more on employment than on studies, which may reflect their real life experiences.

**Index Terms**—Problem-Based Learning (PBL), English grammar instruction, student-centered approach, collaborative learning, self-directed learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

Grammar that takes a significant role in English skills provides information beneficial to the learner's comprehension (Zuhriyah, 2017). It is a key in foreign language acquisition, which helps learners construct meaningful words or sentences (Mart, 2013; Tomakin, 2014). In other words, short of grammar knowledge will result in poor performance in foreign language learning.

Students who are classified as being of poor performance in English learning have something in common. As observed in the class, these characteristics include bad learning habits, deficient of preexisting linguistic knowledge, lack of motivation or unwillingness to learn, passive attitude towards learning, low self-esteem or confidence, unwilling to participate in discussion and interactions with peers, ill communicative and expressive abilities, and being unable to solve problems in learning processes leading to be failed in studies. Owing to the above-mentioned factors, these students are labeled as low achievers. How can these phenomena be improved? It is a big challenge for English language instructors.

In a traditional teacher-centered instruction classroom, teachers are responsible for transmitting knowledge to students, as well as monitoring and assessing their learning process and effects. This lectured-based instructional approach, the teacher is an authoritative leader who sets the learning objective for students and designs curriculums and activities for them to accomplish goal set. The extrinsic motivators such as grades and marks are used to motivate students who basically work alone and cooperation is not a choice (Concordia University [CU], 2018; Thomas, 2013). As a result, students often become passive receptors of information and knowledge (Thomas, 2013; Zhang, 2013).

In a student-centered instruction classroom, in contrast, the role of a teacher is a facilitator who helps students take responsibilities for their learning. Instead of listening to the teacher's lectures entirely, students are regarded as the center of the learning process. The teacher serving as a facilitator provides them with opportunities to learn independently. Students interact with their counterparts and group work is encouraged. They also learn to cooperate and communicate with their classmates while working on the tasks that involve interesting methods such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, and scenario-based learning, which increase their intrinsic motivation. Besides, this approach emphasizes evaluating students' learning and learning needs (C U, 2018; Thomas, 2013). Therefore, Collins and O'Brien (2011) conclude that appropriately conducting the student-centered approach can contribute increased motivation to learning, better retention of knowledge, more insightful understanding, and more positive manners towards the subject being taught.

Compared a traditional teacher-centered instruction with a student-centered instruction, the latter appears to have a better chance to deal with the predicaments that low-achievers encounter. Hence, the need for a change is necessary and urgent for low achievers who are suffering from an inappropriate pedagogy.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Necessity of Grammar Teaching

A good command of grammar is the foundation in the mastery of a language (Wang, 2010). Grammar is important

because it plays a crucial role in English skills and makes those skills meaningful (Zuhriyah, 2017). English is a foreign language in Taiwan. Students learn the language based on conscious classroom instruction as a subject tested by teachers in school, which cannot be learned subconsciously in a natural setting. After leaving the classroom, students are completely exposed to Chinese language environments. Therefore, grammar instruction is needed in formal education, particularly for English low- achievers who need to properly and purposefully acquire grammar knowledge.

### *B. PBL Approach*

The PBL, known as a curriculum approach, originated in medical school education in Canada (Barrows, 1996). Later, this approach has been applied in different fields and proved to be effective in teaching and learning (Azman & Shin, 2012; Peters, 2010; Wong & Lam, 2007). Its characteristics include student-centered learning, small groups learning, minimal teaching, ill-structured problems proposed at the outset for skill development and used as the vehicle to independently develop problem-solving schemata. During the process analytical and critical thinking is strengthened, and new information acquired through self-directed learning as a lifelong habit (Barrows, 1996). According to Barrows (2002), PBL is a learning approach which uses real-world problems as a starting point for the acquisition and incorporation of new knowledge. It is also a learner-oriented instructional approach with the goal to develop problem-solving skills, takes responsibilities for team work, and eventually, cultivates self-directed learning disposition as a sustainable learning habit (Козлова, 2011; Neville & Britt, 2008). In other words, in a PBL classroom, obviously, the responsibilities of learners for learning are multiplied. The learning style is active instead of passive. In addition, the role of the instructor simply acts as a facilitator or coach to encourage learners to discover the knowledge for themselves through interacting with different resources (Larsson, 2001; Ng Chin Leoong, 2009; Zuhriyah, 2017).

### *C. Rationale for Using PBL in English Class*

The PBL, a constructivist educational approach suitable for all levels of education, is a successful instructional approach for English language learners (Boothe, Vaughn, Hill, & Hill, 2011; Olssen, 1996). The characteristics of this paradigm and pedagogical strategies are conducive to authentic language learning experiences and information literacy for learners (Boothe et al., 2011). In a PBL classroom, the proposed ill-structured problems are sophisticatedly designed to address the expected learning results. When engaging in discussing the problems, students' prior-knowledge in their native language may equip them to notionally deal with these problems (Boothe et al., 2011), which corresponds with "Conceptual knowledge developed in one language helps to make input in the other language comprehensible" claimed by Cummins (2000, p. 39). Additionally, PBL sustains the Natural approach (Boothe et al., 2011). The Natural approach proposed by Krashen (1988) allows students error-committing without undue stress on error correction to reinforce new language acquisition. PBL sustains this approach because it is different from a traditional classroom where errors cannot be tolerated. Moreover, collaboration and hands-on learning which can decrease the affective filters as well as increase comprehensible input are also important features in PBL. The use of PBL in language classroom not only strengthens language skills but also content knowledge (Boothe et al., 2011). Therefore, PBL is a tentative approach that meets the need of this study attempting to find an alternative instructional model different from the traditional lecture-based approach for English low achievers.

### *D. Effects of Previous PBL Research in English Language*

Research studies involved in English learning have manifested that PBL is effective in terms of cultivating students' motivation and enhancing proficiency of English. An action research study conducted in Malaysia to investigate Iraqi students' speaking performance by Keong and Mohammed (2015) indicates that the PBL approach improves the participants' English speaking competence as well as motivates them towards more successful language accomplishments. Moreover, the speaking performance test reveals that the students advance in pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and grammar.

Two quasi-experimental research studies are done by Azman and Shine (2012) and Othman, Shah, & Ismail (2013) in Malaysia. The former examines the attitudes of the university students towards PBL. The finding demonstrates that both motivation and self-confidence of the participant are promoted. The participant self-reported that they were motivated to learn both language and content knowledge through problem-solving. Besides, they are more confident of speaking English for communication and enjoy the collaboration with group members. In general, the participant has a very positive attitude towards PBL claimed by Azman and Shine (2012). The latter applies PBL instruction in an English course to investigate acquisition of course content and language proficiency of the participant. The pre-and-post tests of close test and written test were used to evaluate the outcomes. The finding implies that both PBL group and non-PBL group get improvements in content course in terms of language proficiency and the PBL group displays more improvements than the non-PBL. Besides, the PBL group performs much better than non-PBL in the post-writing test in which support and arguments presented in the essays for each point are richer. (Othman et al., 2013).

In Taiwan, Lin (2011, 2012) also attributes her students' progress in English learning and increased motivation to executing PBL in the English classes. Lin used two English video clips and the Internet which combined with the PBL method to explore the effect of her students' text comprehension and their perceptions of PBL. The outcome shows the students make progress in vocabulary knowledge and they agree that their reading skills are enhanced via PBL instruction. Further, Lin (2017) applies PBL in an English reading course to investigate foreign language learners'

reading comprehension ability, strategy use, and their learning attitudes. The result of the t-test manifests that the participants under PBL instruction whose reading comprehension ability, the ability to identify the subject matter and supportive details, and learning attitude are better than non-PBL students. And their motivation and desire to learn English has been positively affected.

The learning effects of the abovementioned studies prove that PBL model is effective in improving students' capacity for learning English and motivating them towards better language achievements. The current study is inspired by these studies. To improve the learning outcome of low achievers, PBL was adopted to integrate into the English reading course as a vehicle to polish the participant's grammar competence. This approach is a student-centered, small-group, problem-based, collaborative, and self-directed learning approach which provides English low achievers with an opportunity to enable them to rectify their learning habits. The purpose of this study attempts to utilize the PBL model to examine whether or not PBL can boost the low-achievers' grammar competence and motivation to study English. The grammar competence refers to relative pronouns (RPs), RPs as a subject or an object in relative clauses (RCs), and preposition placements in RCs. To fulfill the purpose, the following research questions lead the study:

1. Does the PBL approach improve the student's grammar knowledge about relative clauses in terms of relative pronouns, relative pronouns as a subject and an object, and preposition placements in relative clauses?
2. Does the PBL approach enhance the student's learning motivation in studying English in terms of engagement and involvement in learning process in the English class?

### III. METHOD

#### A. Participants

In total, 50 students who took Freshman English Reading joined this pilot study, excluding the 3 students who did not take both pre- and post- tests. The participants who had studied English approximately 9-12 years were divided into 7 teams, 6-8 students in one team with a leader. They were at ages 18-21 and all of them spoke Chinese. None of them were English majors. They were mainly from the Colleges of Business, Journalism & Communication, Engineering, and Arts. Their English proficiency was grouped at the pre-intermediate level based on their scores of the English subject in the General Scholastic Ability Test held by the Joint University Entrance Examination in Taiwan. The total grade levels are 15. The highest level is grade 15; the lowest is grade 1. The grade levels of the participants were between grades 1-4, which was classified as the pre-intermediate level by the Office of Academic Affairs of the University.

#### B. Instrumentation

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are used. This study adopts a pre- and post-test research design, a classroom observation checklist, and 2 classwork as tasks. The tests were administered to assess the participant's knowledge about the RCs before and after practicing the PBL instruction. The two tests that are in multiple-choice format are designed with the same questions but both the questions and the choices of the answers are randomized, 20 questions for each. The maximum score for each test was 100, with each correct response value five points. The classroom observation checklist done by the instructor was used to record what happened during the class. The 2 tasks completed by the participant are used as an indicator to gauge their engagement levels as well as learning achievements. Task 1 requires the participant to offer solutions to the problem the protagonist mentioned in the scenario encounters, task 2 to find out 3RCs from the assigned article and make 3 RCs. Also, the Individual Background Questionnaire is developed to obtain the participant's demographic information, such as their genders, majors, duration for studying English, and English proficiency level, etc.

#### C. PBL Treatment and Steps Taken

This project lasted for 4 weeks with duration of 100 minutes for each week. The general instructional steps taken for implementing PBL instruction are as follows:

First, the participants were grouped into small teams, 6-8 students in one team with a leader.

Second, the instructor proposed the problem to be discussed and distributed the same scenario to each team. The scenario (Appendix A) created by the instructor was related to the article assigned from the textbook. The described situation could happen to the participant in the real world. According to the problem described in it, the 7 teams were required to offer solutions to the problem as one of the tasks.

Third, each team participants offered and discussed the possible solutions; meanwhile, the team leader took down the discussion result. The use of Chinese as a medium for communication was allowed to invite them to engage in discussion.

Fourth, each team studied the article and team members helped one another to solve problems they had about the article, such as new words and grammar rules. They were encouraged to utilize different resources to tackle the problems, such as online resources. They were required to identify the RCs in the assigned article and copy them to fulfill part of task 2. In addition, they were demanded to make up 3 RC sentences which must use a relative pronoun (RP) as a subject, as an object, and a preposition placement that must place in the front of the RP in RCs respectively to complete task 2.



Fifth, the instructor acting as a facilitator circulated the classroom to guide the participant to solve their problems. For example, two video clips introducing RCs from Voicetube were given for them to self-discover about RCs as a purpose to review their knowledge about RCs and self-correct misconceptions about RCs if any.

Sixth, each team made an oral presentation to share the solution to the scenario and presented the RCs they found from the article and the 3 RCs made by them.

*D. Data Collection Procedure*

A pretest was administered before implementing PBL instruction as a basis to compare with the posttest. The 7 team participants were given the same scenario and were asked to discuss and offer the possible solutions; meanwhile, the team leader took down the discussion result for the later oral presentation. The result was collected for the later analysis. During the discussion, the instructor went around the classroom to observe and record what happened for later assessment and provided the assistance when necessary. The posttest was conducted one week after the treatment to appraise the participant’s knowledge retention and learning achievement.

*E. Data Analysis*

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used including classroom observations, assigned tasks, and pre- and post-tests. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare the difference of pretest and posttest. The discoveries of classroom observations and the 2 tasks were categorized and listed to analyze the participant’s intensity of motivation and grammar competence.

IV. RESULT

*A. Analysis of the Effect of Student’s Proficiency on Grammar*

Research question 1 examines if the PBL treatment enhances the learning effect of the participant in RCs in terms of RPs, RPs as a subject and an object in RCs, and preposition placements in RCs. The pretest-and-posttest was administered. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores of the tests. The result of t-tests demonstrates that there is a significant difference in the scores for the pretest (M = 37.80, SD = 15.391) and the posttest (M = 49.50, SD=18.105);  $t(49) = -4.846, p = 0.000$  as presented on the following Table 1. The result suggests that the PBL approach have a positive influence on the performance of the participant. Specially, it suggests that after applying the PBL instruction, the participant makes progress in grammar knowledge of the RCs. Apart from the progress making, the result of the posttest also implies that the participants have difficulty in the preposition placement in RCs which gets the lowest correct rate, followed by *whose* as a RP for the personal possession, unfamiliar vocabulary as the relative pronoun antecedent takes the third place, and only *that* can be used as the RP followed. Some of them have trouble in subject-verb agreement and verb tenses in RCs and main clauses.

TABLE I  
 PAIRED SAMPLES TESTS FOR RELATIVE CLAUSES TESTS (N=50)

	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest/Posttest	37.80/49.50	15.39/18.11	-4.846	49	0.000

Note. \* $p < .05$

In addition, the participants are required to find out three RCs from the article assigned from the textbook and made three sentences in the relative clause (RC) patterns on the team-basis. It is not difficult at all for the 7 teams to pick out 3 RCs from the article. None of them failed to accomplish the task. Since these sentences are copied from the article and examined by the instruction, it seems unnecessary to list them on this paper. As for the three sentences they are required to make they must use a RP as subject and as an object for each; a RP as the object of a preposition for the third sentence. The preposition must be placed in the front of the RP, and the RP cannot be omitted. According to the tasks demonstrated by the 7 teams before the class dismissed, all the sentences are correct based on the above-said rules in spite of a few errors found about preposition placements in RCs, subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, and *whose* as a RP. These errors are amended immediately after giving hints to them. Compared the result with the posttest, the participants denote their improvements in RCs though the diction in the sentences is daily use vocabulary. Astonishingly, the mistaken usage about the preposition placement in the front of the RP getting the lowest correct rate is self-corrected with minimal teaching. One of the teams from College of Journalism & Communication find 3 interesting video clips from Youtube which are beneficial to review their knowledge about RCs. Appendix B indicates the RCs made by the participant.

*B. Analysis of the Effect of Student’s Motivation on Learning English*

Research question 2 investigates whether the participant’s learning motivation is enhanced or not. To obtain the data, a classroom observation checklist and a scenario used to get solutions are used to collect the information. The Classroom Observation Checklist for Student Engagement (Appendix C) is developed to keep the records. As observed, the teams composed of the participants from the Colleges of Business, Journalism & Communication, and Arts whose

major is Dance are more enthusiastic in discussion. These participants exhibit a very positive attitude. Surprisingly, some of the participants from College of Business tried to speak English to discuss with their members. And the participants whose major was Dance were delightful to share their answers and express innovative ideas without any hesitation. The dynamic atmosphere was full of the classroom. On the other hand, the participants from Arts whose major was Chinese Music appeared to be of no interest and boredom. They would rather do nothing, slide their smart phones, or sit there quietly than participating in discussion with their members. Only when the instructor was approaching them, they pretended to talk with their peers. They displayed a perfunctory and negative attitude. The participants for College of Engineering are moderate. They finished the task on time though they did not attend the discussion vigorously. They sought assistance from outside when they did not know what and how to do.

The solutions for oral presentations used as an indicator to evaluate the participant's engagement are classified into 7 categories and listed on Appendix D. The categories from the 1<sup>st</sup> category to the 7<sup>th</sup> contains the solutions to keep a job, to improve learning strategies, to find time for study, to stay awake, to find financial support, solutions unrealistic and erroneous, and the miscellaneous. "Adjust work shifts" under the first category is proposed with the highest frequency among the 7 categories. It seems that the participants are most concerned to stay employed. Eleven solutions are proposed in this category. The second category, solutions to improve learning strategies, talks about how to enhance learning effects. Among them, the suggestion not to take morning classes and withdraw a couple classes is strongly recommended. Other suggestions comprise asking help from teachers and classmates, forming study groups, quitting the job and concentration on study, etc. The third, solutions to find time for study, focuses on time management. Discovering time from a busy schedule to study is advised. The fourth, solutions to stay awake, energy drink and alarm clocks are highly recommended. The fifth, solutions to find financial support, comes up with suggestions such as applying for student loans, borrowing money from friends, marrying to a rich woman and working hard to make tuition. The sixth, solutions unrealistic and erroneous, are solutions that cannot come true and are not feasible, like cheating in exams, making a fake diploma, and asking assistance from Doraemon, a character of animation that is omnipotent. The last category, the miscellaneous, offers the opinions such as workout and making decision in either staying in school or employed. More details can be found from Appendix D.

## V. DISCUSSION

Although the participants make significant progress in grammar knowledge in terms of RCs, the result of the test indicates that the weakness they have in the preposition placement in RCs, the usage of *whose* as a RP for the personal possession, unknown vocabulary as the relative pronoun antecedent, the case where only *that* can be used as the RP, and subject-verb agreement in sentences in the posttest. The size of vocabulary is the foundation for mastering English. For these participants whose English proficient level is recognized as pre-intermediate, their vocabulary knowledge, of course, is limited. The unknown vocabulary blocks their judgement to decide which RP should be adopted. There is neither so-called verb conjugation nor the concept of subject-verb agreement in sentences in the Chinese language. They do not get accustomed to the usage unless they are reminded. The participants understand the rules how to use a RP to replace people and non-people as a subject or an object in RC sentences but they become confused when the sentences that are not presented in the way they are familiar with. For example, the sentence "That storybook which you looked at was very interesting." was easier than "That storybook at which you looked was very interesting." for them to comprehend. Similarly, when encountering *whose* as a RP, they do not have enough experiences to recognize immediately this "whose" was a RP in RCs. The difficulty they had resulted from their poor knowledge in vocabulary and grammar with respect to RCs. This also reminds English teachers who focus on equipping students with linguistic knowledge such as vocabulary and grammar to prepare them for taking English tests of an efficient teaching method that should be adopted to make learning more effective. Despite the difficulties shown, the participant does improve their grammar competence under PBL instruction overall. The consequence is consistent with Zuhriyah's study (2017), which sustains that there is an improvement on students' grammar ability.

Conspicuously, the engagement level of the participants is increased by the scenario-based strategy. The scenario describes the story which possible takes place around the participant. As witnessed, most of them joined discussion vigorously during which they mediated and compromised their opinions with their team members. They reached a consensus finally. During the process, their social interaction skills certainly are positively influenced (Larsson, 2001). According to the solutions suggested, 11 solutions are proposed to stay hired, which spotlights their concern most. All 7 teams unanimously uphold the notion, *Adjust work shifts*. The possible reason for this is that most of them have a part-time job with different reasons but they have the same topic to tempt them to discuss the scenario with their team members. The similar story might happen to them or people around them. There is a need for them to talk about, which is the incentive to make them talk. The story might happen in their real lives, which is different from the traditional classroom context considered to be boring and monotonous due to untruthful events or useless skills repeated and taught. The result also reveals that the participant seems to be practical. Staying employed to make money is critical. They put more emphasis on employment than on studies. This maybe reflects their real life experiences.

The tasks which focus on grammar knowledge regarding RCs are employed as a stimulus to learn grammatical skills. Triggered by such a heated discussion on the team-oriented environment, when asked to find out 3 RCs and make 3 RCs, the participant shows a positive manner. They have to know exactly what the RC is. They realize that they have to

be responsible for their learning to solve the problem. They work collaboratively to fulfill the tasks by self-directed discovery. They start to browse on-line resources where tremendous information is provided. They have to think critically to filter the solutions. After finding the potential solutions, they have to discuss with their members to decide the appropriate solutions for the team to make the oral presentation ready. During the process, they can self-monitor their learning and self-assess their performances and the critical-thinking skill is strengthened as well. In such a circumstance, their knowledge is being instilled subconsciously as well as motivation enhanced by hand-on and collaborative learning. The result echoes the studies of Bauer, Bauer, Revelt, and Kight (2002) and Boothe et al. (2011). They declare collaboration decreases learners' anxiety and increases their level of relaxation and inclusion in the class, which advances their motivation. Under PBL instruction, the participants' learning habits have been changed. They tend to join discussions and interact with their peers more. They are not passive receivers of knowledge anymore; instead they are more independent to explore knowledge with a critical attitude. By doing so, their self-esteem is lifted.

VI. CONCLUSION

The PBL is an effectual model verified by this study according to the finding. The English low-achievers are successfully motivated by scenario-based strategy which activates their interest and desire to participate in discussion. This student-centered approach empowers them to explore knowledge in their own pace. They feel anxiety-free and comfortable to navigate in the Internet to search the information to best fit their problems, such as RCs. During the process, they are exposed themselves to an English rich environment where they are forced to read in English and make judgements to choose the information they need. Accordingly, not only their knowledge about RSs improves but also the reading skill more or less. The study proves that an active learning manner in learning English is needed. It also contributes to English educators an alternative to guide low-achievers to break through their predicaments and foster their independent learning skills under PBL instruction. This study only lasted for 4 weeks. A longer study duration is recommended to guide students to acquire other grammar knowledge such as verb conjugation, comparative and superlative adjectives, and conditional sentences to examine learning outcomes. A study with a control group and an experimental group is suggested to implement PBL to compare the learning effects of both groups.

APPENDIX A. SCENARIO

Li Muming is known as a punctual person in the place where he works. Both his colleagues and boss are very nice to him. He always comes to work on time, rain or shine, and hardly ever asks for a leave. Owing to his excellent performance, it does not take long for him to get a salary raise. He is very happy there.

However, Li Muming is late for classes pretty often. He often works the night shifts, which makes him oversleep. As a result, he is late for class. Even when he is in class, he has low energy; he seldom interacts with his classmates; he does not do well at school. His poor school performance makes him feel great pressure and he is definitely not happy at school at all!

Nevertheless, Li Muming does not want to give up his job as well as his studies. How can you help him?

APPENDIX B. RELATIVE CLAUSES MADE BY THE 7 TEAMS

Team 1	(1) My father is the architect who built our house. (2) Jane is the most beautiful woman that I have ever seen. (3) The girl at whom you are looking is my sister.
Team 2	(1) John is my classmate whose mother is a doctor. (2) I don't know whom that boy is. (3) The tree under which they went camping was the tallest in the park.
Team 3	(1) I know a lot of my classmates who live close to the school. (2) The smart phone which my parent gave me as a gift breaks down. (3) Do you know the girl to whom Tom is talking to?
Team 4	(1) I know a man whose father is your boss. (2) The restaurant where we went for is not good. (3) This is the pond in which we liked to swim.
Team 5	(1) The woman who is speaking English is my English teacher. (2) The woman whom you talked to just now is my teacher. (3) The book for which you are looking is missing.
Team 6	(1) I don't like people who are unfriendly. (2) Do you find the purse which you lost yesterday? (3) The issue about which we talked is solved.
Team 7	(1) The girl who is singing is my friend. (2) The friend whom I visited was not home. (3) The friend for whom you are looking is away from home.

APPENDIX C. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Respond to each statement using the following scale: 1= Meets Expectation; 2= Acceptable but Needs Improvement;

3= Happened during Class. The behavior meets the statement is ticked.

Statement	Team 1			Team 2			Team 3			Team 4			Team 5			Team 6			Team 7					
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3			
1. The team leader leads the group discussion and keeps notes.	v			v			v			v			v			v						v		
2. Team members show interest and enthusiasm.	v			v			v			v			v			v								
3. Team members raise questions.	v			v			v			v			v			v						v		
4. Online resources are used to find out answers as well as seek help from the teacher.	v			v			v			v			v			v						v		
5. Team members are engaged and active.	v			v			v			v			v			v								
6. Team members carefully listen to peer questions or opinions and negotiate the possible answers (critical thinking).	v				v		v			v				v		v								
7. Team members can stay in the assigned area to discuss on the topic instead of missing.	v			v			v			v			v			v						v		
8. Collaboration is found during discussion.	v			v			v			v			v			v							v	
9. The team can finish the task on time.	v			v			v			v			v			v								
10. English is used or partly used as the medium for discussion.		v			v																			
11. Team members are passive and stay silent or indifferent for most of the time.																v								v
12. Team members display boredom and seem unwilling to participate in discussion.																v								v
13. Time is not enough to finish the task.																v								v
14. Team members work independently.																v								v
P.S. Colleges of Business: T1 and T2; Journalism & Communication: T3 and T4; Engineering: T5; Arts: T6 and T7																								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T6 that majors in Dancing is more active than T7.; They enjoy sharing the solutions with their members.</li> <li>• T7 that majors in Chinese Music display boredom and unwilling to participate in discussion.</li> <li>• T1 leader guides members to discuss and find the solutions.</li> <li>• T2 members are better in negotiating with their counterparts (Think critically).</li> <li>• T3 finds 3 good video clips understood easily, related to RCs from Youtube. The animation is impressive. The RC song is easy to learn.</li> <li>• T5 seeks help from other teams in spite of passiveness.</li> </ul>																								

#### APPENDIX D. SOLUTIONS OFFERED BY THE TEAMS TO THE VIRTUAL ROLE

A. Solutions to keep a job	
1. Adjust work shifts.	(7)
2. Find another part-time job.	(4)
3. Transfer to another school nearby his work location.	(2)
4. Don't work on night shifts.	(2)
5. Work on weekends instead of weekdays.	(2)
6. Cut down on the working hours.	(1)
7. Move to a place where is close to school.	(1)
8. Drop out of school.	(1)
9. Find a job during summer and winter vacations instead of school time.	(1)
10. Find a part-time on campus instead of outside.	(1)
11. Have someone else to substitute for the virtual role whenever needed.	(1)
B. Solutions to improve learning strategies	
1. Avoid taking morning classes and withdrawing a couple of classes.	(6)
2. Ask help from classmates to make up the missed classes or borrow notes from them.	(3)
3. Build good relationship with classmates and interact with them more.	(3)
4. Have a good rest to study hard.	(2)
5. Ask help from teachers.	(1)
6. Form a study group and discuss schoolwork with peers instead of studying alone.	(1)
7. Quit the job and focus on study.	(1)
8. Record teachers' instruction and review it after having a good rest.	(1)
C. Solutions to find time for study	
1. Manage time wisely for study.	(3)
2. Find time to study while on duty.	(1)
3. Make good use of break time to study.	(1)
D. Solutions to stay awake	
1. Have more energy drink to stay awake during the class.	(6)
2. Have many alarm clocks around to wake the virtual role up.	(3)
E. Solutions to find financial support	
1. Apply for a student loan.	(4)
2. Marry to a rich woman.	(1)
3. Borrow money from friends.	(1)
4. Take a couple of years off from school and work hard to make tuition.	(1)
F. Solutions unrealistic or erroneous	
1. Ask help from Doraemon.	(1)
2. Make a fake diploma to get a better job.	(1)
3. Cheat in exams to achieve good grades.	(1)
G. The miscellaneous	
1. Workout and have interactions with family and friends to reduce the pressure.	(1)
2. Do not care what others think of you and be brave to be yourself.	(1)
3. Make a choice: stay in school or keep the job.	(1)

\*The number in the parentheses indicates the frequency of the statement suggested by the participants on a team-basis.

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# Bottom-up vs Top-down Model: The Perception of Reading Strategies among Thai University Students

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**Abstract**—Reading strategies have been declared as a vital role in reading comprehension among the students whose English is their second or foreign language. The use of reading strategies would help the learners to deeper understand the text so that they could achieve their tasks. The present study then investigates the use of reading strategies by focusing on the bottom-up and top-down models for both academic and business texts among Thai students in tertiary level. Two hundred-seventy non-simple random undergraduate students participated in this study. The forty-five-item questionnaire was delivered to the participants. The findings were that top-down reading strategies were used the most for both academic and business reading, whereas bottom-up reading strategies were reported the least on both kinds of text. The results suggest that larger numbers of participants, correction between the proficiency and the use of strategies, in-depth interview, and strategies used between low and high proficient readers should be examined.

**Index Terms**—top-down model, bottom-up model, academic text, business text

## I. INTRODUCTION

English plays a vital role for all society around this planet. Not only speaking, writing or listening, but reading is also a very necessary for those who prefer to communicate effectively. Chawwang (2008) stated that reading is the most important skill because it is the useful tool for acquiring knowledge. Used in both studying and living life, English is a lifelong skill for many people (Kucukoglu, 2013). Then, without ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfilment and job success inevitably will be lost (Anderson et al., 1985). If students expect to get the deepest understanding of what they read, they should have the techniques or strategies for reading. The ability to read proficiently is significantly related to how much a person can achieve in his or her personal and professional life (Block & Israel, 2005).

Reading can also serve many purposes. Firstly, it makes the reader relax. Lots of people prefer to read their favorite books in their spare time. Secondly, reading is crucial for business purposes. The business people face a ton of emails in their daily work. The reading skill then supports a lot on this interaction. Lastly, the readers may read for knowledge. For example, the students are usually required to read the journals or academic books in all courses they registered. The stated reading purposes are some reasons that present how important the reading skill is. In Thailand, reading is also very important for Thai people, especially English reading. That is because English is a medium language for Thai people for cooperating with the neighbors in AEC (Asean Economics Community) countries and other foreign countries which use English for communicating in various purposes.

However, reading is still considered a difficult task for most of Thai people. According to PISA (2015), the report from the program for international student assessment showed that Thailand shared of low achievers in reading below the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average which is about 20% of students in OECD countries. The reports from EF EPI (2017) also indicated that English proficiency of Thais is very low and below the average.

The difficulties in reading among Thais are also found in many previous studies. Hayikaleng, Nair & Krishnasamy (2016) also comment that Thai students usually face difficulty when they read the academic books that is consistent with the study of Kasemsap & Lee (2015) who also stated that Thai students are weak in English reading comprehension. Then, there are some scholars who searched on the reasons why reading is a difficult task among Thai people. Chawwang (2008) investigated the English problems among Thai students. The results showed that the problems cover three areas including sentence structure, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Another idea comes from Pangsapa (2012) who did a research on the English reading problems among Thai editorial staff. Her findings revealed that four main reading problems includes not understanding technical words meaning, not knowing the word meaning, facing with complex and very long sentences with many dependent clauses or paragraphs, and unfamiliar words.

Therefore, the reading strategies are important and useful for solving these reading problems or difficulties. Garner (1987) stated that reading strategies are as generally deliberate, playful activities undertaken by active learners, many times to remedy perceived cognitive failure. According to Brown (2007a), reading strategies could be defined as the specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular ends, planned designs

for controlling and manipulating certain information. There are many strategies that are useful for reading comprehension. However, the present study is designed to investigate the top-down and bottom up reading strategies among Thai tertiary students when they read academic and business texts.

#### A. *Top-down Model*

The concept of this strategy is about guessing the meaning of the target reading material. Goodman (1971) firstly comment on top-down model as “a psycholinguistic guessing game”, by showing that the readers predict text’s meaning primarily based on their existing or background knowledge. Moreover, this model is applied when readers interpret assumptions and draw inference or they need to find out the overall purpose of the text or to get main ideas of the text (Nuttall, 1996). In addition, the top-down model is recognized under cognitive process that the processing of a text begins in the mind of the reader. The meaning which is retrieved from the reader’s knowledge, expectation, assumption, and questions to the text is reconfirmed by identifying the letters and words appeared on the text (Aebersold & Field, 1997). In the other words, the readers activate their experience and background or world knowledge in order to understand the text. Correll & Eisterhold (1998) also discussed that reader’s prediction and background knowledge play a vital role in this model. Using as a tool to predict the text, construct a goal of reading, and self-monitor, this model is very much like the general strategies (Block, 1986) or global strategies (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001). In addition, this model is still considered as concept-driven and dependent upon what the reader brings to the text which could be their own intelligence and experience to understand a text (Brown, 2007b; Abbott, 2010; and Lui, 2010).

#### B. *Bottom-up Model*

This model is declared as a decoding process of constructing meaning at the “bottom”, e.g. letters or words to the larger units at “the top”, e.g. phrases, clauses, and intersentential linkages (Carrell & Eistenhold, 1983). Readers begin with decoding letters, words, and syntactic features of a text, then they build textual meaning. They work mainly from the text but ignore reader’s prior or background knowledge. Another idea towards this model is from Dole et al. (1991). They stated that this model refers to a single-direction part-to-whole processing of a written or printed text. It is also known as “decoding”. Moreover, this model is defined as assembling the reading jigsaw of text by correcting the right pieces together. By putting reading puzzle or individual units of text together, it helps constructing an overall interpretation of the text (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Moreover, Brown (2007b) defined bottom-up model as using metal data-processing device to put linguistic signal (letters morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, and discourse makers) in order. In addition, Eunjeo (2009) comment that this model is defined as “focusing on individual words, pausing for grammatical difficulties and repeated readings. Finally, Dambacher (2010) discussed that bottom-up model processes account for elaboration of sensory signals and therefore reflect operations giving rise to the retrieval of a word’s mental representation.

#### C. *Research Objectives*

- 1) To investigate the types and frequency used of reading strategies towards academic texts based on top-down and bottom-up model among university students in Thailand.
- 2) To investigate the types and frequency used of reading strategies towards business texts based on top-down and bottom-up model among university students in Thailand.
- 3) To compare the reading strategies the participants used between academic and business texts.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEWS

Some scholars (Block, 1986; Carrell, 1989; and Kong, 2006) divided reading strategies into two main groups. The first group is about bottom-up or local strategies which are related to the letters, words, and text information, and top-down or global strategies which are related to background knowledge, text gist, and textual organization. Another group consists of cognitive strategies or strategies that are related to the target language and metacognitive strategies which concern about self-management and self-regulation. The present study then focus on the first group which is about bottom-up and top-down strategies.

Related to bottom-up and top-down models of reading strategies, there are many previous studies conducted on the field. Oranpattanachai (2010) investigated the effect of reading proficiency on the reading process of Thai pre-engineering students. The finding revealed that the differences between the high and low proficiency readers were the frequency of perceived strategy use and the frequency of perceived top-down strategy use. Yildiz-Genc (2009) examined the relationship between L1 and L2 reading focusing on the nature of reading strategies employed by Turkish EFL learners in their L1 and L2. The results showed that the participants used both bottom-up and top-down strategies while reading the L2 text. However, it was observed that more top-down strategies were employed in both L1 and L2, whereas bottom-up strategies were less in number and variety. The results from the work of Geladari, Griva & Mastrothanas (2010) also showed that proficiency readers used a great diversity of top-down strategies which is different from the low level readers who appear to rely on bottom-up strategies for word decoding and are ignorant of the reading process. Boonkongsaen, Sujinpram & Verapreyagoon (2016) examined the strategies used in English reading by Thai science students. The finding showed that the participants likely rely on “bottom-up” strategies. Some researchers (Huang, Chern, & Lin, 2009; Yuksel & Yuksel, 2012; Surattanasing & Gampner, 2013; Saengpakdeejit,

2014; Nisbet & Huang, 2015; Wright, 2015; Yousefian, 2015; and Zare & Maftoon, 2015) still investigated the reading strategies among the students based on the problem-solving strategies that is referred to bottom-up, global strategies that is related to top-down, and supporting strategies that is mentioned to bottom-up (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002).

### III. RESEARCH METHOD

#### A. Participants

Being members of the faculty of Management Sciences and faculty of Economics, a non-random sample 270 undergraduate Thai university students are recruited to participate in the present study. They are 35 males (25.90%) and 100 females (74.10%) from the faculty of Economics and 25 males (14.82%), 114 females (84.44%) and 3 LGBT (0.74%) from the faculty of Management Sciences. Those who are from the faculty of Management Sciences took an Analytical Reading for Business course which is about business reading, whereas Technical English course which is about academic reading was enrolled by the members of the faculty of Economics.

#### B. Instrument

Adopted from Fevziye (2006) who studied the awareness of reading strategies among the university students in Turkey, the questionnaire used in the present study was designed to gain the data about reading strategies by using bottom-up or top-down strategies among Thai undergraduate students. Consisted of two parts that are personal information and reading strategies used, the questionnaire presents 45 items with 15 bottom-up strategies and 30 top-down strategies divided into three sections including “strategies used before reading a text (pre-reading)”, “strategies used while reading a text (while-reading)”, and “strategies used after reading a text (post-reading)”. The subjects are requested to rate the frequency of use for each strategy with a five-point Likert Scale ranging from (1) never or not sure, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, and (5) almost always.

#### C. Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was delivered to each participant to complete at the end of the course. The researcher explained that the rating has no effect on their final grade. Then, they should answer or rate their opinion truly. Moreover, the participants were informed that their rating would be benefit for developing the reading course. The data gained from the questionnaire was then analyzed by using descriptive analysis.

### IV. RESULTS

TABLE I  
THE MOST USED STRATEGIES IN READING ACADEMIC TEXT

No.	Reading strategy	Mean	SD
1	Visuals (graphs, pictures, & tables) are important for my reading.	3.87	1.00
2	I look at the comprehension questions before reading the text.	3.85	1.13
3	I change reading speed depending on the difficulty of a text.	3.76	1.02
4	I use my background knowledge about the topic for my reading.	3.71	0.94
5	I consider the title to predict the content.	3.66	0.93

Table 1 presents the five most used strategies in academic reading. They are 1) “visuals that are included graphs, pictures, and tables are important for my reading” that is used before reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, 2) “I look at the comprehension questions before reading the text” that is used while reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, 3) “I change reading speed depending on the difficulty of a text” that is used while reading a text and is under the bottom-up strategy, 4) “I use my background knowledge about the topic for my reading” that is used before reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, and 5) “I consider the title to predict the content” that is used before reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, respectively. Then, according to the average scores on the five-point Likert scale (1.0 - 2.4 = low use, 2.5 - 3.4 = medium use, and 3.5 - 5.0 = high use), the average score of all five most used strategies were defined as high use.



TABLE II.  
THE LEAST USED STRATEGIES IN READING ACADEMIC TEXT

No.	Reading strategy	Mean	SD
1	I read aloud the entire text.	2.26	1.08
2	After reading the text in detail, I evaluate the text and the writer's viewpoint.	2.36	0.99
3	I try to understand the text without translating it into my native language (Thai).	2.50	1.18
4	I use slashes to divide a sentence grammatically.	2.56	1.09
5	If I face the difficult parts, I read aloud.	2.62	1.29

Table 2 demonstrates the five least used strategies in academic reading. According to the average scores on the five-point Likert scale, the average mean score of the first two least use “I read aloud the entire text” that is used while reading a text and is under the bottom-up strategy, and “after reading the text in detail, I evaluate the text and the writer’s viewpoint” that is used after reading a text and is under the top-down strategy were defined as low use. Then, the remains, “I try to understand the text without translating it into my native language” that is used while reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, “I use slashes to divide a sentence grammatically” that is used while reading a text and is under the bottom-up strategy, and “If I face the difficult parts, I read aloud” that is used while reading a text and is under the bottom-up strategy were defined as medium use.

TABLE III  
THE MOST USED STRATEGIES IN READING BUSINESS TEXT

No.	Reading strategy	Mean	SD
1	I consider title to predict the content.	3.91	0.91
2	I use my background knowledge about the topic for my reading.	3.88	0.88
3	Visuals (graphs, pictures, & tables) are important for my reading.	3.85	0.96
4	I link the content with what I already know.	3.74	0.84
5	I underline important parts.	3.72	1.06

Table 3 presents the five most used strategies in business reading. They are 1) “I consider title to predict the content” that is used before reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, 2) I use my background knowledge about the topic for my reading” that is used before reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, 3) “visuals that are included graphs, pictures, and tables are important for my reading” that is used before reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, 4) “I link the content with what I already know” that is used while reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, and 5) “I underline important parts” that is used while reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, respectively. Then, according to the average scores on the five-point Likert scale, the average score of all five most used strategies were defined as high use.

TABLE IV  
THE LEAST USED STRATEGIES IN READING BUSINESS TEXT

No.	Reading strategy	Mean	SD
1	I read aloud the entire text.	2.28	0.96
2	After reading the text in detail, I evaluate the text and the writer's viewpoint.	2.51	0.92
3	I pay attention on tenses.	2.52	0.95
4	I use slashes to divide a sentence grammatically.	2.54	1.02
5	I ask questions related to the text or what I have read.	2.70	0.82

Table 4 demonstrates the five least used strategies in business reading. The first least used were “I read aloud the entire text” that is used while reading a text and is under the bottom-up strategy was reported as a low use, whereas “after reading the text in detail, I evaluate the text and the writer’s viewpoint” that is used after reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, “I pay attention on tenses” that is used while reading a text and is under the bottom-up strategy, “I use slashes to divide a sentence grammatically” that is used while reading a text and is under the bottom-up strategy, and “I ask questions related to the text or what I have read” that is used after reading a text and is under the top-down strategy, were defined as medium use.

V. DISCUSSION

According to the findings of the present study, the reading strategies that were employed the most on both academic and business texts by the participants are the top-down strategies. Among the five most strategies, four top-down

strategies were employed when the participants read the academic texts, whereas five top-down strategies were used during reading the business texts. By using the top-down strategies, the participants predicted the information on the text, and then used their own background knowledge or experiences to comprehend the texts (Goodman, 1971; Block, 1986; Grabe, 1991; Correll & Eisterhold, 1998; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001; and Kong, 2006). Indicated as the most strategy used, the participants have their purposes in their mind by guessing what the idea or content of the text is going to be about together with using their background knowledge to comprehend and overview the text (Yousefian, 2015). The finding of the present study then is relevant with those appeared on the studies of Huang, Chern, & Lin (2009); Oranpattanachai (2010); Yousefian (2015); Boonkongsaeen, Sujinpram, & Verapreyagoon (2016); and Yildiz-Genc (2009). Huang, Chern, & Lin (2009) discussed on their findings that the use of reading strategies helps the learners in gaining the comprehension and the global strategies (top-down strategies) supported a lot in better comprehending, especially for those who are not proficient. Yildiz-Genc (2009) discussed that by using more top-down strategies in L2 reading, L2 readers may try to avoid the negative effects of limited L2 proficiency through the use of background knowledge about the topic or even the prediction about the content of the text. Then, Geladari, Griva & Mastrothanas (2010) and Oranpattanachai (2010) comment that high proficiency L2 learners used more top-down strategies than those who are low proficiency. It may imply that the Thai participants who participated in the present study have a proficient reading ability. Moreover, as this model was frequently used on the pre-reading stage (strategies used before reading a text), it may imply that most students seem to have a plan or preparation before reading a text. In the other words, they initially thought about what they are going to face on the reading materials so that they may get an overview towards the ideas stated by the writer.

The least used strategies for both academic and business reading are bottom-up. Most of participants did not like to read aloud, use slashes to divide a sentence grammatically or even pay attention on the tense. The finding of the present study is consistent with the studies of Ledger & Merga, (2018); Yousefian, (2015); Oranpattanachai, (2010); and Yildiz-Genc, (2009). "Reading aloud the entire text" is considered the least used strategy. It may imply that the participants did not see the importance of the oral language in second language. However, there are some scholars who pay attention on the significance of the oral language which is vital in L2 reading. Ninsuwan (2015) stated that reading aloud boosted the students to have more self-confidence to pronounce the different or unfamiliar words and it could build up potential for students to memorize words. Moreover, being the least used strategies for both academic and business reading, bottom-up strategies were less employed while or after reading text. It may imply that by less using the stated strategies, the readers do not want to waste their time while or after reading.

There is no different on the most and least strategies used on both academic and business reading. As revealed on the results, when the Thai university students read both academic and business reading, top-down strategies are the most used, whereas bottom-up strategies are the least used.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In general, the results of the present study suggest that both top-down and bottom-up strategies were employed in all stages including pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. However, top-down strategies were mostly used by both academic and business reading with a high use, whereas bottom-up model was used the least by both academic and business reading with both medium and low uses. In the other words, there is no differences in the most and least uses in reading both academic and business texts. Moreover, the findings of this study provided some insight into the use of reading strategies among Thai university students. It implies that they seem to frequently use reading strategies before they read a text. It means that they have a plan for managing with their tasks or assignments in order to gain a preview of the reading material or a deeper comprehension towards the text. In contrast, the Thai university students less use the reading strategies during and after reading texts. It is suggested that the future research should look at the effects of the reading strategies use at these three stages including pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. Different type of texts plays no impacts on reading strategies usage which appeared on the results that the most and least use of both academic and business readings are the same.

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# Cultural Language and Commercials: Cross-cultural Content Analysis of Commercials between Almarai` and Real California Cheese

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**Abstract**—Advertisements direct the consumers to focus on the products; it changes their mind and persuades them to buy the products which can be done by using certain lexical choices or gestures. Therefore, the researchers will compare two cultures; the Arabs culture especially the Gulf area and the Western culture especially the American culture by using five commercials of Almarai`s company that represents the Arab part with another five American commercials from Real California Cheese company “The Happy cow from California” that represents the American culture. In addition, the researchers will look at commercials which exist in the two parts of the world as “Snickers” and “Philadelphia cheese” where the reader can notice some similarities and differences between the American culture and the Arab culture. The commercials in this paper are specified in food commercials. Finally, the researchers will focus on how the language is used in the commercials and how some of the standard of textuality such as cohesion, coherent and informativity are used.

**Index Terms**—advertisements, Arabs culture, American culture, the standard of textuality

## I. INTRODUCTION

The word advertisement is derived from a Latin verb which means (to turn towards). Advertising communication can be seen as a social activity that functions to sell products. Advertisements lead the consumers to focus on the products; it will change their mind and persuade them to buy them if they really need the product or not. The phenomenon of advertising has been studied in numerous disciplines such as marketing, sociology, cultural anthropology, social psychology, semiotics and cultural studies. The most are that has been studied is “the analysis of mass media advertising content to gain insights into how cultural factors affect advertising strategies and expressions; how cultural values, norms and stereotypes are reflected in advertising; how advertising creates meanings and affects the audience and the larger society over time.” (Bansal, 2009) Advertisements reflect culture according to that there are different advertisements from one country to another. For example, International companies have different advertisements for the same product depending on the country in which the advertisement is shown.

In addition, every commercial conveys some information, it presents a list of information cues which include the price, the packaging or shape, the quality, the guarantees or warranties, performance, safety, components or contents, nutrition, availability, independent research, special offers, company-sponsored research, taste and new ideas.

Downing modifies that studying advertisements as a discourse type “plays with the evocation of imaginative situations has been pointed out recently by several authors” as Carter and Nash, 1990, Cook, 1992, 1994 and Semino, 1997. Also, He explains that Semino has noticed that “advertising is a genre where the setting up of vivid contexts and discourse situations is often crucial to the achievement of the text producers' goals”(Downing, 2000). Downing and Bezuidenhout clarify Cook`s features of context in advertising discourse; starting with the substance which is the physical material of advertisements, music and pictures, paralinguistic which consists of voice, gesture, type and size of letters, situation which is “the properties and relations of objects and people in the vicinity of the text, as perceived by the participants” (Bezuidenhout, 1998), co-text, intertext, participants and function which is the intentions of both senders and receivers. According to him Cook defines discourse as “text and context together, interacting in a way which is perceived as meaningful and unified by the participants (who are both parts of the context and observers of it).” (Downing, 2000) For that Bezuidenhout defines advertisement discourse as text occurring within a specific context.

Also, Bezuidenhout modifies that advertisements “always rely on the relation between the text and its context; the one cannot survive without the other... the context of the advertisement determines how the receivers will perceive the message. The context is embedded in a specific culture, whether it is a language-related culture or a sub-culture.” (Bezuidenhout, 1998) Also, he modifies that the task of discourse analysis is to identify the cultural aspects and determine their role in the persuasive advertisements in view of transferring them in the translation process.

Also, Magalhaes (2005) examines textual and semiotic aspects of advertisements to critical discourse analysis. His focus is on the gender identity, “both the feminine and the masculine are represented discursively in their heterogeneity;

the feminine is represented as a commodified body. The masculine is linked with power, but with fashion too." (Magalhaes, 2005) Gilly (1988) studies the gender portrayals in advertising of the United States, Australia and Mexico; the results show that the use of the sex role is present in the three countries; however, United States and Mexico use the sex role more than Australian.

Magalhaes explains the semiotic aspect as the ways in which photos represent women and men. Also, he divides the semiotic aspect into four different kinds; pictures, abstract shapes, words and letters. Some qualitative researches have used semiotics and other interpretative methods to analyze the linguistic content and the visual content as Barthes (1979), Vestergaard and Schroder (1985) and Williamson (1978). He states that semiotics is a new interdisciplinary approach, "this new approach can be extended to a cross cultural study of advertising to examine both verbal and visual content" (Ahmed, 1996) because it can be used in examining the visual content of advertising.

According to Valmoria, studies which investigate the advertisements content "revolve on two major elements" (Agatep-Valmoria, Myra Vina D., 2007) which can be described as informational advertising 'what is said' and persuasive advertising 'how it is said'; first, the strategy element "commenced in the late 1970s when the Federal Trade Commission of the United States recognized the growing deception in marketplace with regard to the claims of marketers. A survey on deception cases filed in court showed that information in advertisements or lack of it is a way for marketers to exercise the capacity or tendency to deceive" this strategy element studies 'what is said'. The second element is the execution element which is concerned with 'how it is said'.

Resnik and Stern (1977), every commercial transmits some information by transmitting visual and audio stimuli to offer significant indications. They present a list of information cues which contain the price, the packaging or shape, the quality, the guarantees or warranties, performance, safety, components or contents, nutrition, availability, independent research, special offers, company-sponsored research, taste and new ideas.

## II. CULTURES AND ADVERTISEMENTS

Cultures play an important role in the international advertisements. Bansal and Khattri define culture according to Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard as "complex values, ideas, attributes, and other meaningful symbols that serve humans to communicate, interpret, and evaluate as members of society." (Gully, (1996–97)) Also, they mention that Stanton, Etzel, and Walker define culture as "symbols and artifacts" which can be done by the people who live in that culture and these symbols can be moved from generation to generation as determinants and regulators of human behavior.

In addition for that, Yang states that objects, ideas and concepts "are employed by advertisers to manipulate and persuade the receivers to simulate consumer behaviors depicted in the advertisements." (Yang, 2006) He focuses on the translation of cross-cultural advertisements by explaining the gap between the source and the target language in the translation of the international advertisements. He concludes that translation "allows for specific variations when applied to particular cultures, taking into account the specific cultural conventions and the expectations of the members of a particular culture. Thus, as long as the translation of advertisements works admirably, and produces equivalent pragmatic effect, it is more likely to come up with the most persuasive advertisements in their respective language." (Yang, 2006)

Also, Ahmed counts in his research that the previous studies which investigates the cross-culture content analyses of advertising as; Weinberger and Spotts (1989) who analyze the information content of British and U.S. television advertising and they conclude that U.S. advertising contained more information cues than the British advertising. However Resnik and Stern show that the level of information "has increased in U.S. over a decade." Also, Biswas, Olsen and Carlet (1992) compare the content analysis of information content and emotional appeals between United States and France. However, Cutler and Javalgi (1992) who compare between United Kingdom, United States and France in the cross cultural analysis of the visual components of print advertisements. They conclude that there are greater differences between countries than similarities in term of various visual components in advertising.

In addition, Belk and Bryce (1986) make a comparison between Japan and the United States; they try to investigate the culture differences in advertising according to materialism and individualism. The results in their study are that the U.S. advertisements have more emphasis on individual determinism and materialism.

Valmoria, Lin and Salwen (1995) reclassify the information cues into two major parts; rational and emotional. Rational appeal consists of price, quality, performance, safety and guarantees and warranties and emotional appeal consists of taste, packaging and new ideas. Valmoria uses Walliser study to modify some studies on cross cultural comparison of information content (Agatep-Valmoria, Myra Vina D., 2007);

Country Average	Number of Cues	Author
Australia	1.88	Dowling (1980)
Canada	1.47	Johnstone et al. (1987)
China	1.90	Keown et al. (1987)
France	2.40	Schroeder (1991)
Germany	1.95	Walliser (2001)
India	2.30	Ahmed (2000)
Ireland	2.20	Ward and McQuirk (1987)
South Korea	1.86	Keown et al. (1987)

Spain	1.38	Bigne (1993)
US	1.28	Resnik and Stern (1977), Johnstone et al. (1987)

Furthermore, according to Bansal and Khattri (2008) "Cross-cultural analysis of advertising can identify specific differences and similarities in advertising strategies, expressions, and manifest cultural values, norms and stereotypes of the target audience and the larger culture. Such findings may be used to address the question of whether the same strategies and expressions can be used in international advertising, and whether the values, attitudes, desires and tastes of consumers around the world are converging". They divide the world into two cultures; high context cultures which include the Middle East, Asia, India, Africa and South America and low context cultures which include north America and western Europe. Also, they describe the both cultures; starting with the high context culture as more relational, collectivist, intuitive, and contemplative. Also they say that "people in these cultures emphasize interpersonal relationships..." and that "These cultures are collectivist, have a preference for group harmony and consensus to individual accomplishment." (Bansal, Khattri, 2008) However, the low context cultures are more logical, linear, individualistic, and action-oriented. In addition for that Bansal and Khattri use the McDonalds advertisements one from America and another one from India to show that collectivistic is versus individualistic; they modify that the high context cultures are more collectivism than the low context cultures which tend to be more individualism. They explain that the collectivist cultures try to reflect the happy time which is spent with family and friends as their dominant values. However, the individualist culture reflects the "freedom and personal time" to imply "relaxation and time spent by oneself." (Bansal, Khattri, 2008)



So the American AD reflects the image of individuals enjoying themselves with music and relaxation. And from the second AD one can understand that McDonalds is "a family restaurant in India where people can come and have a good time. Hence the user imagery is that of families having fun time at McDonalds" (Bansal, Khattri, 2008). This is a result and reflection of the collective society that India has.

Perry, Motley and Lewis (2008) have written about Islam and advertising. They explain that there a number of studies that examine the role of the religion in the advertisements as Rice and al-Mossawi (2003) who modify the type of the Islamic advertisements that might be appropriate for Muslims using a framework that relates basic Islamic values to advertising.

"Television advertising has a very strong impact on our society. The advertisements in a country actually depict its cultural values." (Jabeen, 2011) Also, Jabeen modifies that different brand use television advertisement and other marketing activities as means of promoting culture. And the reason for that is to develop a prestige of a brand among customers who respect such values in order to make it preferable by the customers. Jabeen gives examples from her region which is Pakistan that there are some advertisements which promote their culture values "while other are depressing them." (Jabeen, 2011) She explains that in their country they have popular and old brands which try to reflect their traditions in the advertisements. She adds that some brands use to make special campaigns during various religious festivities and other occasions. In addition, she explains that most of these advertisements have capitalized the opportunity of featuring traditional family values in their advertisements. These advertisements usually emphasize the importance of joint family system, eating and dining together, getting together at tea time in the evening and respecting our elders to attract customers.

### III. METHODOLOGY

Advertisements direct the consumers to focus on the products; it changes their mind and persuades them to buy the products and this can be done by using certain lexical choices or gestures. Also, the researchers will focus on some of the standard of textuality such as cohesion, coherent and informativity. Also, the researchers will compare two cultures; the Arabs culture especially the Gulf area and the western culture especially the American culture by using five commercials of Almarai's "المراعي" company to represent the Arab part and another five American commercials from Real California Cheese company "The Happy cow from California" to represent the American culture. In addition, the researchers will look at commercials which exist in the two parts of the world as "Snickers" and "Philadelphia cheese" where the reader can notice some similarities and differences between the Arab culture and the American. The commercials in this paper are all food's commercial which are taken from the YouTube site.

### IV. ANALYSIS

#### **Almarai Company: (quality you can trust):**



Almarai<sup>1</sup> is the largest integrated dairy foods company in the Middle East which was established in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1976. As a researcher, I use this company as a model for the Middle East culture especially for the Gulf area because the commercials are done to the Gulf area as the addressee for them. So, for that the commercials do respect their culture. The researchers have five commercials to analyze and to reflect the Arabic Culture from them.

#### **The first Commercial:**

A child who is like five years old is running to his family who are in a picnic. Once the child arrives to his family, the grandmother gives him a glass of Al Maria juice which is supposed to be given to his father not the child. In that moment the father says a proverb which is "the dearest of the son is his son (the grandchild)". Then the narrator says "and the dearest of fruits is the fruit juice" then he says "Almarai juice... as you like it".

This commercial lasts for only seventeen seconds which in the beach with the sound of the sea gull. This commercial represents the family bond (the grandmother, her son, the grandchild and a woman who is maybe the son's wife). Also, It reflects an Arabic proverb which can be used alone to reflect their culture. In addition, the women dress a veil (Hijab) to represent the Islamic Culture. Also, their accents show that the commercial is addressed to Arabs especially who live in the Gulf.

This advertisement is coherent because it is related to reality. Also, cohesion is achieved for example by using the conjunction "and" by the narrative to complete the father's role. This ad is not shown to inform the receiver the content of the juice or the price but it shows that this juice is better than the fruit itself because this juice is what "you" like.

#### **The second commercial:**

A mother who is celebrating her son's graduating in their home. In celebrations, one knows that there are many kinds of foods and deserts but in this commercial the focus is on the juice while the mother is pouring a glass for her son. In that moment, the father arrives from work because he holds a business bag so the son runs to his father and the mother passes a gift to the father without letting the child notice. When the father gives the gift to the son, the mother gives the father a glass of juice and he says: "behind every great man is a great woman". The narrator concludes by saying that "behind every great juice is a great fruit... Al Marai juice... as you like it."

In this commercial, one can notice the happy family and the use of Al Marai juice completes the happiness. Also, it reflects the Arabic Culture where the father is supposed to work and the mother is supposed to take care of the house. In addition the father dresses the traditional customs and the mother dresses the hijab. The coherence and cohesion are achieved in this commercial. The informativity is only the idea that in order to make a great juice one needs great fruits.

#### **The third commercial:**

Well cooked rice, chicken are shown on a table with a narrator who is a woman talking to women saying that in order to cook a tasty food you need to have Al Marai butter, a good cooker, then put the butter in the pan, add a lacing of love and finally you and your family will enjoy the taste. After that, the narrator describes the Al Marai butter by saying "Al Marai is all in all".

<sup>1</sup> See [www.lordofthebrush.com](http://www.lordofthebrush.com)



This commercial lasts for thirty seconds. It represents the Arabic culture, for example the use of the rice which is an essential component in the Gulf area and in the Arab world in general. Also, the need to be a great cooker is also an essential condition for the Arabic women. The cohesion is achieved in this ad but the coherent can be said that it is violated but with a little imagination it can be fixed as if the listener will downgrade the text; for example, adding a lacing of love can be a species or something else. However, Arabs know that the cooker must love what they cook and cook with passion. So, Arabs can understand it because it is a common knowledge for them. In addition for that, this commercial can be used as if it is a teaching program which teaches people how to cook. This commercial unlike the first commercials does not use the picture of the family to reflect some aspects of the Arabic tradition.

#### **The fourth commercial:**

A lady is in the kitchen talking on the telephone saying that “you still need one hour to have lunch so I am going to take a little snack.” She starts eating Al Marai cheese first with biscuits then with chips after that with vegetables and finally with using a spoon. In every time she wants to eat, she tries to prevent herself from eating but the taste of the cheese is stronger than her will. She takes out the cheese from the refrigerator four times in forty six seconds, however, one can notice that this cheese is tasty and healthy; first, the lady is slim and the food that exist in the refrigerator are healthy foods only. After that, the lady asks the waiter to bring her a glass of water only and in that moment her friends look upset from her because she is supposed to have her lunch with them.

The researchers consider this commercial can be used in both cultures but the lady and her friends must change their outfit. Also, the camera makes zoom on the word /baladuna/ “our country” which is written on the bottle. In addition the word /tasbera/ “snack” can be used as an aspect of the Gulf area because they have many kinds of food that are represented as /tasbera/, for example; l’usine. The informativity is achieved in this commercial by representing the different ways that Al Marai cheese can be eaten with, also how much it’s taste is irresistible. In addition, the cohesion and coherence are achieved. Here, the focus is on the acting (the picture) more than the words themselves trying to transfer the irresistible taste to the receivers to persuade and to motivate them to try this product.

#### **The fifth commercial:**

A mosque background which resembles the Andalusia architecture and the night light are represented. Suddenly lantern swags from the ceiling, however, this lantern is not a normal one but it is Al Marai juice instead as if it is the light in the midnight or it is like the energy which one needs in fasting and praying. There is no a sound effect or narrator sound in the commercial. For that, this commercial is expressed only by the use of the picture which has the Almarai’s logo and slogan which is a sentence or phrase which through repeated usage is designed to become identified with the advertiser’s product or service. Also, in the picture there is a wish to enjoy Ramadan and an advice to make your fast healthy and powerful.

This commercial as the previous commercials does not give any information about the component of the juice. It only reflects that this juice will help you in Ramadan and it will make your fast healthy and powerful. The use of the orange juice specifically can imply the freshness and powerful energy that can be achieved by the vitamin C. The coherence and cohesion are achieved because the idea of Ramadan is acceptable in the Arabs world but if this commercial appear for example in a non Muslim country it will not be acceptable but also it will be rejected by the people who live there. So, the use of the Ramadan is a clear representative of the Muslims culture.

#### **Real California Cheese: (it’s the cheese):**



The Real California Cheese Seal was established in 1984. The seal was created with heavy participation from the California Milk Advisory Board which was the first U.S. dairy advisory board to generate a set of industry standards for quality and excellence in cheese production<sup>2</sup>.

#### **The first commercial:**

Two cows are walking in a very nice field and suddenly a black bull comes to to the two cows says: “ladies /my name/ is Bob I am a French bull” one of the cows says: “wow... French bull...uh... you must feel lonely so far from home... lucky you Dayan speaks fluent French here.” The other cow says a French statement; however, the bull does not understand for that he says nothing unless “hha... that’s...” in that moment the two cows start laughing loudly. Also, in that moment another bull appears starting the conversation by saying “bounjour ladies...” so the first bull says: “forget it Bell” with the sound of the two cows laughing as a background.

<sup>2</sup> See [www.sportsnetwork.com](http://www.sportsnetwork.com)

This theme is not acceptable to be shown in a Saudi Arabia specially; however, as a researcher, we think it is there but it is not presented in the television. So, we think this idea is more acceptable in the western culture. Also, the amount of information is higher than the Arabic sample. This commercial which lasts for twenty eight seconds shows that these “happy” cows are special and because of that their milk is used. Also, the last picture represents the whole products that this company produces; different kinds of cheese, milk, butter, ice cream and yogurt without forgetting to decorate the table with green and red grapes which can be used as a symbol of wine to prove this the researcher will quote an article (Wine and Cheese: California Style by Ron Kapon). In addition there is the website address if someone wants to know more details and so on. According to that, we think the use of the website link represents the western culture in general more than the eastern one because they are used to use the technology more than the Arabs.

**The second commercial<sup>3</sup>:**

Cow: “ok... again... who rules?”

Bull: “cows rule”

Cow: “and why the cows rule?”

Bull: “because they are the farm masters”

Cow: “and do you think they are pretty?”

Bull: “yes... (With very bored tone)”

Cow: “yes what”

Bull: “yes I think the cows are pretty...”

Cow: “oh... do you want to marry a cow?”

Bull: “look can I just have the ball back (with serious intonation)”

Cow: “oh... this ball” with the sound that the ball falls in water.

Bull: “wow... ok, she is on our team”

Then the narrator ends by saying that “great cheese comes from happy cows... happy cows come from California... Real California Cheese.”

This commercial lasts for thirty seconds only in a very nice landscape; it has the idea that females try to impose their authority which can be seen in both cultures. In addition, the producer wants to reflect the power of the cows by kicking the ball for a far distance. This idea breaks the stereotype about females that they are pleasant and not powerful and this idea exists in both culture but it exists more in the eastern culture. Cohesion and coherent are achieved, also informativity too. This commercial as the first one, it has the website link.

**The third commercial:**

A cow starts singing a happy song then a group of cows start singing with her suddenly an old woman steps out from the house to dust off the towel. So, the first cow makes the sound of “sh... sh”. The woman looks at the cows for two seconds then she gets back to the house. After that, the cows start to sing again and the narrator ends this commercial by saying that<sup>4</sup> “great cheese comes from happy cows... and happy cows from California... real California cheese.. it’s the cheese.”

This commercial can be seen in both cultures but in these commercials the focus is on the feminine aspect more than the masculine one. This commercial and the first two are unaccepted in our natural knowledge because we do not think that cows can sing like a human sound which can be represented as high level of informativity because it’s not expected. This is the first commercial from this company that the researcher has noticed that does not have the website link as the previous commercials.

**The fourth commercial:**

A group of cows who is looking at a cow that comes to them, they say: “hey, she is the new girl... this could be interesting...” then the conversation starts between them asking her about this place. So, she reflects her happiness and gladness that there is no snow. However, the cows do not understand what is the meaning of snow but they think that she has a problem because she is not used to talk with other cows. After that, the narrator ends the commercial by saying that: “great cheese comes from happy cows... and happy cows from California... real California cheese... it’s the cheese.”

This commercial which lasts for thirty five seconds can be presented in both cultures. The producer wants to show that how really suffers is not like who is not; the new cow has suffered from snow unlike the other cows. The acceptability and intentionality (for the cows not the commercial) are violated because the cows misunderstand the new cow. Informativity is achieved for example the website link exists in this commercial.

**The fifth commercial:**

A rural wooden hut with the sounds of a rooster and birds, the camera shifts to inside the hut to see a cow which yawns, another cow says “good morning”. Then the camera refocuses on the rooster and its sound which makes the first cow angry. In the end of this commercial the rooster is being thrown outside the hut in an aggressive way. The narrator ends the commercial with “great cheese comes from happy cows... and happy cows from California... real California cheese.. it’s the cheese.”

<sup>3</sup> See [www.disborads.com](http://www.disborads.com)

<sup>4</sup> See [bunnygurl.blogspot.com](http://bunnygurl.blogspot.com)

This commercial which lasts for thirty second, shows the spoiled cows who do not want to wake up early, for example: the first cow says: “what’s the hurry”. This idea almost exists in all Real California Cheese Company. This commercial as the previous one has the website link for the company.

#### **International companies:**

The researchers want to explain two kinds of foods’ commercials which are Snickers and Philadelphia cheese which exist in the two parts of the world trying to show the similarity and the differences.

#### **Philadelphia cheese:**



Starting with the Philadelphia cheese, the commercials in America are two kinds; the first commercial represents women in the sky wearing white clothes showing them as angels who care for their bodies so they eat Philadelphia cheese because of the low fat that it causes comparing it with other kinds of cheese. The second kind of Philadelphia cheese focuses on the cheese alone to show the brightness of the cheese trying to reflect its taste from the picture and the sound of the narrator who explains the ingredients with a special tone trying to persuade people that this cheese is unimaginable.

This kind of commercial exists in the Arabic part of the world but because Philadelphia’s company tries to sell their products to the Gulf area so the first kind exists in the Arab part but with some changes for example the angel women are changed with a whole family; father, mother and children who eat the cheese and because of its taste it will make them feel that they are in the sky which implies somehow the low fat in this product and the happiness that will cause. However, in the west part of the world there is a commercial, “there is one cheese... taste better... with wine...” this commercial shows this cheese with green grapes on the same plate with a bottle of wine. So, this kind of commercial represents the west culture more than the Arab culture because as said before this company tries to sell their product to the Gulf area so they will be restricted with the tradition and the culture which prevents drinking.

#### **Snickers chocolate:**



The researchers have taken the 2011’s commercial into consideration only to compare and contrast between the two cultures. In 2011 there is only one advertisement for Snickers in Arabic which is thirty one seconds only; however, it represents the stereotype that women have less power than men. This commercial is about two guys and one old woman try to push the car in order to make it work and while they are pushing the old woman keeps complaining to show that she is doing something is higher than her ability. In that moment, another guy gives her a Snickers to eat and suddenly this old lady turns to be a Guy originally but because this guy is hungry he turns to be an old woman as the narrator says that (enta mo enta w enta jo3an) which means “you are not you when you’re hungry”.

This commercial tries to be universal in the Arab part; however, the guys are Egyptians who are unknown for the Arab part but the guy who turns to be an Egyptian old woman, but this woman is a very known actress who almost known in the whole Arab’s part, finally the narrator uses an accent from the Gulf part trying to make more acceptable in the Gulf area. This idea exists too in the second part of the world, the researcher has found two commercials for Americans and these commercials have the same idea but in different situation; a group of guys who are playing super bowl with an old woman who cannot handle their roughness at the game so one of the guys calls this old woman “Mike” and tells her that “you are playing like Betty White out there” and she answers him that “yes that is what your girlfriend says” in that moment there is a young lady who calls this old woman “hey baby” and asks her to eat a Snickers and from the first bite this old woman turn to be a young man. The narrator says “you are not you when you are hungry” then “Snickers satisfies” the narrator means that Snickers satisfies the hunger.

Snickers' chocolate ingredient as roasted peanuts requires the advertisements to have some roughness unlike for example Galaxy chocolate which is smoother than Snickers. So, one can notice that Galaxy commercials use women only to represent the chocolate as if the receiver for this chocolate are women only, so as a researcher I would like to recommend researchers to make a survey to see if the commercial affects the receiver or not for example; do women prefer Galaxy more than Sinkers because Galaxy's commercials are more connected with women unlike Snickers which is connected with roughness.

#### V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the reader can notice that advertisements' language does not always achieve the standards of textuality. In advertisements the focus is on intentionality because commercials are produced to persuade costumers to buy the product. Also, advertisements should give an amount of information which is more likely about the quality of the product and this amount varies from one company to another and from one culture to another as the website link. However, the two companies' commercials do not have any information about the price, ingredients or where can they be found. In addition, the reader can notice that cohesion and coherent are achieved most of the time, but they also can be violated. Also, the language of the advertisements tends to use a lot of adjectives to describe the product for example "great". According to cultures, the reader can notice that there are similarities and differences; in the similarity case, for example "snickers" has the same theme in both cultures. However, the differences for example; the Almarai commercial for Ramadan or the use of proverbs cannot exist in the Western part in contrast the cheese with wine commercial cannot exist in the Arabs world especially at the Gulf Area. Also, the Arabs' commercials are more direct than the American's but the Americans have more humor than the Arabs in their commercials, however, Almarai's commercials represent the ideal family which spend happy time with each other trying to make it more connected to audience's life, also they are more emotional.

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# The Relationship between the Emotional Intelligence of Iranian EFL Learners and Their Performance on the Listening Section of IELTS

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**Abstract**—This study was an attempt to explore the role of emotional intelligence on the whole and its components particularly problem solving in EFL learners' listening comprehension performance in the IELTS tests. For this purpose, a total of 39 advanced learners homogenized according to Oxford Placement Test took part in this study. Participants completed the IELTS listening tests and were asked to fill out the Bar-On emotional intelligence questionnaire. The obtained quantitative data were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficients. Results indicated a non-significant correlation between the whole EI scores and listening performance of learners. There were, however, a significant relationship between problem solving and EI. The social responsibility component of EI was also found to have a significant relationship with listening. The findings are discussed with regard to the role of the IELTS test as a standardized test and the high level of learners. Implications and suggestions for further research are presented.

**Index Terms**—emotional intelligence, IELTS, listening comprehension, problem solving

## I. INTRODUCTION

Listening refers to the complex and invisible mental activities that lead to the understanding of the spoken language. It is not only a skill but also a means of learning a second or foreign language. In contrast to past when listening was considered not as an active but as a passive skill, today listening is assuming more and more significance in foreign or second language learning.

Listening has its unique specificities which are essential to learn so that one can better understand the nature of listening. Lynch and Mendelsohn (2002) referred to the following as the unique features of listening:

1. Its usually ephemeral, one-shot nature
2. The presence of a rich prosody (stress, intonation, rhythm, loudness and more), which is absent from the written language.
3. The presence of characteristics of natural fast speech, such as assimilation, making it markedly different from written language.
4. The frequent need to process and respond almost immediately.

The effective listeners know how to use all these factors during the listening process so that the message gets across. Definitely, there are different techniques that listeners use to understand the incoming information. The most prominent ones are the bottom-up and top-down processes. The bottom up processing, according to Nunan (2001), assumes that "listening is a process of decoding the sounds that one hears in a linear fashion, from the smallest meaningful units (or phonemes) to complete texts" (p. 200). According to Anderson and Lynch (cited in Nunan, 2001), the bottom-up processing assumes the listener as a passive tape-recorder because it assumes that the listener in this view functions in the same way as a tape-recorder, taking in and storing messages in much the same way as the tape-recorder.

The alternative top-down process suggests that the listeners begin with the background knowledge, knowledge of the topic, the speakers and their shared knowledge, and the knowledge of context and then start constructing the meaning of the sentences. Listening, when viewed from this perspective, is very close to the concept of schema theory. According to Nunan (2001), schema theory "is based on the notion that past experiences lead to the creation of mental frameworks that help us make sense of new experiences" (p. 201). Nunan (2001) argued that listening is an interactive process which includes both bottom-up and top-down processes. In other words, these two critical processes interact to build the meaning from the incoming information.

The listening process can be affected by several variables both internal and external to the learners. One individual variable known to potentially affect listening is emotional intelligence (EI). EI plays a significantly important role in listening comprehension due to its core skills: 1) emotional awareness 2) ability to manage emotions 3) problem solving. All these elements are presumed to be crucial to the development of listening. In addition to this, EI is an interpersonal skill and innate potential on achievements. According to Jahandar, Khodabandehlou, Seyedi, and Mousavi Dolatabadi

(2012), emotional intelligence can play a more significant role in learning receptive skills such as listening comprehension that can be enhanced and developed by environment and experience that it is assumed to be one of the major variables in promoting EFL learners. With active listening (the process of fully attending to all parts of a communication) and a high EI, one can able to problem solve, offer help to increase trust, and address people concerns. Moreover, problem-solving is a basic and major issue in people's life. Every human being meets problems to be solved in any way. The whole human capacity including energy, motivation, emotions, experiences, cognitive abilities is wasted in solving problems (Yalin & Sozen, 2015). However, Iranian EFL learners experience considerable stress when taking IELTS listening test, thus by knowing the relationship between them teachers can better prepare their students for the listening section of IELTS.

#### *A. Emotional Intelligence and the Listening Skill*

As a receptive skill, listening has gained much significance in recent years. Learners need to listen and successfully interpret the speakers' speech so that the communication occurs. In this process, the importance of listener's emotions and his/her ability to manage the stress, anxiety, to overcome the negative attitudes, and to encourage interest in the task are pretty obvious. Therefore, as with the other skills, EQ plays an important role in the success of ESL/EFL learners. However, as the concept of emotional intelligence is a comparatively a novel and burgeoning issue with respect to pedagogical endeavors, research dealing with the numerous implications of this construct for instructional realms still appear to be infrequent.

Badakhshan (2008) examined the relationship between the total EQ and its subcomponents with the listening ability of the Iranian EFL learners. The study was also an attempt to compare male and female learners regarding the listening comprehension. To this end, 177 intermediate university students were selected from 265 students. Participants were administered the Bar-On EQ questionnaire and a listening test including 40 questions. The results were analyzed using a Pearson correlation. Findings showed that there were statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and listening comprehension ability of the students. Specifically all of the components of emotional intelligence except for the empathy component had a strong relationship with the listening ability of the students. Considering gender, males were much more emotionally intelligent than their female peers with regard to the emotional intelligence.

The studies conducted by Pishghadam (2009) are the pioneer studies in this area. As referred to above, the studies of Pishghadam covered all the skills, one of which was the listening skill. The results of one of the studies (2009) showed that there were no significant differences among the three groups in listening ability, meaning that neither emotional intelligence nor verbal intelligence had any effect on this skill. In the other study carried out by Pishghadam (2009), listening was affected by some subcategories of emotional intelligence such as interpersonal, stress management, and total EQ.

In another study, Aghasafari's (2006) revealed a significant relationship between overall emotional intelligence measure and listening comprehension strategies. The study by Hasanzadeh and Shahmohamadi (2011) looked into the interrelatedness of emotional intelligence and listening strategies of 100 university learners majoring in different fields. The administration of Bar-On's EQ-i and Strategies Inventory pinpointed a significant relationship between the learners' emotional intelligence and their listening strategies. Nevertheless, regarding the relationship between the learners' disciplines and their emotional intelligence and listening strategies no significant results were reported in this study.

The results of these studies refer to the role of EI in facilitating the listening comprehension of learners. However, it is still not clearly known if the problem-solving component eases or hampers learners' attempts in understanding the speech they listen to. The present study was therefore an attempt to investigate the relationship between the problem solving component of EI and the listening performance of EFL learners in IELTS test.

#### *B. Problem Solving*

One of the effective ways of teaching listening to students that has caught considerable attention is the use of problem-solving skills. Previously, Larsen-Freeman (1986) suggested that teaching is an exercise in problem solving tasks. According to this model teaching involves the ongoing solution of series of problems.

There are advantages and disadvantages associated with the use of problem-solving activities in the classroom. For instance, problem solving activities facilitate transfer, retention and increase motivation. Problem solution is achieved when something is also learned. Problem solving is an art which is involved in creating the context in which learning occurs.

According to Ausubel (1963) problem solving as a method of learning requires the learner to discover the higher order principles without specific verbal help. Problem solving or discovery learning involves the combining of the previously learned principles into the new ones that solves the problem and generalizes to an entire class of stimulus situations embodying other problems of the same type. The most important and most obvious characteristic of a discovery approach to teaching is that, it requires for less teacher involvement and direction than most methods (Lefrancois, 2011). This issue has a specific significance with regard to the learning of young learners. This approach encourages an inductive method through which young learners can discover the language and learn it. This is in line with the young learners' subconscious and inductive learning abilities and seems to offer a major advantage in teaching

for young learners. As Corno and Show (1986, as cited in Le Francios, 1991) point out, teachers can offer a continuum of guidance by adapting their teaching to different students and different purposes.

Problem solving is a skill that induces learning through invoking intellectual guess. Learning is the development of the continuous process of cognition. In education, the main emphasis needs to be given to the fact that learners should be asked to think, in other words; they should be taught to solve problems (Kundu & Tuttoo, 1988). In problem solving, there are five phases of reflective thought, i.e., to think deeply. According to Kundu and Tuttoo (1988), reflective thought may be analyzed in five phases. At two extremes there are pre-reflective or beginning situation in which there is a state of confusion and post reflective situation that is a feeling of mastery over the doubts. There are suggestions among these states of thought such as possible solutions, and intellectualization of the difficulty of a problem to be solved, the use of one suggestion after another as a main idea, reasoning in the sense of developing the assumptions, and testing the hypothesis by overt task.

Kundu and Tuttoo (1988) stated that learners should get familiar with these five steps in complete thought. Step one describes for the learners the terminal performance, which leads to the solution of problem. Step two deals with analyzing the problem to find out what prerequisite concepts are for its solution and to assess the learners' behavior for the concepts they will need to solve the problem. Step three describes the guidance the teacher must provide to give relevant principles, and step four requires that teachers provide guidance to problem. Step five requires teachers assess the performance of the learners to see whether they can transfer their learning to new and similar problems. These five steps are overlapping and it is not necessary to be followed one after another.

Therefore, problem-based learning purposefully combines cognitive and metacognitive teaching and learning. It is an approach that has been around since the late 1960s (Neufeld & Barrows, 1974) and engages EFL learners in learning how to learn language and content. When first language learners face problems, they can skillfully cope with them, but second language speakers devote much endeavor to overcome this challenge to express their intended meaning. Understanding second language problem management is essential; nevertheless, in spite of the prominence of problem-solving behavior in learner's comprehension, current language teaching sources do not offer outline tasks for learners as comprehensive frameworks of problem. Problem solving learning can place language learning in the authentic contexts. By posing language learners, problems similar to those faced in real life, teachers can bridge the gap between language use in authentic environments and classroom environment. Furthermore, they demand learners to explore resources other than the teacher, including reference materials and community members, and drawing on knowledge from various subject areas such as mathematics, geography, and science (Duffy & Savery, 1994).

## II. METHODOLOGY

The present study intended to investigate the effect of emotional intelligence particularly the problem-solving component on the listening comprehension of learners at the IELTS test. The following research questions were addressed:

1. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' emotional intelligence and their performance on listening section of IELTS?
2. Is there any significant relationship between EI components including problem solving and Iranian EFL learners' performance on listening section of IELTS?

### A. Participants

An initial number of 50 students were selected as the sample of this study, but this number was later declined to 39 according to the proficiency test results. The participants consisted of 18 female and 21 male students ranging from 15-42. The participants were non-native speakers of English who were living in Tehran, Iran at the time of the study. Participants were institute learners in Pardisan institution.

### B. Instrumentation

The following instruments were employed for the present study.

#### 1. Oxford Placement Test

For the purpose of estimating students' proficiency levels and determining their homogeneity, a proficiency test, Oxford placement test, was administered. The test consisted of three sections: 40 vocabulary, 40 grammar, and 20 reading questions. Test takers were asked to choose the correct answer from 4 choices. It took about 50 minutes to administer the test.

#### 2. Listening Section of an IELTS

The second instrument of this study was the IELTS General listening. It was chosen from the latest published Cambridge practice tests for IELTS book 9. It contained 4 sections with a total number of 40 items to answer. The first section was a conversation between two speakers and the second section was a monologue. The final two sections were concerned with situations related to educational or training contexts. The third section was a conversation between up to four people and the fourth section was a monologue. A variety of question types were used including: multiple choice, completion, matching and labeling. In scoring the exam papers each item had one point. Thus, each participant's listening score was scored out of 40. Candidates heard the recording once and answered the questions as they listened.

The task took 30 minutes plus 10 minutes for participants to transfer their answers to the answer sheet (Khodadady & Zeynali, 2012).

### 3. The Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire

The bar-on model was used to assess the participants' emotional intelligence level. The Bar-On Emotional Quotient inventory (EQ-i) is a self-report scale. The inventory takes 10-15 minutes to complete, subjects respond on a 5-point Likert scale continuum from "very seldom or not true of me" to "very often or true of me". The original version consists of 133 items containing five expansive areas of skills and 15 factorial components: The first is Intrapersonal emotional intelligence (self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, actualization, and independence). The second is Interpersonal emotional intelligence (empathy, interpersonal relationship, and social responsibility). Next is adaptability emotional intelligence (problem solving, reality testing, and flexibility). The fourth is stress management (stress tolerance and impulse control). The last one is general mood (happiness and optimism) (Bar-On, 1997, pp.43-45). In this study to make sure that Iranian students fully comprehended the content, the translated Persian version of this questionnaire was employed. The final version was decreased to 90 items with the same number of components as mentioned above (Zafari & Biria, 2014).

### C. Procedure

The data required for the study were collected in three steps. Since the participants had to take the IELTS listening section exam their level of proficiency must be high. Accordingly, the researcher needed to choose those learners that were in an advanced level of language proficiency. Thus, the Oxford Placement Test was the first to be administered for choosing the advanced learners. After scoring the papers the number of participants was reduced to 39, since their language level did not correspond to that of the other participants. In the next step, the homogenized participants were ready to take the IELTS listening exam. The IELTS test was taken from Cambridge book. The exam took about 40 minutes. It contained four sections. Participants had to answer different types of questions within the limited time. It is noteworthy that the listening texts were played once and they were allowed to take notes. Then, all the papers were scored out of 40.

Finally, a Persian written emotional intelligence questionnaire was given to the participants containing 90 items. The participants were asked to read the questionnaire carefully and choose their answers among the five options provided in the sheet (1 the least appropriate item for describing the person and 5 the most appropriate item for describing the person). Next, the questionnaire was analyzed and the total score for each category was written in front of it. Then the scores of each question were added up together.

The data that were gathered from EI questionnaire and listening section of IELTS were analyzed for each person. The score of each subject was compared with his/her EI score.

### D. Data Analysis

All the analysis was carried out by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 21). First of all, there was a brief analysis about the participants followed by a table and histogram. Next, one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were used to check the normality for EI scores, problem solving and listening scores, the same test was used to check the normality of the components of EI questionnaire. Next, in order to see whether there were any significant relationship between the EQ and problem solving scores of Iranian EFL learners and their performance on IELTS listening section the Pearson Correlation Coefficients were administered.

## III. RESULTS

In order to examine the relationship between EQ, problem solving of Iranian EFL learners and their performance on IELTS listening section, a Pearson correlation coefficient was run. The results are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

TABLE I.  
PEARSON CORRELATION FOR EQ SCORES AND IELTS LISTENING

		EQ	IELTS listening
EQ of Iranian EFL learners	Pearson Correlation	1	-.047
	Sig (2-tailed)		.388
	N	39	39

Table 1 indicates a non-significant relationship between emotional intelligence of Iranian EFL learners and their performance on IELTS listening section,  $p = .38$ ,  $r = -.04$ .

TABLE II.  
PEARSON CORRELATION FOR PROBLEM SOLVING AND IELTS LISTENING

		problem solving	IELTS listening
PS of Iranian EFL learners	Pearson Correlation	1	.312
	Sig (2-tailed)		.027
	N	39	39



According to Table 2, there is a significant, moderate and positive correlation between the problem solving of Iranian EFL learners and their performance on IELTS listening section,  $p = .02$ ,  $r = .31$ . In other words, if the problem solving skills of the learners increases a unit, their performance on the IELTS listening section would increase as well and vice versa.

Table 3 demonstrates the relationship between IELTS listening scores and each subcategory of EI questionnaire.

TABLE III.  
PEARSON CORRELATION BETWEEN IELTS LISTENING AND COMPONENTS OF EI

		IELTS listening
Happiness	Pearson Correlation	-.209
	Sig (2-tailed)	.201
	N	39
Independence	Pearson Correlation	-.145
	Sig (2-tailed)	.377
	N	39
Stress Tolerance	Pearson Correlation	-.076
	Sig (2-tailed)	.645
	N	39
Self-Actualization	Pearson Correlation	-.094
	Sig (2-tailed)	.569
	N	39
Emotional Self Awareness	Pearson Correlation	.036
	Sig (2-tailed)	.827
	N	39
Reality Testing	Pearson Correlation	-.186
	Sig (2-tailed)	.257
	N	39
Interpersonal Relationship	Pearson Correlation	-.046
	Sig (2-tailed)	.783
	N	39
Optimism	Pearson Correlation	.258
	Sig (2-tailed)	.113
	N	39
Self-Reliance	Pearson Correlation	-.183
	Sig (2-tailed)	.266
	N	39
Impulse Control	Pearson Correlation	.033
	Sig (2-tailed)	.842
	N	39
Flexibility	Pearson Correlation	-.182
	Sig (2-tailed)	.268
	N	39
Social Responsibility	Pearson Correlation	.341
	Sig (2-tailed)	.034
	N	39
Empathy	Pearson Correlation	.038
	Sig (2-tailed)	.818
	N	39
Assertiveness	Pearson Correlation	-.222
	Sig (2-tailed)	.174
	N	39

Table 3 clearly indicates the existence of a significant relationship only between the social responsibility component of EI and the listening performance of learners,  $p = .03$ ,  $r = .34$ . Other components were found to be non-significantly correlated to listening comprehension.

**Discussion**

The present study intends to investigate if there was any relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ emotional intelligence, problem solving and their performance on listening section of IELTS exam. Findings illuminated a non-significant correlation between emotional intelligence and listening section of the IELTS exam. This finding is in contrast with previous theoretical and empirical studies (Valizadeh & Alavinia 2013; Alavinia & Mollahosseini 2012). Valizadeh and Alavinia (2013) revealed a strong relationship between listening comprehension performance of the learners and their emotional intelligence scores, with the strongest relationship belonging to the self-awareness subscale of EI. In addition, EI was a proper predictor of listening comprehension performance of learners. Alavinia and Mollahosseini (2012) also came up with a significant amount of correlation between the use of listening metacognitive strategies and total emotional intelligence score as well as the learners scores on the subscale of emotional intelligence (intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, and general mood). The non-significant finding of the present study might be attributed to the two factors: 1) the advanced level of learners and b) the nature of the listening test. Firstly, since learners in this study were advanced level EFL learners whose purpose was to take part in the IELTS exam and attain a high score on the test, they might not have attended to the emotional dimension of listening; rather, they were more focused on the outcome of the test. Secondly, the nature of IELTS test with different types of questions such as multiple

choice, short answer and extended listening text might have caused anxiety and lack of concentration among learners to make use of their EI.

Results, however, indicated a significant and positive correlation between the problem solving of Iranian EFL learners and their performance on IELTS listening section. The findings of the study are in line with those of Goh and Hu (2013). The study sought to explore the relationship between metacognitive awareness and listening performance. The results showed a significant positive relationship between learner's metacognitive awareness scores and listening performance. Analysis of individual factors showed a significant relationship between listening performance and the strategies of directed attention and problem solving. Results are, however, in contrast with what Jahandar, Khodabandehlou, Seyedi and Mousavi (2012) found in examining the effect of each EI component on listening comprehension. The findings revealed that stress tolerance, interpersonal relationship and flexibility had great impact on listening. To put in a nutshell, by improving problem solving as one of the components of EI, there is a possible chance to increase learners' listening scores.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of the present study provide some implications for EFL teachers, learners and teacher trainers. The purpose of the educational system is to equip learners with strategies to cope with stressful and challenging situations that they might face in the learning process. Emotionally intelligent people are better able to deal effectively with the challenging situations. This skill in overcoming stressful situations can be implemented to listening tasks, as well. Although the findings of this study did not indicate a relationship between EI components (except social responsibility and problem solving) and listening, it is obvious that this was due to some factors such as the test type, the lack of previous education about the significance of EI and the individual characteristic of the individuals. The findings of the present study revealed a significant relationship between the problem solving component of emotional intelligence and listening comprehension. With respect to the fact that EI is developmental (Davies, Stankov & Roberts, 1998; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000), language learners need to be trained emotionally. Concerning the mediatory role of emotions between sensory input and cognition, having a high level of emotional quotient is expected to facilitate learners' better understanding of input. Teachers are therefore suggested to teach their learners to handle the listening task by employing appropriate problem solving strategies when they are situated in a puzzling context and this is an aspect of training EI in learners. Teachers can also direct learners towards learning more about their feelings and emotions and strengthen their positive emotions. Furthermore, being aware of their own emotions can help learners in establishing goals, monitoring their success in carrying out activities and appraising what they have performed. These are the strategies that learners can use considering their emotional intelligence.

Studies also show that parents' involvement increases the likelihood that students will improve their EI competencies (Weissberg & O'Brien, 2004). This means that both parents and more importantly teachers as educators of learners need to be familiar with the concept, striving hard first to raise their own emotional competencies and then to try to enhance the emotional intelligence of their learners. Materials developers are also encouraged to include techniques which pay more attention to emotional factors, leading the learners to more self- and other-discovery. Some helpful techniques which can be used to increase emotional intelligence in the classroom include: discussion, listening to light music, watching emotional clips, self-disclosure, designing questionnaires and reading literature and psychological texts (Pishghadam, 2009). If school teachers use these EI strategies, allowing students to learn to know themselves and others, understand how to act and care for others, students will integrate these principles into their everyday lives.

There were a number of limitations in the present study that necessitate the conduction of further studies in this area. Firstly, as stated above, the standardized nature of the IELTS test might have intervened in the outcomes of this study. Further studies are encouraged to examine other listening tests or listening tasks such as listen and do tasks (Ellis, 2003) which are more meaning-based and are expected to better tap into the learners EI development. Secondly, the low sample size of this study needs to be enhanced in future studies by examining a larger sample of learners. In addition, it is suggested that the relationship between EI and other language skills and abilities be examined in further research. Lastly, the use of computer-assisted learning tools can enhance the learner-friendly atmosphere of the classroom (Khezlrou, 2018) and provide an appropriate context for the development of EI awareness and problem solving activities in the classroom.

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Articles

1) Studies on Oral Error Correction: Do they provide Counterevidence against Nativist Arguments? (2017)

2) The Relationship between Temporal Measures of Oral Fluency and Ratings of Fluency: A Case study of Iranian Advanced EFL Learners (2017)

Books:

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2) *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics* (2018) Danesh Mana Publishing house Tehran, Iran



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# Learners' Problem in Phonetics with the Intelligibility at Segmental and Supra-segmental Level

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**Abstract**—Bengali, though not much discussed, is one of the most resourceful Indo-Aryan languages. Its forty-nine letters allow its speakers utmost flexibility to diphthongize and to form wide ranges of consonant cluster in accordance with the demand of spelling and meaning. Remarkably enough, Bengali has more sounds than needed to facilitate any English sounds without making any distortions to them. But, in fact, there are very many pronunciation varieties people are used to pronouncing Bengali words: most sounds they may bring into their English often can be *variably*<sup>1</sup> attributed to their own regional dialects rather than the standard *CholitaBhasha*<sup>2</sup>. However, apart from the local dialects, Cholita Bhasha speakers are likely to make distortions in the production of certain English sounds, but incontestably not in too many. This paper looks into the similarities and dissimilarities between English and Bengali at segmental and supra-segmental level and attempts to pinpoint the influences behind these distortions to rectify learners' errors init.

**Index Terms**—Cholita Bhasha, segmental, supra-segmental, consonant clusters

## I. INTRODUCTION

"Within the contrastive analysis framework, the word *interference* is used to refer to a *reflection of the surface-structure discrepancies between L1 and L2*" (James, 1980, p. 175).

The statement mentioned above is not pragmatic enough to serve a direct link to the analysis of phonetics and phonology though it shows the shallowness of the term *contrastive analysis*, but it can be used as a tribute to Lado and it is surely a matter of positivity that chapters and articles are still composed in the field of contrastive phonology. Apart from this, contrastive analysis in general refers to a way of comparing and contrasting various linguistic features of two languages; for example, *sound systems*, grammatical structures, vocabulary systems, writing systems and above all cultural aspects of two languages. Results from contrastive analysis are valid and can be accepted but there are difficulties in interpreting this CA hypothesis in relation to *learners' behaviors* (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p.17). The mention of the phrase *learners' behavior* is powerful enough to relate itself with the study of all other aspects of language including phonology.

## II. METHODOLOGY

Problem with intelligibility at segmental and supra segmental level has been there ever since though the discussion on this has been very rare. The nature of this research demands close attention to the production of nuances in phonemes at different levels of articulation. In order to observe closely the distinctions and distortions made by Bengali speakers, which can be labelled as same in case of other non-native speakers, this research adopts a thorough empirical study using quantitative method as it can give the hands-on result at the micro level analysis on any pronunciation production. The major tool used in this research was the selection of subjects in terms of their background and setting. Data was collected from local markets and other regions where it can be possible to acquire authentic data. After the collection of data, a dichotomy was set between the male and female respondents in terms of the variables found. Then, the survey data was put on tables to mark them as distinct from each other. Next, the data was processed through different graphs to analyze and find out the percentage. Now, a decision was made in connection with the problems, distortions and replacements made by the speakers at different segments of the given words. At the end, the result was displayed on graphs with appropriate selections and differences, which demonstrates a clear picture of the result.

## III. DISCUSSION

### PROBLEMATICS OF CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

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<sup>1</sup> Bangladesh has plenty of dialects and every dialect is distinctive in individual features. This dialectic L1 often has direct influence on L2 sounds. This dialectic interference varies widely from place to place and some people have privilege in their L2 pronunciation as their dialect is phonologically approximant.

<sup>2</sup> The regional dialect of Chittagong which significantly shares equivalence with the English sounds.

The limitation of contrastive analysis has to be mentioned to avoid any drawbacks in this research albeit this discussion seems irrelevant. On the contrary, this discussion falls back on the aim of this research that it embraces some aspects of the successive discussion to come in. In their critique Gass and Selinker have claimed that contrastive analysis is built upon a prediction on a data collected from some learners' utterances of certain behavior at a certain time, which does not provide proper interpretation and analysis for second language learners, for instance:

An English-speaking learner of Italian tends to devoice the first member of the clusters /zmzn,zl/, and then adjust them to the English clusters /smsnsl/. Thus, the CA hypothesis predicts learners' behaviors depending on some observational data of some learners under certain unspecified conditions (1994, p. 2).

Despite the limitation they believe that contrastive analysis is vital to discuss any range of interchangeability between the linguistic features between interlanguage (Gass&Selinker, 1994, p. 3).

IV. BENGALI SPEAKERS' ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION: PROBLEMS IN SEGAMENAL AND SUPRA-SEGMENTAL LEVEL

Near similar sounds

There can be apparent influence of L1 on L2 in the production of pronunciation of L2. There are articulatory similarities between English and Bangla, but on occasions where some Bangla sounds are unlike English require the speakers to swap their articulators to fit the production of L2, English. In this case, the nearer the articulation system of L1 to L2 the more replacement of L2 sounds with L1 is manifest. These subtle differences yield different languages such as Chinglish, Indian English, Banglish and so on. A few phonemes (consonants) in English resembles to some extent to some sounds in Bengali, but they involve different places of articulation. For example, English contains labio-dental sounds such as /f/ and /v/ whereas Bengali contain the bilabial stops / p<sup>h</sup>/ and /b<sup>h</sup>/ which are pronounced with much stress than regular English fricatives. Hence, the words pronounced with these two sounds sound as stressed and aspirated bilabial plosives rather than English fricatives, /f/ or /v/. Some examples can be given from the Bengali speakers' speech; for example, words like fashion, vegetables, fishing etc. Therefore, native English speakers may well confuse these words as aspirated /p<sup>h</sup>/ and /b<sup>h</sup>/.

For English sounds with different stress level like /z/ /dʒ/ and /ʒ/ are quite different from their Bengali equivalents. For example, Bengali has no sounds similar to /dʒ/, and all sounds in this category are pronounced with same stress and follows the same articulation; however, they differ not in terms of sounds but in terms of their word formation. For instance, words in Bengali containing /z/ sound is different in meaning than a word made up of /dʒ/ sound with no difference occurring in their pronunciation in Bengali. A sound like /ʒ/ very often gives problems to all types of learners at the beginner level. They cannot often make actual /ʒ/ sound in the word like 'television'. They pronounce this sound either close to /dʒ/or near /ʃ/. So, it also may create in all possibility toward English listeners in terms of intelligibility and vice versa.

V. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A. Consonant Clusters

Many word-initial consonantal clusters are simplified according to Bengali phonotactics. A common tendency is to use a short vowel sound before these initial consonantal clusters is visible among less educated people. They also have intelligibility problem with sound switching between /s/ and /ʃ/ as well, for instance: Data collected and transcribed from local 50 Chittagonian (Bengali) speakers both male (25) and female adults (25) that show British pronunciation influenced by Bengali pronunciation is given below: (figure:1)

TABLE I

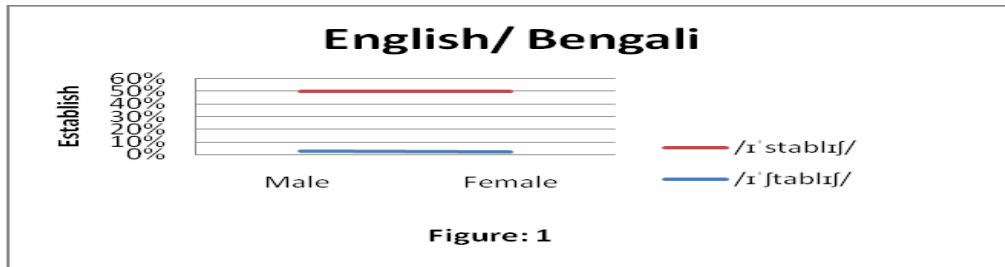
English Pron.	Bengali
Establish /ɪstəblɪ/	/ɪʃtəblɪ/
Student /stju:d(ə)nt/	/ɪʃtu:dent/
station /steɪʃn/	/ɪʃteɪʃon/
smell /smel/	/ɪsmel/

Illustration of data and graph containing the percentage of pronunciation difference by male and female of the first word from the fig: 1 has been displayed below:

Speakers were asked to pronounce the following words:

TABLE I

Establish	Male	Female	Transcription	Male	Female
/ɪʃtəblɪ/	3	2	/ɪʃtəblɪ/	3%	2%
/ɪstəblɪ/	47	48	/ɪstəblɪ/	47%	48%



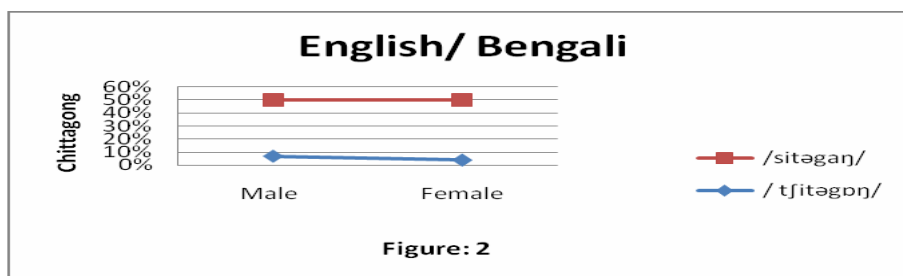
**Findings:** The above illustration demonstrates a vast difference between male and female who are able to duplicate British pronunciation and who cannot. It is proven that only 3% male and 2% female could come up with the proper pronunciation which is hugely marginalized by their inability to pronounce the word by 47% and 48%. In the final clusters also, we can notice there is a propensity among the speakers of Bengali to pronounce according to spelling norm. The ordinary speakers would fail to distinguish between the affricates and fricatives, and this is one of the foremost difficulties they have in pronunciation, for instance, in the articulatory places of /tʃ/ and /s/. Here, they tend to replace /tʃ/ with /s/. They often confuse /z/ with /dʒ/ which is different from Bengali similar sound. This mistake can be attributed to *over-generalization* too. Similar data collected from Bangladeshi *Cholita Vasha* speakers both male and female adults (100) that show the evidence of such generalization. Examples are shown below:

TABLE II

Words (British RP)	Words in Bengali
Chittagong /tʃɪtəɡɒŋ/	/sɪtəɡaŋ/
Lecture /'lektʃə/	/leksər/
National /'næʃnəl/	/næʃnəl/
Change /tʃeɪn(d)ʒ/	/sen(d)ʒ/
General /dʒenrəl/	/zenarəl/

Illustration of the graph regarding figure-2 has been shown below:

Chittagong	Male	Female	Transcription	Male	Female
/tʃɪtəɡɒŋ/	7	4	/tʃɪtəɡɒŋ/	7%	4%
/sɪtəɡaŋ/	43	46	/sɪtəɡaŋ/	43%	46%



**Findings:** The above representation provides the evidence on the replacement of /tʃ/ with /s/ by most Bengali speakers of English. It is seen that both male and female are equally incapable of pronouncing the word *Chittagong* with proper /tʃ/ sound. There is a remarkable difference among male and female who can and cannot come up with the correct pronunciation without replacing /tʃ/ with /s/. Only 7% male and 4% female are able to pronounce the word which is almost none to their counterparts 43% and 46%.

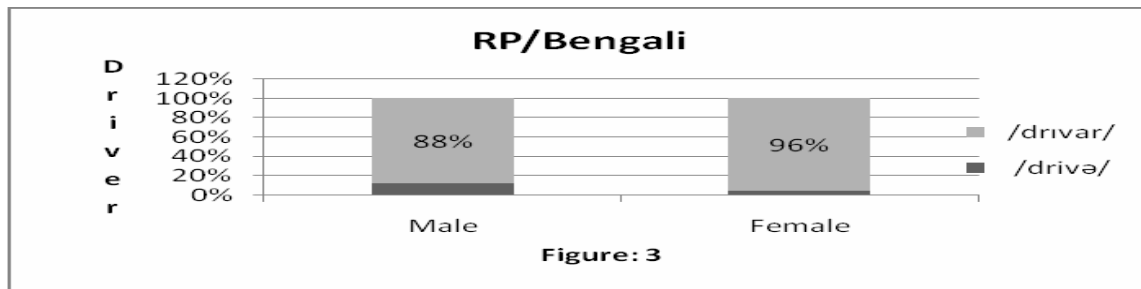
**B. Rolling Articulation of Sound /r/**

Bengali speakers who are not educated abroad like UK or USA would have *rolling* /r/ sound unlike RP or GAE which has a mild or an approximant /r/. Unlike GAE Bengali /r/ will require the tongue to touch alveolar and make a trill. The cardinal vowel /ɜ:/ becomes broad /a/ in Bengali, for instance: (*Data collected from 25 male and female at a*

local Bazar in Chittagong, commercial district of Bangladesh)

TABLE III

Words pronounced RP			In Bengali		
Driver	/ˈdrɪvə/			/drɪvar/	
Person	/ˈpɜːsn/			/farson/	
Capture	/keɪptʃə/			/kepsər/	
Transcription	Male	Female	Transcription	Male	Female
/drɪvə/	3	1	/drɪvə/	12%	4%
/drɪvar/	22	24	/drɪvar/	88%	96%



**Findings:** The above report from the survey shows the male and female pronouncing the given word with a more accented rolling /r/ like Indian speakers of English. 88% male and 96% female came up with rolling /r/ sound instead of a mild /r/ used by native speakers of English. Also, the cardinal vowel turns into a much voiced /a/. It can be anticipated that the problem can be overcome through regular practice with a native speaker of English.

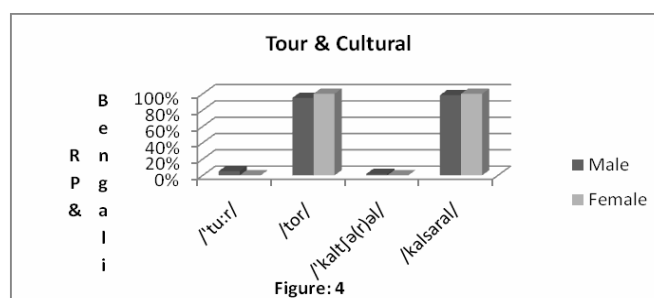
C. Stress in Words

At the supra-segmental aspects, there is apparently no specific and regular word stress in Bengali like English which has certain stress syllables, and any stress apparent can be directly and variably identified with regional accents. However, the tendency to put stress on the first syllable is the most probable in this case with the distortion of diphthong sounds. The sample has been collected from local station in Chittagong. 60 people were interviewed and asked to pronounce words, Tour, pupil, carpenter, and cultural, which have later been transcribed into their RP and Bengali version as they uttered.

TABLE IV

In English	In Bengali
Tour /tuːr/	/tor/
Pupil /pjuːpl/	/pupil/
Carpenter /ˈkɑːpentə/	/karpentar/
Cultural /ˈkʌltʃə(r)əl/	/kalsaral/

Tour /Cultural	Male	Female	Tour /Cultural	Male	Female
/tuːr/	3	0	/tuːr/	5%	0%
/tor/	57	60	/tor/	95%	100%
/ˈkʌltʃə(r)əl/	1	0	/ˈkʌltʃə(r)əl/	2%	0%
/kalsaral/	59	60	/kalsaral/	98%	100%





**Findings:** The graph shows a majority 95% and 98% Male interview pronounce the word *tour* and *cultural* wrong having difficulty to put stress on the proper syllable. They also demonstrate a failure to pronounce the fricative /t/ which is replaced by /s/ sound. In case of female, the percentage is even more depressing. It means most speakers tend to go for more generalized pronunciation.

Whereas, the learners more exposed in English speaking countries would be exceptions to that rule. It can be said that Bengali has a substantial influence on the production of English.

*D. Epenthesis*

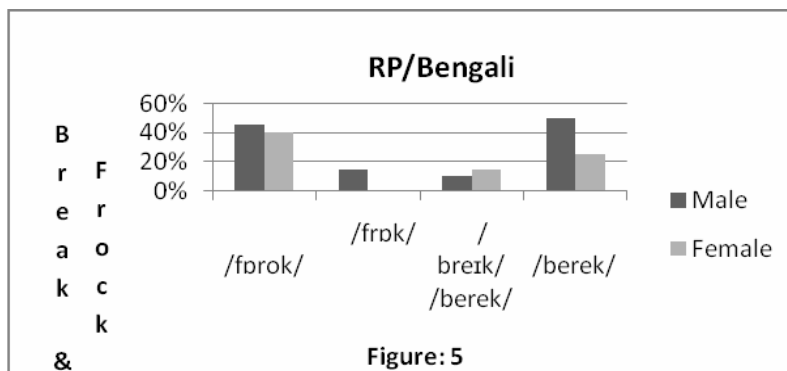
Epenthesis mostly occurs in the beginning consonant clusters in terms of the Bengali speakers' pronunciation of English words. It may also occur in the final clusters, for instance:

British RP		Bengali
Frok	/frɒk/	/fbrɒk/
Break	/brek/	/berek/
Film	/flat/	/felet/ or /felat/
Spain	/spein/	/ispen/
Slow	/sləʊ/	/solo/

The above data was collected from 20-day workers in a local factory, 12 male and 8 female participants. The participants, most of whom finished their primary education and a few high school graduations, were asked to pronounce the words listed above, and most of whom came up with Epenthesis.

TABLE V

Frok/Break	Male	Female	Frok/Break	Male	Female
/fbrɒk/	9	8	/fbrɒk/	45%	40%
/frɒk/	3	0	/frɒk/	15%	0%
/brek/	2	3	/brek/	10%	15%
/berek/	10	5	/berek/	50%	25%



**Findings:** Figure: 5 displays the percentage of male and female participants who were able to pronounce the given word properly and who were not. 45% male while 40% female pronounced the word with epenthesis; similarly, 50% male and 25% female were unable to pronounce the word *break*. Remarkably though 10% male and 15% male could come up with proper pronunciation with varied accents. The difficulty is due to lack of practice and learning pronunciation. It can also be alluded to their lack of exposure and conversation with native speakers.

Odlin points out phonemic difference, segmental errors, (errors relating to vowels and consonants), supra-segmental errors in connection with stress, tone, rhythm and other factors. According to his understanding, stress patterns are significant for a L1 speaker to learn L2 sound systems as they affect syllables and the segments that constitute certain nouns and verbs such between COMbine and comBINE (Odlin, 1989, p. 116). Thereupon, he concludes that if stress pattern of the target language is not maintained properly in the speech, it may well create confusion and misperception of pronunciation (1989, p. 116). Odlin also discusses Bansal's (1976) opinion about the use of English in India where unintelligibility and misunderstanding mostly occur because of errors made in the stress patterns of the pronunciation in English. Considering all of these issues, a comparison between Bengali and English is made in terms of initial clusters, aspirated and non-aspirated sounds etc.

Throughout the learning process of any second language, learners' use of their native language helps as cognitive activities towards the second language. J. James believes that equivalence between L1 and L2 does not depend on

linguists' definition of it and he focuses on learner's *autonomy* and he points out that:

"It is not only relevant whether L1 and L2 actually differ or are the same at a particular point or not but rather whether the learner expects or believes this to be the case. It is the learner's attitude and expectation that determines transfer or generalization within L2" (1977, p. 12).

But, Sajavaara believes that language learning taking place only before early puberty phase is 'unconscious'; and after it is very much 'conscious'... (Sajavaara in Sharwood Smith and Kellerman, 1986, p. 68). But, in this case, the deviation in diversion in pronunciation within adult Bengali speakers of English may not be conscious, but it cannot be said that 'the person cannot articulate sounds, but that they do not *conceptualize* them appropriately' (Nowicki, 2001, p. 17-32). Nowicki's comment is apparently worthwhile considering for the period when the learning of phonetics involves cognitive interference at post-puberty phase, whereas the problems with the sounds /ɜ:/, /dʒ/ and /tʃ/ would be more conspicuous on puberty.

#### VI. PROBLEMATICS OF STANDARD FORM AND ALTERATIONS: SETTING MODEL PEDAGOGY TO RECTIFY THE BENGALI SPEAKERS' UNINTELLIGIBILITY

The formation of discussion on the setting of a *standard form* to British or American pronunciation is no longer accepted with full consent; rather the non-native teachers along with a number of researchers have found that the so-called standard form has undergone significant changes whereas non-native teachers' talk relates to the *ownership* of English or its pronunciation. Up until now, the aim of learning English for those to whom English has an internal significance and use in their L1 country or those who moved to English speaking countries is to communicate message in English with standard pronunciation: to achieve this goal it was considered for these 'non-native speakers' to try to make their pronunciation like the native, Received Pronunciation (RP). Yet, David Crystal believes that:

"Less than three per cent of the British population speaks RP in its pure form, with many educated people having developed an accent known as *modified RP*-a combination of RP and regional features" (Crystal, 1995 in Jenkins, 2000, p. 14).

On the other hand, Daniels refers to RP speakers as the *phantom speakers of English* because of the impossibility of a learner coming into contact with one of them (Daniels, 1995 in Jenkins, 2000, p. 14). Though *the ownership of English*<sup>3</sup> has come under question in recent years it is debatable that English cannot belong to any other nationalities other than those for whom English is their first language: there is a point in saying so as many like Kramersch is very concerned about the fact and put violent remarks:

"...They can never become native speakers of it. Why should they disregard their unique multilingual perspective on the foreign language and on its literature and culture to emulate the idealized monolingual speaker?" (Kramersch 1997, p. 359 in Jenkins)

In fact, Kramersch's remark apparently implies to *the other*<sup>4</sup> not to try being native-like in pronunciation and in spoken proficiency. Nayar calls this paradigm of non-native speakers and the utilitarian ownership of English is politically pernicious, and he believes this is a linguistic imperialism (1994, p. 5). This kind of remark is countered by many like Liu Dailin saying *English is England's language but the world's treasure* (EL Gazette, 1996 in Jenkins, 2000, p. 5). Dailin's comment implicates the validation of world-English varieties and their pronunciation other than RP. Particularly, the dismantling of British empire in ESL countries in Indian sub-continent tend to accept and develop a range of local English accents from speakers of different L1s such as Bengali and Punjabi on one hand and are concerned to retain intelligibility on the other. This paper agrees with Bansal whose findings in India matches Bangladesh and other Bangla speaking regions that:

"The view that the only suitable model is British RP is not shared by all educated people in the country and ...it is felt that *some reasonable standard* should be insisted upon to ensure effective communication" (1990, p. 229-30).

Of course, Bansal's proposition is true though it is impossible to set a transformed dichotomy other than existing standard RP or General American English (GA). But, Bansal does not clarify what he means by *some reasonable standard*. If Bansal's proposition matches with Widdowson's *neutral medium*, it will be a failure:

"An entirely neutral medium for the conveyance of information is doomed to failure because as soon as the human factor intrudes, the language grows, changes, varies, becomes subject to the identifying need of speakers to express their own *identity*" (1982, p.11-12).

So, the choice of one standard phonetics model and its acceptance and rejection requires to delve into the *fiction*<sup>5</sup> and facts related to the background of non-native speakers and it entails more empirical study other than this small effort. However, it is manifest that some L2 speakers genuinely do desire to acquire an RP accent and many more admit to preferring to retain something of their L1 accent (Porter & Garvin, 1989 in Jenkins, 2000, p.16). Again, Benson finds

<sup>3</sup> The ownership of English has changed the notion of ESL and EIL and EFL pedagogy widely. As the debate involves talk on the ownership of English, it delimits the study of what should be the standard model for teaching pronunciation. Despite this fact, there should be a more intelligible standard which has to be the criterion for all learners.

<sup>4</sup> This has a strong implication to the ownership of English, which again requires RP to be the standard phonetic pedagogy.

<sup>5</sup> The fiction is the most important fact to look into as most of the problems which the Bengali speakers face is due to lack of interest in trying to pronounce them correctly, not only the Bengali speakers but also other learners can overcome the intricacies of sounds since all of us share the same articulators to create sounds.

that English with a Japanese accent is the second most preferred goal (1991, p. 34-48). Whereas, an American accent is preferred as learning goal rather than a British RP (Benson et al. 1994 in Jenkins, 2000, p. 16). This is obvious that learners do have a propensity to take over RP or American, and it can be argued that a *model* should be set in the pedagogical framework since it may be confusing for learners to determine which pronunciation to adopt. But, there cannot be any obligation on either side, so the intelligibility would be plausible in terms of the production of the sounds.

As Bengali is very rich in alphabet and their consonantal clusters, the Bengali speakers face very little problems which can be easily overcome without having to set any rigid standard pedagogy, rather they need repetition and practice for that. So, this paper agrees that 'the problem of labio-dental fricatives /f/ and /v/ can be overcome by an L1 transfer, which will not impair intelligibility' (Jenkins, 2000, p.101). This can be made identified with any local dialect pronunciation depending upon the speakers' home town. For instance, for a Chittagonian, the closest type of pronunciation with /v/ can be replaced by /vap/, a local lexis, which means smoke or evaporation in English. So, the prescription would be to do replacements with L1 equivalents to make it sound much easier and more contextual. Along with this, the mooted one to one correspondence like, /dʒ/and/z/and/s:/ and /a/ can be teachable to Bengali speakers to minimize ambiguity of sounds. Moreover, the *epenthesis*, as Jenkins (2000) believes, which corresponds to the problem of Arabic learners is a common tendency of L1 child acquisition. This problem is in all likelihood can be removed through the consonant clusters used in Bangla language, as Bangla is very rich in consonant-clusters.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Teaching the most plausible sounds to Bengali speakers of English has been the key issue throughout this paper though there must be a dichotomy in the pedagogical system as English can be entitled with two denominations in Bangladesh, ESL and EFL. Whereas, the researchers suggest; (Jenkins and Kenworthy, 1998) *cloning* and; (Daniels, 1995 in Jenkins) L1 *regional variety*, Bhatia's proposition seems to be more appropriate for any ESL or EFL student learners including Bengali speakers of English:

"...It is necessary to recognize nativized norms for international functions within specific speech communities, and then to build a norm for international use on such models, rather than enforcing or creating a different norm in addition to that" (1997, p.318).

Yet, the modification of sounds entails practice and proper instructions for Bengali speakers of English.

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# William Butler Yeats: The Hidden Nationalism

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**Abstract**—W.B. Yeats the famous Anglo Irish poet and dramatist was accused of a lack of sense of nationalism. His achievements in the reviving of the Irish culture as a means to establish a dependent Irish identity was regarded with suspicions simply due to his being a descendant of Anglo -Irish origins. In this light, the study comes to shed light on Yeats' tremendous achievements concerning his sense of nationalism and his role in the reviving Irish culture. Also, the study aims at refuting the charges against Yeats which considered him as a representative of the colonizer's class. Finally, the study proved that Yeats revealed a mature vision of nationalism which most of his contemporaries failed to notice since they only focused on one aspect of Irish identity and neglected the other; in discussing the Irish question, they were either politicians or culturalists. Whereas Yeats shows a higher degree of awareness as he believed that establishment of an identical distinctive Irish identity must be done with having both the cultural and the national elements united in one word that is "Irishness." His national creed is rooted in a kind of cohesion between culture and nationalism. It is this conclusion that not only refuted the charges against Yeats' nationalism but also put him in a position superior to any other Irish Nationalists.

**Index Terms**—W. B. Yeats, modern Irish drama, modern theatre, national identity, postcolonial literature

## I. INTRODUCTION

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) is recognized today as one of the most significant literary figures in the twentieth century. Many critics deal with him as a distinctive Irish writer, for instance Kitishat (2012) refers Yeats' importance to his efforts "in the national employment of literature for national purposes were the fountainhead by which he was able to present the national cause of his country." (p. 83) Many critics deal with him as a writer who "bears a very special relation to a particular culture." (Brooks, 1978, p. 44). Though Yeats is considered the key figure in the re-making of the Irish identity, still subsequent critics deal with his works suspiciously, politicians also degraded his national efforts. Because of his hybrid Anglo-Irish origins, he has seen a representative of the English hostile stereotype of Irish identity. Many Irish Nationalists did not believe in his nationalism simply because he is from an Anglo-Irish class and thus they identified him as reporting the English stereotype. About this point, Louro indicates that Yeats' plays were "attacked for not serving well enough the nationalist cause." (1991, p. 2382). Being a descendant of Anglo-Irish stock, Yeats was accused of disloyalty to Ireland, because he did not show much nationalism. Many critics undermined Yeats' efforts accusing him of belonging to a "colonial class," a representation of English occupation. For instance; John S. Kelly in "The Fifth Bell," argues that "after some attempts to identify with the people, [Yeats] fell back into colonial and authoritarian attitudes". (1989, p. 110)

## II. YEATS BETWEEN NATIONALISM AND CULTURALISM

Subsequent critics supplement the suspicious attitude toward Yeats; Kiberd for instance in *Inventing Ireland* argues that Yeats was working from "a version of a version" (1996, p. 137), which means that he introduces a "romantic English" vision of the Irish life: English rather than Irish. Still, some critics believe that Yeats embodies a "national" rather than mere "Provincial- Culturalism," for the latter is an embodiment of the English colonized perspective of Ireland as a "province" of England. This "Provincial" view of the Irish literature undermines its importance; and thus Irish writers, including Yeats, rejected this exclusive colonized attitude toward their literature as being secondary or "disposed culture" (Brooks, p. 44).

Moreover, Yeats' hybrid origins caused him much trouble since he did not match with all the main categories that were listed of the "Irish national being." For example, in *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature*, three forces were introduced to identify the Irish national literature: they are best summarized in the following headlines; "the Religious consciousness[...], Irish Nationalism, the Land." (Brown, 1988, p. 83). In this light, being of an Anglo-Irish Protestant Ascendancy, Yeats though "a major voice," did not truly speak for "Irish reality," he "stands for the Irish tradition as broken." (Brown, 1988, p. 83)

Though Yeats attempts to refute these charges, still as Donna Gerstenberger in "W.B. Yeats: Politics and History" points out that the debate over Yeats' nationalism continued "unsettled, unsettling, and unsatisfying" (p. 81). The main charge directed to Yeats is his hybrid stock. Regarding this point Gerstenberger comments:

Yeats stood on the margins between two centuries; culturally, he belonged to neither of the classes he admired most, peasant or nobleman, his life divided him between England and Ireland; his

literary precursors were Shakespeare, Shelly, and Blake, although he wished to create a voice for Ireland, and, Protestant in a Catholic country.(1989, p. 86)

Another charge directed to Yeats is his "Anglo-Irish elitism" (Brown, 84). By elitism, Yeats is described as alien to the majority of the Irish people. Critics suggest that by being a representative of elitism, Yeats made a great distance between him and "the rough digestion of a crofter, a Connemara fisherman, a country shopkeeper, a country doctor, a lawyer, a policeman, a soldier." (Brown, p. 80) In other words, Yeats was accused of being cut off and isolated from the middle-class Irish people. Also, other critics accused Yeats of inauthenticity because of Yeats' tendency to idealize Irish life as mythic which means that he detached Irish people from reality.

Yeats identified himself with the Irish culture as a fountainhead of the Irish identity; he wished to transcend this identity dilemma by having a refuge in some quiet place that has nothing to do with the political disorder in his country. This refuge was found in a literary form, the Irish Celtic material in its cultural and national forms.

Yeats' efforts were mainly distorted and suspected on the grounds of "political affiliation or religion," a fact which only revealed "insularity" which Yeats often "railed" against. (Donoghue, p. 11). Not only did Yeats reject this insularity against the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy, but he also participated in many national movements such as the establishment of the Irish National Theatre, the participation in the Gaelic league as well as his literary activities. Nevertheless, even these national endeavors on Yeats' behalf were attacked by the nationalists. However, Yeats prefers to identify himself with the Irish people and rejects the English identity. Besides, he recognized that the only way to define the Irish identity is by "contrasting it with English influences" (Kelly,1989, p.117).

As for Yeats, his Anglo-Irish roots did not influence his sense of nationalism; on the contrary, he identifies himself with the Irish identity, and believes that "the Anglo-Irish tradition, mainly Protestant and aristocratic, was capacious enough to include 'old fathers' ... his own family, and the Pollex fens". (Donoghue, 55) Thus, in this light, Yeats is seen as a national as well as a cultural innovator who attempted to "educate the Irish out of provincialism and sectarianism," to "rediscover, through the agency of art, their true national character." (Deane, 1989, p.50)

No doubt that many nationalists and politicians misunderstood Yeats' efforts in reviving the Irish culture, Kiberd classifies Yeats' enemies into three main categories: Cultural conservatives, extreme Catholics, and the extremist politicians. (p. 161)

In re-staging the past, Yeats aimed to examine the cultural context of the Irish literature as a source of his themes. R. Jude Meche comments on the "re-staging of Ireland's past" is achieved, "by examining the thematic and formal experimentations" and by "trouble[ing]," Irish history .(2002,p.2882) Thus in his depiction of Irishness on the Irish theatre, Yeats develops a trend of "aesthetic resistance" to the political propaganda that some writers introduced in their works . However, Irish cultural nationalism was greatly influenced by the political change that takes place in Ireland especially that which resulted in the break of the union with England in December 1921 (Cullingford, 1984, p.109). Still, such a historical background should be taken into considerations if we tackle Yeats' sense of nationalism and his identity crisis. So, Yeats asserted the need of a distinctive national identity that differentiated the Irish theatre from his English counterparts.

Taking into consideration Yeats' Anglo-Irish stock, Yeats encountered a great enmity from some nationalists who accused him of anti-nationalism and attributed his refusal to employ his literature as a political weapon to his hybrid origins. Though Yeats was hybrid, he was loyal to Ireland and chose to identify himself with the Irish nation and to defend its national identity as distinct from that of the English.

### III. YEATS' HYBRID IDENTITY AND THE SENSE OF NATIONALISM

Taking into consideration the cultural milieu of Anglo-Ireland, the conflict between the Anglo-Irish cultural, as well as national awareness encouraged the Irish people in their struggle against English colonization. Belonging to Anglo-Irish origins, Yeats introduced the modern Irish context in the light of this hybridism. The hybrid identity (Anglo-Irish) stimulates Yeats to prove how the two cultures are integrated into one. This fact justifies Yeats' restless quest for identity that had its roots in the Irish culture. However, at the same time, Yeats expresses his intentions to refine this culture so that it can play a significant role to fulfill its goals. Instead of making his works have a "cultural authority," as Taylor states, Yeats insists that theatre must have an "ethnic" quality by focussing on the spiritual or the hidden worlds which are found in Celtic Ireland.(Taylor, 1984, p.6) Ireland, with its Anglo-Irish conflicts, presents two slices in the society: the majority of the Irish people who descended from real Irish roots, and a small slice of the Irish society of hybrid origins the so-called Anglo-Irish. Concerning this point, Homes Bhabha, argues that because the colonizer had power over the colonized, he practiced many forms of discriminations which were manifested as binary opposites: the colonizer and the colonized; or in other words between the self and the other. (*The Location of Culture*,p.p. 34). About this point, Ashcroft et al., in *Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, questions the possibility of having a true cultural identity if there is a colonial authority (1995,p.2).

Accordingly, Yeats rejects the theories of colonial literature especially those concerning "the superiority" and "the rightness" of the colonial power and the portrayal of the distorted "stereotypes" of the colonized nation. (Boehmer, 3). Therefore, the Irish theatre aims to "interrogate the hegemony underlying imperial representation" which was widely spread within Irish drama. (Richards, p. 613) . Thus, the Anglo-Irish identity crisis is relevant to the experience of decolonization. For instance, Shaun Richards examines the ideology of the Irish dramatists during the Revival. He

states that "their concern was with a fundamentally 'nationalist' reading of Ireland." (Shaun Richards, 616) For instance, Victor Merriman in "Besides the Obvious: Post Colonial Criticism, Drama, and Civil Society define postcolonialism as a representation of, an awareness which took place when the colonized nations resist and fight to have their rights. (p.625). In other words, postcolonial writers try to cut any contact with any theory that supports colonization. They "sought to undercut thematically and formally the discourses which supported[ ... ]the myths of power, the race classification, the imagery of subordination." (Boehmer, p. 3) Thus, W.B. Yeats is embedded under the category of postcolonial writers. Indeed, he attempts to present the Irish culture and heritage in contrast with the process of the colonizing of his country on the one hand, and at the same time a process aiming at arousing the Irish people to obtain independence from their English colonizers.

In light of post-colonial criticism, there is a great responsibility which is laid on the shoulders of the liberation movements, literature, political and cultural activities. Without the doubt, the self-realization of the Irish people as a nation is different from the English in culture as well as in language. This self-realization helped in explaining the spread of the spirit of nationalism among the Irish people. Concerning this point, Neil Lazarus in "National Consciousness and the Specificity of (Post) Colonial Intellectualism" highlights the relationship between the spread of nationalism and its contemporary theories since they play a great role in the spread of the "decolonizing project." (1994, p. 198)].

Yeats is classified under the class of national poets in whose poetry there is a national quest for occupied nations to resist occupation. For instance, Edward Said draws an analogy of Yeats' national poems with resistance poetry; he attempts to prove that Yeats was responding to certain historical moments in the history of Ireland such as the bloody events of Easter 1916 or the so-called Easter Uprising. Highlighting Yeats' efforts in this aspect, Said states that Yeats is a representative of poets who resisted imperialism, but his way was not by making poetry direct political propaganda, rather by introducing a "new narrative" for the Irish people. (1990, p. 85) What is worth mentioning in this context is Said's estimation of Yeats' effort as a nationalist represented in his efforts of decolonization. For Said, the historical and political milieu is considered as a magnificent opportunity that inspired Yeats to introduce new themes of heroism and sacrifice for his works both poetry and drama. (1990, pp. 86-7).

Yeats links the literary and imaginative freedom with his sense of nationalism. He was seeking reconciliation between "nationalism and liberty, but where he could not, chose liberty." (Cullingford, 1984, 13) Also, in *Autobiographies*, Yeats attacks his Irish contemporaries who degraded his nationalism. He argues that any literary work that was deliberately written for praising a political figure or event is of a low artistic value, a fact that cannot be understood but only by those who know the boundaries between the politician and the nationalist. He even claims that such literature would enslave the nation "in the name of liberty." (247)

Thus, Yeats' insistence on the compulsion of the free will even in his adoption of political or national attitudes. However, this desire to link the national and cultural without sacrificing any of them placed a heavy burden on Yeats and thus encouraged some critics to accuse him of not being national as he claimed. Taking this fact into consideration, Yeats' sense of nationalism was mistakenly considered, as the study attempts to prove, Yeats, insisted on the sovereignty of literature and the free well of people in general and writers in particular. As an Irish citizen who was deeply interested in liberating Ireland, Yeats was against the hypocrisy and materialism of the colonial state and the influence of the materialistic theories such as Communism, Socialism and thus he searched a refuge in spiritualism and mysticism which he found rooted in the Irish culture. Although Yeats is a national Irishman, he refused to allow any ideology to make him its spokesman by using his poetry as a medium for any party. Refusing this issue completely, Yeats in *Autobiographies* states that one of his best friends, Morris, asked him to write about Socialism and to link it to the Irish question, but he refused Morris's request saying that this was not his concern as a writer. (249)

Pondering on Yeats' interest in cultural nationalism, it must be acknowledged that Yeats as a famous Irish writer cannot be studied in isolation of the political, cultural as well as the literary movements in his age. He is a writer who was able to express his country's political culture, religious problems without any prejudice to a special part in the conflict. Yeats' great sense of responsibility made him involved in the political, cultural dilemma of asserting an identity for his people. To achieve this goal, Yeats bore in mind the audience who read his poems or watched his plays. He understood well that if the audience were aware of this national quest, his efforts would not end in vain.

Having the audience in mind, Yeats expressed his desire to win the majority of the people to his side. In *Essays and Introductions*, Yeats felt a great responsibility regarding his work as an Irish writer; he aims to have the attention of the simple Irish audience who was his primary concern. He believed them to be "the right audience could one but get its ears." (265)

Of the paradoxes to win the audience or to lose them, Yeats sometimes was frustrated by the failure of his Irish audience to understand his intentions, for instance in *Autobiographies* Yeats wrote "The Irish people were not educated enough to accept images more profound, more true to human nature, than the schoolboy thought of young Ireland." (P.494)

Within this context, it is worth pointing out Yeats' national attitudes as a writer he attempted to portray his reaction regarding any incident that influenced him or affected his life regardless of its being political or not. In *Essays and Introductions*, Yeats expresses his attitude toward the employment of literature for political or moral purposes. He expresses his refusal because he belonged to an "a school of writers," who repudiated "to preach a doctrine to consider

the *seeming* necessities of a cause.” (pp. 256-57)

Regarding Yeats' refusal to adopt a specific political ideology, C.K. Stead clarifies this point saying: "He had always advanced the arguments of the nineties [1890s] to resist pressure from the Irish patriots[...] who were often puzzled by his refusal to use poetry as a political weapon." (1977, 21) No doubt, for Yeats there is a big difference between being a nationalist, but not a politician. Yeats writes:

All day I'd looked in the face  
What I had hoped would be  
To write for my race. (Yeats, *The Fisherman*, p.69)

However, Yeats did not see himself a politician. However, Yeats drew a line for himself not to go beyond, he is, without doubt, a patriotic and a national figure, but as clearly seen, he refused to support a party or a "government," since he is against making literature propaganda. Still, Yeats refused to be a spokesman for anyone except himself and the Irish people, as he expressed it in "The fisherman" "to write for my own race/ And the reality" (Larrissy, *Yeats: A Critical Edition of the Major Works*, p.68) Evidently, Yeats' importance is not only literary, it is, as Foster argues, a "diplomatic". He states that Yeats' "historical task was not militancy at home, but diplomacy abroad." (Larrissy, p. 324)

Revealing a high degree of awareness of the Irish critical historical and cultural situation, Yeats sought an active role for literature in strengthening the national feelings. Furthermore, Yeats expressed his love for Ireland and his pride in his belonging to this Gaelic culture. On Yeats' dedication to his country as he considered "love of country" and love of the "unseen life" related and inseparable. In other words, Yeats attempted through the medium of literature to "weave them together into a complete philosophy" (38). Yeats expresses this love in "I am of Ireland."

In *W.B. Yeats: A Critical Edition of The Major Works*. Yeats boasts:

"I am of Ireland,  
And the Holy Land of Ireland  
And time runs, cried she  
Come out of charity:  
Come dance with me in Ireland." (Yeats, *I am of Ireland*, p. 142).

Finally, Yeats' efforts for his country are numerous and highly estimated, he is seen as diplomatic who succeeded in shedding light on the Irish question and asserted the Irish identity while politicians (Republicans & Unionists) failed. For this fact, the new Free State government afforded Yeats a seat in the Irish Senate in 1922. (Mac Lamoire, p. 97) Besides he was afforded the Noble Prize in 1923 for "he is remembered as an important cultural leader," also as a major "playwright." (97) In this light, Yeats' efforts are concluded to be a comprehensive approach to the establishment of the Irish identity that is rooted in national, cultural as well as aesthetic principles.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Yeats has a great responsibility for embodying the hopes, expectations, of the Irish people in his works. Thus, Yeats' efforts in the establishment of the Dramatic Irish movement are seen as a counterattack by which he was able to refute the charges attributed to him because of his hybrid (Anglo-Irish) origins.

By presenting plays that encouraged the Irish to have their freedom by committing themselves firmly to their cultural roots, Yeats had done a great national service for his country's quest for establishing their own national identity. Unfortunately, very few people realized his national efforts. His national philosophy was not direct political propaganda. An attitude which he firmly rejected for he believed that literature is not the place for politics. However; he made it clear that there is a vast difference between to be a politician or a nationalist. When he had the chance to choose, he chose to be a nationalist; but not a politician.

To sum up, the study proved that Yeats revealed a high degree of awareness regarding cultural identity as coupled with the nationalism. By focusing on his role in the reviving of the Irish culture in his works, Yeats was able to arouse the national identity. Yeats believed that both culture and nationalism are interrelated and cannot be separated from each other; the existence of one of them requires the existence of the other. By reaching this conclusion, the study proved that Yeats revealed a mature vision of nationalism which most of his contemporaries failed to notice since they only focused on one aspect and neglected the other; they were either politicians or culturalists. However, concerning Yeats, he was wise and smart enough to reach this cohesion between culture and nationalism. A fact which raised him over other Irish Nationalist, who always considered Yeats' sense of nationalism with suspicions because as they were blind to see his peculiar, distinctive hidden nationalism.

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# Competitive Team-based Learning vs. Reciprocal Teaching of Reading: A Study in Reading Classes

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**Abstract**—This study was an experimental investigation on the effects of a new innovative approach to ELT/Education namely Competitive Team-Based Learning (CTBL), developed by Hosseini (2009, 2019) at Mashhad Rooyan Research Center in Iran, and Reciprocal Teaching of Reading (RTR), developed by Palinscar, at the University of Michigan and Brown (1985), at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, on the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL intermediate students. See the introductory 17-minute video to CTBL at <https://youtu.be/cPtOUaIkJlk> or at <http://www.aparat.com/v/i32tK>. After administering Interchange placement test to a total population of 75, and after ensuring that the participants were homogenous and at intermediate level, sixty students were selected, based on their scores in the pretest. Then, they were randomly assigned to two experimental groups – thirty per group. Each class was divided into seven teams of four – the two remaining students in each class worked in pairs. Before the experiment, the researchers conducted the Interchange reading test. In the course of experimentation, while the first experimental group was instructed via RTR method of CL, the second experimental group was instructed via Hosseini's approach to (language) teaching (i.e., CTBL). At the end of the study, the reading comprehension test (posttest) was used to assess the probable progress in the reading comprehension ability of the students. Independent samples T-test illustrated statistical significance at  $P \leq 0.05$  level that proved the superiority of CTBL over RTR on the participants' reading comprehension achievements. Suggestions to researchers have been put forward at the end of the present article.

**Index Terms**—competitive team-based learning, reciprocal teaching of reading, reading comprehension

## I. INTRODUCTION

As an effective means of communication in today world context of globalization, reading could also greatly contribute to the quality of the language one acquires/learns. Iranian college and graduate students need effective reading skills to comprehend a large number of reading materials from various sources related to their studies which are engulfing them. For Iranian high-school students, as English foreign language (EFL) learners, reading is even more important. This is due to the fact that they have to be very competitive in the national universities' entrance examination. In addition, high-school students need to improve their English reading comprehension abilities to more advanced level because of the demanding expectations for academic success in all areas of learning.

In spite of the significant importance of English, English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly in reading comprehension classes/courses, has not been a success in Iran until now (Hosseini, 2012). Some difficulties including large size of classes, limited reading strategies, and particularly the methods of teaching reading comprehension in Iranian classrooms causes the Iranian students' English reading ability does not reach a very high level of proficiency.

Hosseini (2007, cited in Jahanbazian, 2015) proposes the idea that the teaching methods and approaches Iranian educators avail themselves of in the course of teaching English language play a more noteworthy role in this fiasco. He argues that in spite of the considerable developments in the field of ELT, Iranian teachers as well as most of teachers from other parts of the world are still applying the traditional methods and approaches in their language classes. According to Hosseini majority of Iranian teachers are using a hybrid of grammar translation methods and audio lingual methods for the purpose of teaching English language in their classes. The fact is that the mechanisms underlying such classes do not have the potentiality to engage all of the students in the process of language learning. Furthermore, the pivotal role of language learning strategies has been greatly ignored in Iranian language classes.

It is in such a context that in recent years, the pendulum in language education is shifting towards learner-centered models and approaches. This shift signals a new era in which the significance of language learning strategies also is prioritized. A promising method to traditional teaching of reading is Cooperative Learning (CL). CL could serve as an alternative way of teaching for promoting reading abilities of students (Gomleksiz, 2007; Ning, 2011). Prior research also suggests that CL has significant effects on developing students' reading skills (Pattanpichet, 2011). The common belief is that in cooperative learning settings students are more active and are encouraged to take more responsibility for their learning. But CL is a general term that refers to some teaching methods where students work in groups on a certain activity

in order to maximize one another's learning and to achieve certain shared learning goals (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1998, cited in Jahanbazian 2015). Like many other parts of the world, however, in Iran too English reading instruction within the framework of CL has not been tried yet at the intermediate level particularly when it comes to different CL methods such as Competitive Team-Based Learning (CTBL) and Reciprocal teaching of Reading (RTR).

#### A. *Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study*

Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills to be developed and enhanced in language learners. It is, perhaps, in such a context that to comprehend appropriately is the main goal of TEFL in Iran. Nevertheless, it seems that a considerable number of even the students who graduate from universities are not still satisfied with their reading performances. This calls for immediate action to be taken. As it will be hypothesized in this research study, one of the main influential factors in our fiasco, in TEFL, in Iran, relates to the contexts of our classes occasioned by our approaches to teaching. It is a known fact that students in our present traditional contexts of learning are passive and are not willing to take responsibility for their own learning in the course of learning. And such behaviors contribute to their failure.

According to researchers like Jahanbazian (2015), there is no doubt today that CL methods are more effective than the traditional methods in improving reading performance of learners. As it will be clarified, the effects of CTBL and RTR methods of CL on students' reading comprehension have been repeatedly demonstrated and confirmed by studies conducted in L1 and L2 learning environments. However, studies on this area with EFL students in Iran are none and far between. Thus further investigation to examine whether the positive effect of CTBL and RTR also holds true for improving Iranian students' reading comprehension, still calls for empirical validation.

In the present study, as such, the researchers have tried to evaluate the effectiveness of CTBL and RTR on the reading comprehension of Iranian intermediate students. The researchers decided to compare CTBL with RTR as they think that, in comparison to other methods of CL, these methods are the most effective methods particularly for reading classes.

#### B. *Significance of and Justification for the Study*

This study considers an issue which has been ignored by researchers particularly in Iran. The results of this study would assist (language) educators increase their knowledge of particularly CTBL, which is a modern seminal approach to ELT/Education (Hosseini, 2019). As Hosseini confirms, the significance of CTBL for language classes refers to its focus upon systematic implementation of teamwork and discussion, which are of paramount importance for language learning. Teamwork and discussion contribute to direct and indirect transference of language learning strategies, social skills and learners' dispositions. Also, the value of RTR for language classes refers to the fact that it focuses on direct and explicit presentation of four main reading strategies in group work oriented learning environments.

Most importantly, the present study investigates the effectiveness of two Western oriented educational approaches in an Asian context, in language classes in Iran. As researchers like Jahanbazian (2015) and Akbarzadeh (2017) have confirmed, in spite of the large amount of research on the effectiveness of methods of CL in the West, there has been few researches on their effectiveness in non-Western academic environments, particularly in relation to EFL settings. This study would answer the question 'Whether CTBL and RTR would be effective in Iran?' and if yes, to what extent? The researchers hope that their findings would also encourage and help Iranian language educators to implement CL methods in their classrooms for the development of particularly reading performance of Iranian students. Educational policy makers, educationalists, researchers, syllabus designers, and material developers all throughout the world could also avail themselves of the results of this study.

#### C. *Research Question and Hypothesis*

This study was, thereby, an attempt to compare the effects of CTBL and RTR on the reading performance of Iranian intermediate students. The purpose of the present study was to answer the following question:

RQ: Was there any significant difference between the effects of CTBL and RTR teaching methods on the intermediate EFL students' reading performance?

Based on the above question, the null hypothesis was formulated as under:

H0: There would be no significant difference between the effects of CTBL and RTR teaching methods on the intermediate EFL students' reading performance.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of researches have been done to investigate the effectiveness of CL methods in developing students' reading skills.

#### A. *Some Studies Related to the Effectiveness of RTR*

Pearson and Fielding (1991) believe that teaching comprehension strategies is effective particularly for students who show poor comprehension. In their over a five-week period study, Westera and Moore (1995) showed that students who had 12 to 16 reciprocal teaching sessions gained, on average, more in tested reading comprehension. In this study 95% of the extended reciprocal teaching students showed gains in comprehension, compared to 47% of students in the short

reciprocal teaching group and 45% of the students in the control group.

In his comparative study, Alfassi (2004) hypothesized that RTR method of CL would have greater effects on students English reading comprehension in their language courses. Therefore, two classes of good readers were assigned to two groups by random: the experimental group (RTR) included 29 subjects, and the control group included 20 participants. Both groups had pre-, throughout, and post- intervention and maintenance testing was completed. At the end of the study it was found that the experimental group significantly improved as both experimenter-developed and standardized testing showed significant changes between pre- and post-testing. Therefore, it was concluded that RTR was effective for English Language arts curriculum.

In 2003, Clark carried out a 5-week research study to investigate the effect of reciprocal teaching on adult high school students' reading comprehension. Fifteen students participated in the study. Group discussions, written assignments, and surveys of the students' opinions on reciprocal teaching were instruments in this study. The results from the surveys exhibited that forty of the students believed that reciprocal teaching improved their reading comprehension and ninety of them believed they gained benefits from using reciprocal teaching and preferred it to traditional instruction.

In another study, Konpan (2006) compared RTR with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) on 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students' reading comprehension. The results showed that the experimental group, who were taught through RTR, improved their English reading comprehension abilities more significantly than the control group (i.e., the group who was instructed through the CLT) at 0.05 level. Therefore, the superiority of RTR over the CLT was confirmed.

In his one-group experimental design research study, Wisaijorn (2003) examined the effects of RTR on reading comprehension of 34 university students of English for Academic Purposes. He used a pretest, a posttest, and a follow-up reading comprehension test; a pre-questionnaire, a post-questionnaire, and a follow-up questionnaire; checklists; and journals. The results exhibited that RTR was more effective in improving the students' reading ability. Moreover, the students exhibited further gains in reading comprehension in the follow-up test compared to the results from the post-test completed at the end of the training.

Rosenshine and Meister (1994) conducted a meta-analysis of sixteen quantitative studies which focused on RTR in higher education. The study showed that reciprocal teaching was most effective for older students as well as those with poor comprehension skills.

Finally, as Fillenworth (1995) and Palincsar and David (1990) confirmed, a number of other researches has been done on the effectiveness of RTR on primary and college different levels and groups of students' reading abilities. The results of these studies also showed the positive effects of RTR on the participants' reading comprehension abilities.

#### *B. Some Studies Related to the Effectiveness of CTBL*

As this researcher (Hosseini, 2019) explicates, a number of researches have illustrated the significance and effectiveness of his instructional approach, Competitive Team-Based Learning (CTBL). In his MA research study, Hosseini (2000) compared the effectiveness of his own approach (CTBL) with the Traditional Lecture Method (TLM). He found significant results for the effectiveness of CTBL in improving the reading comprehension of Iranian high school students. Also, he found that his approach contributed to the development of reading comprehension abilities of lower performers more effectively than the TLM.

This researcher's PhD research study (Hosseini, 2009, cited in Jahanbazian, 2015), which was a comparative empirical research study sought to explore and examine the complex effects of his educational innovation, CTBL, with Learning Together and the Traditional Lecture Method (TLM) on Iranian and Indian EFL/ESL undergraduate learners': (a) reading comprehension in English, (b) language learning strategies, (c) attitudes towards English language learning and the select teaching methods, and (d) retention of information. All these objectives were addressed with respect to different-level achievers of the target groups with the help of field studies and experiments in Iran and India. It should be mentioned that Learning Together or Cooperative Group-Based Learning (CGBL) method has been developed by Johnson and Johnson at the University of Minnesota in the USA.

It became evident from the analysis of the data gathered that CTBL and CGBL served to (a) increase acquisition of texts contents, (b) widen repertoire of language learning strategies, (c) generate positive attitudes, and (d) improve retention of information, on the part of the target groups more significantly than the TLM. (Hosseini, 2014) Further analysis of the data revealed that whereas CGBL was substantially more effective in developing the reading skills of the participants, CTBL was more successful in developing their metacognitive and affective strategies. It was likewise noted that CTBL facilitated the participants' long-term retention of information or their depth of understanding of the texts contents more effectively than CGBL. The results also indicated that it was CGBL, rather than CTBL, that was more successful in Iran. But, in India, it was CTBL.

In another study, this researcher (Hosseini, 2012b) found that CTBL contributed to the language proficiency of Iranian EFL college seniors more effectively than Structured Academic Controversy method of Johnson brothers at the University of Minnesota in the USA. Also in 2014, in another study, he compared the effectiveness of his method with Group Investigation, developed by Sharan and Sharan (1992) at Tel Avive University, in Israel, with reference to the language proficiency of Iranian EFL intermediate students. This researcher found that his method was more effective in promoting the language proficiency of Iranian EFL intermediate students.

In her study, Jahanbazian (2015) intended to look and compare the possible effects of CTBL with Learning Together (LT) – the most popular method of Cooperative Learning (CL) -- on oral performance of Iranian EFL intermediate

students. She also wanted to measure the participants' attitudes towards language learning, individualistic class structure, CL, and the selected methods before and after the study. The results of the study showed that CTBL had a more significant effect on improving the oral performance of Iranian intermediate students. Analysis of the quantitative questionnaire results confirmed that there was more tendency towards supporting the implementation of cooperative strategies. More specifically, the participants had more positive attitudes towards CTBL rather than LT.me

Akbarzadeh's (2016) study was an experimental investigation on the effects of CTBL and Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD), developed by Slavin and associates (1977) at Johns Hopkins University, in the US, on the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL intermediate students. After conducting an IELTS Reading test to a total population of 75, sixty students were selected, based on their scores in the pretest. Then they were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups – thirty per group. Each class was divided into seven teams of four – the two remained students in each class worked in pairs. The control group was instructed via STAD technique, which is a well-known technique of cooperative learning, while the experimental group were instructed via this researcher's approach to (language) teaching (i.e., CTBL). The reading comprehension test (posttest) was used at the end of the study to assess the probable progress in the reading comprehension ability of the students. The results of the study confirmed the significant effects of CTBL on the participants' reading comprehension achievement.

In another study, Salimi Bani (2017) studied the effect of CTBL and Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) on the reading comprehension of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. She found significant results which proved the superiority of CTBL over CIRC in improving the reading comprehension of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

And finally, Salari (2018) studied the effect of CTBL vs. Reciprocal Teaching of Reading (RTR) ), developed by Palinscar, at the University of Michigan, and Brown (1985), at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, on reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. She also tried to gage the attitude of the participants towards these methods before and after the study. In her study, after administering Interchange placement test to a total population of 75, and after ensuring that the participants were at the intermediate level and that they were homogenous, sixty students were selected, based on their scores in the pretest. Then, they were randomly assigned to two experimental groups – thirty per group. Each class was divided into seven teams of four – the two remaining students in each class worked in pairs. Before the experiment, we conducted the Interchange reading test and the questionnaire. In the course of experimentation, while the first experimental group was instructed via RTR method of CL, the second experimental group was instructed via this researcher's method of (language) teaching (i.e., CTBL). At the end of the study the questionnaire was applied once again. The reading comprehension test (posttest) was also used to assess the probable progress in the reading comprehension ability of the students. The results on independent samples T-test verified the significant impact of CTBL on the participants' reading comprehension achievements. That is, CTBL was more effective than RTR in improving the reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL intermediate students. It was also found that the participants had developed more positive attitudes towards CTBL.

Despite the abundance of research findings that verifies the advantage of RTR and CTBL over other methods of teaching, no research, to date, has essayed to directly investigate and compare the effectiveness of RTR and CTBL particularly in reading courses in Iran. This research study has come to address this lacuna in the related literature.

### III. METHOD

Participants of this study were sixty Iranian intermediate EFL learners studying in Golrizan Language Institute in Mashhad, Iran. They were in two separate classes, including male learners, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty-one. They were all homogeneous with regard to age, exposure to English, and educational background. All of the participants were native speakers of Persian and for this reason, Kurdish and Turkish people were discarded. They were using English as a foreign language for general purposes. They had studied English for six years until the time the experiment was conducted.

Two experimental classes were assigned. One class conducted through RTR and another one through CTBL, each including 30 subjects. The students in the RTR class were allowed to build their teams of three or four members based on their interests. But the students in CTBL class were divided into seven heterogeneous teams based on their performance on the placement test. In other words, each team, in CTBL class, consisted of four members: (a) one learner with a high placement test score, (b) the two others with average placement test scores, and (c) another with a low placement test score. As noted, the placement test was also used to confirm the homogeneity of two experimental groups.

#### A. Instrumentations

The main text book which was used in this research was 3rd edition of Interchange 3 (Intermediate) by Jack C. Richards with Jonathan Hall and Susan Proctor (2005). This textbook is used in Golrizan Language Institute in Mashhad, Iran, for intermediate learners and it consists of 16 units. The main purpose of this book is to integrate grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Every unit of this book also contains a reading comprehension text, which was focused upon in the experimental groups in the present research study.

#### **The Interchange Placement Test**

The Interchange placement test was administered at the initial stages of the present research study. This test was applied to demonstrate the level of the participants and homogenization. The participants were tested in order to have two homogenized groups of 30 participants each, based on their scores in the pretest. Sixty learners, from among 75 learners, who scored within one standard deviation above and below the mean, were selected. They were then divided into 2 groups.

The reading section of Interchange placement test was also used to check the reading comprehension of the participants of this study before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the experiment. The same test was given after the study, after a-16-session practice, to see the effects of CTBL and RTR on two experimental groups. The test was similar both in format of the questions and their level for the two groups. The test consisted of 3 sections with a total of 70 questions:

Part 1: The Listening Section

Part 2: The Reading Section

Part 3: The Language Use Section

Learners had 50 minutes to answer the questions. The reason for using Interchange placement test in the present study refers to the fact that it is internationally valid, reliable and easy to administer.

It should, however, be mentioned that item facility and item discrimination has already been calculated for this test. The reliability of the test was found as high as 0.92. As a result of item analyses, no item was discarded.

### B. Procedures

The placement test was administered to 75 students, in the first session, in order to homogenize the participants according to their language proficiency levels. Sixty students who were nearly at the midpoint were selected, on the basis of the information obtained. To put it another way, very high or too low scores on the test were rejected, which in its turn contributed to the elimination of the effect of statistical regression. The selected participants served the study for a whole academic semester that included 18 sessions of 90 minutes each.

The researchers assigned the participants to the two experimental groups (i.e., CTBL and RTR) randomly. They did not let the population know the fact that an experiment was being conducted in order to minimize the reactive effect of the experimental procedure.

Students were ranked based on their performance and then cooperative groups were formed. In each class at intermediate level, the seven students who scored highest on the placement test were identified as high achievers and the seven students who scored lowest were considered as low-achievers. The remained 16 students were identified as average-achievers.

At this stage, the researchers conducted the pre-test and started the experiment. While in the RTR class, the students were permitted to shape their own teams of three to four members based on their interests, in the CTBL class, the students were assigned to seven teams of one high-achiever, one low-achiever and two average-achievers each. The reminded two students worked in pairs. The reason for this type of team building in CTBL class was that it provided opportunities for learners to peer-tutor and help each other to complete the shared learning goals. After grouping the students, in RTR and CTBL groups, the goals of the experiment and the class management techniques were explicated to the both classes.

Both the classes had the same curriculum, the same instructor and the same schedule of instruction in the course of experimentation. The difference was that while the RTR class experienced a method of presentation that focuses upon explicit teaching of four main reading strategies namely predicting, questioning, summarizing, and clarifying, the participants in the CTBL class experienced systematic teamwork and discussions through which they learned/acquired learning strategies directly and indirectly.

#### 1. Reciprocal Teaching of Reading and Reading

As regards teaching a text, in a real classroom situation, in RTR class, having activated students' minds on the topic through different techniques, the teacher introduced the text. To illustrate how the implementation of each of the aforementioned strategies helped students in the comprehension of the passage, the teacher *modelled* her own process of comprehending of the first paragraph of the text. She did it *by thinking the process aloud*. Through this technique, students learned the target strategies – the strategies that the teacher had already planned to teach. Students were then given the opportunity to try to follow the same procedure for next paragraphs in their groups so as to internalise and master the strategies. The point is that it was more proficient readers who took the first turns to implement the strategies, by thinking aloud, in order to endow lower performers with more opportunities to better understand the application of strategies. Group members also shared their uncertainties about unfamiliar vocabularies, confusing text passages, and difficult concepts and discussed more practical strategies to be applied for each problem.

#### 2. Competitive Team Based Learning and Reading

For a comprehensive understanding of the procedure in classes run through CTBL, see the 17-minute video, prepared by Dr Hosseini, creative of CTBL, at <https://youtu.be/cPtOUaIkJK> or at <http://www.aparat.com/v/i32tK>. As shown in the video, the teaching and assessment process, in CTBL settings, has been designed as it is illustrated in the below figure:

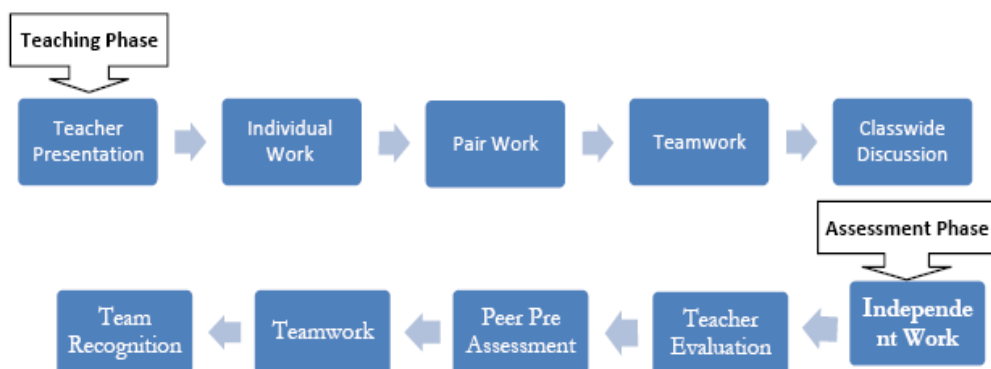


Figure 1. Teaching and assessment process in CTBL class; Adapted from Hosseini, 2012, p. 96

As it is illustrated in the above video/figure, in CTBL class, after the teacher presented the new lesson through different techniques and strategies, team members were required to work individually first. Then they were asked to work in pairs. Later they were encouraged to work as a team – with all their teams' members. And finally, at the end of the class time they had a class-wide discussion. In the following session students had a quiz, which they had to take individually. At the end of given time, the teacher collected some papers for correction and then required students to take the same quiz with their partners – in pairs. After that, the students were required to work on the same quiz in their teams – with all members of their teams. For CTBL's theoretical foundations (i.e., Dr Hosseini's Cognitive Socio-Political Language Learning Theory as well as his Multiple Input-Output Hypothesis, see Hosseini 2010 and 2019).

### 3. Distinguishing between RTR and CTBL

The researchers have tried to distinguish between RTR and CTBL in the table 1:

TABLE I.  
DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN RTR AND CTBL

RTR	CTBL
Less structured	More structured
Unsystematic implementation of groupwork	Systematic implementation of teamwork
<b>As a model of teaching does not have its own theoretical foundations</b>	<b>As an approach has its own theoretical foundations (see Hosseini, 2019)</b>
Direct/explicit presentation of four language learning strategies	Explicit as well as implicit presentation of language learning strategies
The approach to presentation goes through a) teacher presentation, b) groupwork	The approach to presentation goes through a) teacher presentation, b) individual work, c) pair work, d) teamwork, e) class wide discussion

As opposed to RTR which offers unsystematic implementation of groupwork and emphasizes on direct and explicit presentation of four language learning strategies such as 'summarizing', 'questioning', 'predicting' and 'clarifying', CTBL is a systematic implementation of teamwork that emphasizes explicit as well as implicit presentation of language learning strategies which goes through teacher presentation, individual work, pair work, teamwork and class wide discussion.

### C. Research Design

The study was a quasi-experimental research which used the two group pre-test treatment post-test design. While the participants' reading performance is the dependent variable of the present study, CTBL and RTR are the two independent variables. As noted, the researchers asked students, in both experimental groups, to take the pre reading test at the initial stage of the study. Regarding the kind of selection of the two groups, randomization process practically assured equivalency in many ways. For example, as both the groups experienced an equal effect of variables like contemporary historical events, maturation, and pre-testing, their effects were controlled. Therefore, the effects of these variables cannot be mistaken in the effect of the treatment as they were equalized. Also, extraneous variables which arise between pre-test and post-test which are known as intersession developments were also balanced out due to the presence of randomized selected groups.

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The descriptive statistics of the results for the research question are as following:

### A. Descriptive Statistics

#### Pre-Test Results for Both Groups

First of all, the means and variances of the two groups in pre-test were calculated. See table 2.

TABLE II.  
PRE-TEST RESULTS FOR BOTH GROUPS

Groups	Number	Mean	Variance
CTBL	30	17.6	8.7
RTR	30	17.76	8.5

The means and variances of both groups in pre-test indicated that the two samples had almost the same dispersions from the means. This was suitable for our purpose in the present study.

At the next juncture, to verify the pre-test results on both groups, an independent t-test was used. See table 3.

TABLE III  
THE T-VALE FOR THE PRE-TEST OF THE TWO GROUPS

T-value Critical	Degree of Freedom	Two-tailed Probability	T-value Observed
2	58	0.05	-0.21

As the value of the calculated t (-0.21) was less than the value of the t-critical (2) at 0.05 level of probability, the researchers concluded that the two groups had little difference.

**RTR Group Pre-Test and Post-Test Means**

The means obtained from the pre-test and post-test of the RTR group, which are presented in table 4, indicated that there has been a little progress in this group.

TABLE IV.  
RTR GROUP'S PRE AND POST TESTS MEANS

pre- test mean	post-test mean
17.76	21.16

To find out the significance of the above difference a matched t-test was conducted. See table 5.

TABLE V.  
PAIRED T-TEST FOR RTR GROUP

Group	X1	X2	S1	S2	D.F.	T-ob.
RTR	16.69	20.15	2.95	5.53	28.9	-6.7

P>0.05 t-critical 2.045

X1 = pretest mean

S1 = pretest standard deviation

D.F. = Degree of Freedom

X2 = posttest mean

S2 = posttest standard deviation

T-Ob = T Observed

As the observed t of -6.7 at a probability level of P > 0.05 exceeded the critical t of 2.045, the researchers concluded that there was significant difference between the RTR group performances on both tests. (See also table 6)

**CTBL Group Pre-Test and Post-Test Means**

The means gained from the pre-test and post-test of the CTBL group are presented in table 6.

TABLE VI.  
PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST MEANS OF CTBL GROUP

pre- test mean	post-test mean
16.69	24.9

The results of the CTBL group's means on both tests showed a remarkably high difference which supported the positive correlation of CTBL and Iranian EFL intermediate students' reading comprehension.

The researchers conducted another paired t-test in order to ascertain the results. See table 7.

TABLE VII.  
PAIRED T-TEST FOR CTBL GROUP

Group	X1	X2	S1	S2	D.F.	Tob.
Exp.G.	16.99	24.7	2.91	3.92	29	16.7

P>0.05 t-critical 2.045

X1 = pretest mean

S1 = pretest standard deviation

D.F. = Degree of Freedom

X2 = posttest mean

S2 = posttest standard deviation

T-Ob = T Observed

As shown in the above table, the t-observed (16.7) surpassed the value of t-critical (2.045) at a probability level of P>0.05. This would support the aforementioned hypothesis that CTBL has a significant effect on the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL intermediate students.

**Post-Test Results for Both Groups**

The two groups' means and variances in post-test were calculated at this stage. See table 8.

TABLE VIII.  
RESULTS OF POST-TEST FOR BOTH GROUPS

Group	Mean	Variance
CTBL	25.5	15.6
RTR	21.16	29.3

The differences between the variances of the two groups showed that the CTBL group remained to be more homogeneous. Moreover, the means presented in table 4.5.1 illustrated significant differences between the two groups. It seemed that the null hypothesis was firmly rejected.

To be sure, the results obtained from the post-test were subjected to an independent t-test. See table 9.

TABLE IX.  
THE T-VALUE FOR THE POST-TEST OF THE TWO GROUPS

T-value Critical	Degree of Freedom	Two-tailed Probability	T-value Observed
2	58	0.05	16.7

The researchers rejected the null hypothesis as the t-observed of 16.7 surpassed critical t of 2 at a probability level of  $P > 0.05$ . To put it another way, the independent t-test' results confirmed the positive relationship between CTBL and reading comprehension of Iranian EFL intermediate students.

Now, it can be claimed that in our class' settings, CTBL bears better results than RTR and improves intermediate learners' reading comprehension abilities.

### B. Inferential Statistics

Before continuing our discussions, the researchers review this research study question once more:

RQ: Is there any difference between the reading comprehension performance of the intermediate EFL students who are taught with CTBL and those who are taught with RTR?

The researchers applied a t-student test first to investigate the above research question. But before that, they tested to see whether the two groups were normal with reference to their reading comprehension performances. They also intended to ensure that the two groups' variances were equal. For the former purpose, the researchers applied One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. They also evaluated Equality of Variance test.

TABLE X (a).  
ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV TEST

		Reading comprehension performance in CTBL	Reading comprehension performance in RTR
<b>N</b>		30	30
<b>Normal Parameters<sup>a,b</sup></b>	<b>Mean</b>	24.7600	28.4643
	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	4.52111	5.18286
<b>Most Extreme Differences</b>	<b>Absolute</b>	.121	.158
	<b>Positive</b>	.069	.111
	<b>Negative</b>	-.120	-.151
<b>Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z</b>		.571	.772
<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</b>		.911	.588

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

That CTBL group is normal is not rejected in view of the fact that p-value (0.911) in Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of reading comprehension performance in this group is higher than 0.05. Similarly, that RTR group is normal is not rejected as p-value (0.588) in Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of reading comprehension performance in this group is higher than 0.05.

Then, the researchers applied Levene's Test for Equality of Variances in the two groups.

TABLE X (b).  
LEVENE'S TEST FOR EQUALITY OF VARIANCES IN CTBL AND RTR GROUPS

		Learner's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
Reading Skill	Equal variances assumed	.770	.384
	Equal variances not assumed		

Again, that the variances in the two groups are equal is not rejected since p-value (0.384) in Levene's Test is higher than 0.05.

Now, with the assumption of the equality of the variances of the two groups, t-student test was conducted the results of which are as below:



TABLE X (C)  
GROUP STATISTICS

	Method	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reading comprehension performance	RTR	30	25.1071	4.41663	.83466
	CTBL	30	28.4643	5.18175	.97926

TABLE X (d).  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Reading comprehension performance	Equal variances assumed	.770	.384	-2.609	54	.012	-3.35714	1.28671	-5.93683	-.77745
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.609	52.678	.012	-3.35714	1.28671	-5.93832	-.77597

The assumption of the equality of the average of reading comprehension performance in the two groups, with the assumption of the equality of the variance of the two groups, is rejected as p-value (0.012) in t-student Test is less than 0.05. Also, as noted in the table, the average of reading comprehension performance in CTBL is higher than the average of reading comprehension performance in RTR. Based on such results, the researchers concluded that CTBL is more effective than RTR in developing reading comprehension performance of students.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the present study rejected the null hypothesis and confirmed the idea that CTBL is more effective in improving the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL intermediate students. It was found that systematic implementation of teamwork through CTBL, which was also more structured, greatly affected the success of reading courses. It was revealed that much more individual learning/understanding had occurred in the CTBL class than in RTR class. Particularly, lower performers had further benefits in this class.

The results of this study were similar to the findings of Hosseini (2000, 2009, 2012), Jahanbazian (2015), Akbarzadeh (2017), Akinbobola (2009) and Salimi Bani (2017). But the results of this study were not completely in line with the findings of Nederhood (1986) who found no significant results for academic achievement of students in CL classes. Nederhood's study was a meta-analysis of 34 studies, which attempted to find out the effects of CL on reading comprehension, language arts, and mathematics of 1145 middle school students in 114 classrooms. The results of the study corroborates the idea that if Dr Hosseini's approach to ELT/Education is employed thoroughly and systematically, it can significantly improve the achievement of intermediate students' reading comprehension performance.

It is surprising that despite the results of our studies, our classroom practice, particularly here in Iran, is so much oriented toward traditional methods. It is time for the discrepancy to be reduced between what research indicates is effective in teaching and what teachers actually do.

A. Practical Implications

The importance of CTBL for language classes refers to the fact that it focuses on systematic teamwork. Successful teamwork is helpful to the emergence of different and creative ideas and strategies, which are favorable to the reading comprehension of learners also. Students' reading comprehensions develop meaningfully in CTBL settings as they need to exchange information, strategies and advice in order to succeed in achieving their shared learning goals.

This study provided data that reflects the essentials of our classrooms. The results provided by the present study may be of some help to both theoreticians and practitioners in the field of TEFL/ELT/Education. At the level of theory, our findings confirmed Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978) which emphasizes the facilitative role of interaction in learning. The ability to work with others, in competitive environments, which contribute to developing interpersonal skills suffices it enough to implement CTBL in today world classes. Increased interaction in English and easy management of large classes may be other motivating factors for employing CTBL.

1. Implication for Language Teachers.

At the level of practice, the results yielded through the study may be helpful to language teachers. Although using new methods is paramount and effective in learning, teachers should not neglect the significant impact of systematic implementation of teamwork on the reading comprehension abilities of their students. More specifically, the researchers suggest language teachers to focus on explicit as well as implicit teaching of reading strategies in CTBL

interactive environments. The interaction occasioned in such environments brings about many positive results particularly for the implementation and success of their technical innovations. Teachers should be aware that the process of learning is not a smooth one. In other words, their efforts would be in vain if they insist on their traditional chalk and talk system of class management. As Block (1998) also confirms, through the implementation of the traditional method in their classes, teachers are distorting the process of learning by chewing up the text for students and not allowing them to eat on their own.

Since CTBL proved to be useful in actual classroom procedure with EFL Iranian students in the present study, EFL teachers may easily adopt this approach in their reading courses to advance the students' reading abilities. It seems that if teachers try to have a general understanding of CTBL's principles, they can develop a range of tactics which will enable their language classes to become fully bonded, motivated, activated, and engaged in learning in a process-oriented environment. Language teachers should use CTBL in the reading class as it provides situations wherein students learn how to work collaboratively in the context of group discussion for constructing meanings out of the texts. In the process, students' self-regulatory and monitoring skills can develop, producing an autonomous reader.

### **2. Implication for Material Developers.**

Material developers may incorporate and design more challenging and motivating teaching materials, exercises, and activities which can encourage students to interact with their team members more effectively. This, in turn, helps learners to learn more about learning, increase their understanding and rate of learning, improve their reading abilities, and make more effective transitions to real world settings, where they will draw upon their experiences and skills to communicate, negotiate, build consensus, cooperate, compete and learn with others (Jahanbazian, 2015). Therefore, syllabus designers too should try to

- a. clarify the common shortcomings of team activities provided in their textbooks, and modify them in order to enhance the probability of more effective student interaction in classes run through CTBL.
- b. increase the quantity and quality of team activities in recent ELT course books.

### **3. Implication for Methodologists.**

Methodologists may also take CTBL's benefits into consideration and strongly recommend it to teachers/educators throughout the world for more interesting and of course effective classes. Methodologists should consider the fact that what differentiates CTBL, as a holistic approach, from other CL methods and even CLT refers to the emphasis it puts on the significance of systematic teamwork in competitive environments, as a real world phenomenon. Hosseini (2019) argues that our classes, as fractions of the real world, should prepare students for the real world, the macrocosm. He is of the opinion that as the real world is characterized with competition in environments that are engulfed with socio-political issues, educators should try to increase tomorrow citizenry's socio-political awareness in competitive environments.

### *B. Suggestions for Further Research*

The researchers suggest language teachers and researchers to compare the effectiveness of Dr Hosseini's approach to (language) teaching with other methods and approaches with regard to other skills and sub skills, rather than reading, in their school as well as university classes. Furthermore, Dr Hosseini (2019) believes that CTBL contributes to critical thinking and creativity of mind more effectively. He is also of the opinion that his seminal approach to ELT/Education contributes effectively to nation building, more civilised societies and eventually modern democracy and world peace, all of which exact more researches:

*DEMOCRACY* is an ideology which above all others prioritizes the paramount importance of humanitarian interpersonal principles and skills in human relationship, without which its practitioners are maimed. We educators must, thus, practice tomorrow citizenry in such norms, principles, and skills, in our mini-democratic lands (classes), if we do not want to continue to give birth to maimed detrimental-to-global-peace societies; if we want to contribute to the overthrow of dictatorial/corrupt regimes, and if we want to transform the present peasant communities into more civilized societies and compassionate civilizations. All of these are of significant importance as they contribute to live, humane, healthy, and civilized societies, and world peace, which is the ultimate dream of humanity in today highly multicultural, incredibly complicated, and of course developmentally competitive world context of globalization. As a more realistic seminal approach to liberal education, Competitive Team-Based Learning (CTBL), the sum-total of my educational life, could serve democracy as a major building block. (Hosseini, 2019, p. 136)

For more comprehensive understanding of CTBL's theoretical foundations and its salient features which distinguish it from CLT and the present innovative methods and approaches, search Dr Hosseini's Didactic Weapon on the net and watch my 17-minute introductory video or search the title of his approach. You may also see Hosseini, 2012/2018/2019.

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**S. M. H. Hosseini**, as an Iranian liberal educator, is interested in democratic education and has a zest for awakening, empowering, and emancipating the oppressed majority. He succeeded to publish more than 150 bookticles during his stay in India, in the course of pursuing his PhD, in ELT. Dr Hosseini has suggested *language as a liberating agent* in his seminal *Cognitive Socio-Political Language Learning Theory* based upon which he introduced his instructional weapon, a weapon for the overthrow of dictatorial regimes. Particularly, he recalibrates the critical attitude of his mind towards the philosophy beyond curricula in corrupt regimes and he focuses upon the importance of his didactic weapon for educators in today world context of tyranny. Although Dr Hosseini has the experience of teaching in different universities both in Iran and overseas, he has been obliged to teach at a *school for backward students* in Mashhad.

# Pragmatic Errors and Transfer of Foreign Learners of Indonesian: The Case of Refusals

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**Abstract**—Pragmatic transfer, an emerging part of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), has been receiving serious attention from applied linguists currently. This study was aimed at investigating pragmatic errors and pragmatic transfer learners made and effect of second language (L2) proficiency to their pragmatic transfer. Eighteen students of *Darmasiswa* who have been learning Indonesian language and culture from Bali State Polytechnic (PNB) and from Teacher Training Institute of *Saraswati Tabanan*, Bali, Indonesia were involved as research participants. Discourse completion test (DCT) consisting of nine situations designed with sociocultural aspect of power, distance, and rank of imposition (PDR) was used to elicit data of refusal strategies. The data were analysed to see pragmatic errors, pragmatic transfer, and effect of L2 proficiency on participants' pragmatic transfer. Result of analysis revealed that learners' pragmatic competence was still low. They were pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic errors made dealing with Indonesian noun phrase (NP) structure, the use of verb, noun, prepositions which are very different from English patterns. Moreover, pragmatic transfer was frequently made due to learners' shortage of L2 pragmatic proficiency and learners' L1 cultural knowledge. In addition, learners' pragmatic transfer was found to be strongly influenced by learners' L2 proficiency.

**Index Terms**—pragmatic transfer, pragmatics, proficiency, Indonesian language learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

Undeniably, learning Indonesian language, like learning other second language, also requires that learners should be introduced with pragmatics. In order for them to be able to perform speech acts, they have to be ready with two main treasures: knowledge of form and knowledge of social norms. Knowledge of form is included in pragmalinguistics, i.e. the linguistic resources by which speakers can produce functional utterances, and sociopragmatics, i.e. the knowledge about hearers' social rules based on which speakers will be able to produce appropriate utterances (Leech, 1983).

The case which usually comes up on second language acquisition (SLA) is how speakers can produce functionally and socially appropriate speech acts if their knowledge resources of both aspects are still limited, on the other hand, their knowledge of mother tongue still dominates their minds. Consequently, they are only able to realize poorly structured sentences of target language (TL) which adopt some of their L1 sentences or phrase structures or social norms. In this case, transfer of either language or pragmatic will occur. Language transfer is the influence resulted from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other languages that have been previously acquired (Wang, 2015). Language transfer is a common issue in SLA and foreign language teaching. It is also a domain of cross linguistic.

The present study is focused on responding to the following questions:

1. What pragmatic errors did learners make?
2. To what extend were pragmatic transfers performed by learners?
3. Does proficiency affect their pragmatic transfer?

Pragmatic transfer, as a part of language transfer, is a newly emerging area of study known as interlanguage pragmatic (ILP). Its emergence is caused by the effect of similarities and differences between the first language and the

second language of speakers. To put it deeper, its existence is caused by a number of aspects, such as cultural differences (Connor, 1996); pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic (Leech, 1983); as well as speakers' first language (L1) background and their second language (L2) proficiency (Hui, 2010). Learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) often attempt to compensate for their lack of knowledge by transferring some features of their L1 to L2. This is triggered by the desire they would like to achieve, i.e. they should be able to convey something even though with the production of functionally and culturally inappropriate sentences (Tavakoli and Salva, 2013). The problem about misuse of language forms functionally and social norms appropriately to produce sentences results in an endeavour of transferring what they have based on their L1 knowledge. Thus, transfer can be drawn as the use of native language knowledge in the acquisition of L2 (Gass and Selinker, 1992), which sometimes may lead to communication breakdown or pragmatic negative transfer (Thomas, 1983). Syahri (2007) underlines that pragmatic transfer, in the context of interlanguage pragmatic transfer occurs due to the culture difference. For instance, Indonesian learners often transfer the non-acceptance strategies using 'No' when responding to English compliment which they usually use in Indonesian language. In line with this notion, Zegarac and Pennington (2000) states that pragmatic transfer exists when there is influence on newly learned L2 knowledge by the existing native language knowledge in mind. It appears when people from different cultures communicate with each other without perceiving their different culture. In this case, miscommunication may probably happen and pragmatic transfer may probably occur (Bu, 2011).

There have been some studies administered in the field of pragmatic transfer. However, those research utilized different speech acts (SA) or topics to raise, such as 'suggestion' (Bu, 2011), 'request strategies' (Noda, 2013; Hui, 2010; Loutfi, 2016; Syahri & Kadarisma, 2007; Alam & Gill, 2016), 'negative transfer' (Wang, 2015), 'refusal strategies' (Tavakoli & Salva, 2013; Jafari, 2018), and 'effect of L1 pragmatic transfer' (Alhadidi, 2017).

Bu (2011) investigated pragmatic in suggestion strategies by Chinese who learn English language. The study was also in attempt to see what kind of pragmatic transfer in suggestion strategies occurs in intercultural communication and how the transfer occurs. The study involved thirty participants (ten English native speakers, ten Chinese learners of English, and ten native Chinese speakers). Data of pragmatic transfer in suggestion were obtained by using discourse completion task (DCT). By the help of Chi-square, the collected data were compared to see frequency of the use of suggestion strategies. Finding was successfully drawn that Chinese learner of English tended to use direct suggestion and hedged suggestion more frequently than English native speakers group. The transfer of pragmatic was done from culture of Chinese. The research proposed that, in field of pedagogy, teacher should incorporate materials about cross-cultural differences into instruction syllabus for teaching. In addition, in the teaching activities, teachers and materials designers have to expose students with formulae of suggestions which are made as contextual as possible.

Investigation of pragmatic transfer in SA of request was held by Noda (2013). The pragmatic transfer was focused on request written in email. The study was attempted to investigate how American learners of Japanese perform request SA in email. Specifically, it was in purpose to draw differences between request by Japanese native speakers and Japanese learners in terms of explanatory sequence, request strategy, sentence final form. In addition, the study was aimed at searching if there was evidence of L1 pragmatic transfer from English language to Japanese and if social aspects of power (P), distance (D), and rank of imposition (R) affect request realization. DCT with ten situations were applied for participants to make request. Learners' performance was compared to that of native Japanese speakers to see if there were any differences and similarities between the two performances. Data of requests were analysed from point of view of 'explanatory sequence, request strategies, and politeness' and 'sentence final form'. Results of analysis revealed that Japanese learners wrote noticeably fewer explanation sequences than Japanese native speakers. Japanese learners were influenced by P but Japanese native speakers were not. Japanese learners could produce shorter explanatory sequence than Japanese native speakers in all situations. Negative transfer occurred in the use of direct questions from English. Lastly, Japanese learner could use more limited apology strategy than Japanese native speakers.

Research on request by Hui (2010) was undertaken to examine the hypothesis that 'there are some common and unique pragmatic features in English text'. Explicitly, it was aimed at drawing pragmatic transfer that emerges in English email written by Chinese L2 English speakers. By involving thirteen participants with different English proficiency (based on their IELTS score) and exposure, there were 104 emails successfully analysed. The participants were also given questionnaires to see factors that affect their pragmatic performance. The result of analysis indicates that level of proficiency did not affect their pragmatic performance. The extent of pragmatic transfer of each individual participant was complex, triggered by some aspects, such as English proficiency, exposure to English, and confidence in using the language. Most participants, when making request SA, were found to be direct on the sentence level but indirect on the level of discourse.

Loutfi (2016) tried to explore Moroccan EFL learners produced request in order to investigate if L2 pragmatic competence acquisition is still desired. The research was aimed at comparing the average frequency of direct and indirect strategies used by native Moroccan English learners and native English speakers. In line with the Hui's (2010) study, this research was also undertaken to see if proficiency gives impact to transfer they made. The study raised up a hypothesis, i.e. 'transfer decreases as the study level increased'. The subject involved was 60 people (40 Moroccan learner of English and 20 native Speakers of English). Request strategies were set using frame work of CCSARP (Blum-Kulka, 1991). Data was collected using DCT with 7 situations with focused on investigating transfer of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. Upon data analysis, some conclusions were found that Moroccan learners of

English were not satisfactory. Sociocultural dimensions were fundamental to support acquisition of L2. There was transfer from L1 to L2 done by Moroccan learners of English. And, pragmatic competence was found to play a major role in the communicative failure of Moroccan learners of English. The result was emerging some pedagogical implications, such as teacher should include teaching pragmatic competence in curriculum to raise students' pragmlinguistic and sociopragmatic awareness of target language. Thus, teacher should be equipped with knowledge of pragmatic variation, how to teach pragmatic in L2 and how to assess it. In addition, students should be exposed to authentic L2 materials.

Apart from Loutfi's (2016) work, Syahri & Kadarisma (2007) investigated pragmatic transfer in request realisation by 68 Indonesian university students majoring in English study. The research was focused on recognizing how pragmatic transfer occurred in SA of request in EFL learners and to present enactment of language learners' SA which specify one type of SA realization. The participants pursuing 450 TOEFL score were involved in the project and provided with DCT questionnaire including 15 situations using variable of Power (P) and Distance (D). Result revealed that external modification was appearing more frequently than internal modification. Indonesian learners of English are considered to be influenced by their native culture norms. The research participants were also found to be able to embed some supportive move prior to executing head acts, and inserted move in initials position. However, the study did not figure out pedagogical implication to be proposed for instructional needs.

Alam & Gill (2016) also did a work on request and apology done by two groups of speaker, Pashto English learners and Siraiki English learners. The study was focused on investigating effectiveness of pragmatic transfer of both speakers from L1 to L2, their accomplishment of SA of apology and request in target language, as well as what specific culture and linguistic resources are transferred, why they use pragmatic transfer and how it affects pragmatic competence. DCT and semi structured interview were applied to 8 participants of both speakers who were from English cultural and linguistic background. Result of the discussion revealed that both speakers showed different performance. Pashto English speakers were more pragmatic and indirect in realizing request SA and were more direct in apology SA. Meanwhile, English speakers of Siraiki were more indirect and polite during their accomplishment of both SA.

Existence of pragmatic transfer was also proved by the work of Wang (2015) which investigated negative transfer in English writing, number of attributive clauses errors commonly occurred in Chinese students' writing and influences interferences made to the learners writings. It involved 60 students of Juinjiang University who were majoring in English and were given 30 minutes to do online writing composition. Data of research was also obtained from an interview. The collected data were sorted out to see frequency of mistakes. The analysis was also done to see interference in English writing, in terms of how many errors were made, how interferences influenced Chinese students writing. Result of analysis indicated that there were five error categories, including avoidance strategies, redundant pronoun, and omission of preposition, underused, misplaced and redundant relative words. It was also found that transfer error occurred in students' writing as they consciously or unconsciously turned to their L1 and they translate every words, i.e. English words with Chinese meaning. Suggestion to find more valid data was given by improving the study limitation, use of more than university as locus, combine written version with oral test, and use of formal and informal situation.

Research in refusals SA was also carried out by Tavakoli & Salva (2013) and Jafari (2018). Tavakoli & Salva (2013) investigated backward pragmatic transfer. This study used DCT to collect data and involved 44 Persian speakers (24 of whom were Persian EFL learners, 20 of whom were native speakers of Persian. Persian EFL learners were grouped into three levels of elementary, intermediate and advanced using Oxford Placement Test (OPT). Data were collected via 3 scenario role plays. Analysis was in purpose to examine participants' multiple competence by investigating backward pragmatic transfer from English to Persian when performing refusal to invitation. In addition, the study was also undertaken to explore participants' frequency and content of refusals strategies in L1 regarding the social status of P and D and proficiency level of EFL learners. Result of analysis fostered that there was a significant difference between Persian native speakers and high proficient EFL learners in terms of content and frequency of refusal strategies. EFL learners seemed more direct and employed more specific response to their refusal than Persian native speakers. However, Jafari's (2018) work was focused on investigating pragmatic transfer on Iranian EFL learners' refusal strategies and finding out their pragmatic competence. In that study, 60 EFL Iranian learners of advanced level aged 20-31 were involved. Multiple choices DCT was applied to collect data on realization of pragmatic recognition ability of participant while written DCT was applied to 20 participants of advanced learners of English. MDCT was built up of 10 situations in English. Result of study revealed that L1 interference caused 50% failure of Iranian EFL elementary learners. Intermediate and advanced learners mostly had difficulty in pragmatic recognition of English language. It can be implied that pedagogical intervention shall introduce pragmatic and culture aspects.

On different ground, Alhadidi (2017) researched the effect of L1 pragmatic transfer on the acquisition by Saudi speakers of English. 42 participants of Saudi speakers of English were involved and multiple choices questionnaire was employed to examine participants' pragmatic awareness of various SA. Specifically, it was undertaken to see if Saudi English speakers relay on their L1 pragmatics when they communicate in English, and do the beginner and advanced speakers transfer pragmatics from L1 to L2 equally. Data were collected by using online survey through Google forms. Data were analysed by using SPSS particularly that of paired sample t-test to compare result of T1 and T2. T test statistical significant was also used to draw differences between the averages of the two groups. Result of analysis

showed that beginner level of EFL learners tend to rely on L1 due to shortage of L2 pragmatic knowledge. During process of SLA they actively transfer knowledge of their native language to generate their L2 acquisition process. In contrast, advanced group did not show L1 pragmatic during the acquisition meaning that the higher the level of proficiency, the less L1 pragmatic is transferred.

## II. METHOD

This study involved eighteen foreign learners of Indonesian who had been learning Indonesian language intensively for one year in Bali. It is a scholarship program financed by government of Indonesia for foreigners who learn Indonesia language and culture in universities or the like all over Indonesia. The research participants involved are from numerous countries aged between 20 – 35 years old. They also have different level of Indonesian language (L2) proficiency upon given a placement test. The study was undertaken in the *Darmasiswa* classes at Bali State Polytechnic and Teacher Training Institute of Saraswati Tabanan, Bali, Indonesia.

In its implementation, the participants were given placement test to see at what level of proficiency they were. The test was taken from the regular test provided by *Darmasiswa* program which is usually used to measure students' proficiency prior to their level determination. The test was a-multiple choice test consisting of 40 questions. The result of test was listed to recognize participants' base- line. To collect data of participants' pragmatic competence particularly pragmatic transfer, participants were given DCT consisting of role play of invitation to elicit their performance of refusal SA. DCT consists of nine situations of request which included social aspects of power (P) and distance (D) of the hearer. Participants of research were to make refusal to request in each role play card. Upon the pre-test, participants were given a treatment in the form learning Indonesian language (particularly grammar) using self-directed learning (SDL) model. The model was developed in previous research. However, this research was not focused on measuring effectiveness of SDL specially designed for Indonesian language learning, but on learners' pragmatic errors and transfer made. Upon one session of learning of Indonesian language, they were given post-test. These tests were given to recognize whether learners' proficiency of L2 was in line with transfer they made. Their responses in form of refusal SA were noted on spaces next to each request or invitation. Although they were requested to make refusals in Indonesian language, some of them made it in English as they were not able to perform their capability. All of their works were collected and explicated. Participants' answers were listed and codified. Their responses were then analysed using theory of transfer.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis on participants' refusal performance led in some findings regarding pragmatic competence of participants. As described above, there are two main aspects viewed concerning the data, they are 'pragmalinguistic' and 'sociopragmatic'. Pragmalinguistic errors deal with the use of linguistic resources or form functionally, such as grammar, structure, collocation, phrases patterns, use of possessive pronouns, and things dealing with forms. Sociopragmatic errors deal with use of form in relation to correct context.

### A. Pragmalinguistic Errors and Transfer

In situation 1, pragmalinguistic errors are drawn as follows. The use of '*anda pergi*' which is based on the interview result means 'you may go' which refers to a giving permission. The utterances '*...tetapi anda akan bekerja satu hari lagi*' is not appropriately used to tell necessity as *akan* is used to tell futurity. Thus, *harus* referring to 'have to' is appropriate word instead. And the expression '*Kamu bekerja untuk hari ini...*', is also less appropriate functionally as it is suitably used for telling necessity, and it requires '*harus*' to be '*kamu harus bekerja untuk hari ini*'.

Responses to situation 2 of the role play card were not also proper. The utterance '*semua yang terbaik untuk ujian*' has not been in line with the speaker intention to say 'let's do the best for our exam'. Additionally, 'the expression '*setelah ujian itu, tolong datang ke kelas*' is still not relevant to what the speaker meant by "after the exam, please come to the class'. The article 'the' is translated as it is really needed in English language. The utterance '*...hari examnya saya belajar juga, tidak ada mungkin*', includes two errors. First, native Indonesian will commonly express '*pada saat ujian (exam)*' and '*tidak mungkin saya meminjamkan buku itu kepada anda*' which needs to have a complement after the word '*mungkin*'.

Dealing with situation 3, '*ya pak, sebentar, saya punya istirahat untuk makan siang sekarang*' is less proper as native speakers of Indonesian commonly say '*beristirahat*' to refer to 'I'll have a rest'. Apart from this, '*saya mau mengantar anda di sana*' also used improperly. Its problem is on use of preposition *di* which shall be replace with *ke* to express a movement instead of existence.

Two expressions in situation 4 may be based on or derived from English expressions thus sound less appropriate. '*...aku mau pergi dengan kamu, aku akan senang*' is not considered common in Indonesian since sincere expressing marker is commonly inserted in sentence or clause, commonly placed between subject and verb, as '*saya sangat senang bisa ikut dengan kamu*'. And expression '*Oh tidak, saya sakit dan tidak bisa pergi ke konser*' may be derived from the speaker's L1 pattern so that it sounds very expressive. As it is in purpose to apologize, it may be more appropriate to express '*Maaf, saya sakit dan tidak bisa pergi ke konser*'.



Two expressions in situation 5 also seemed to be awkward. '*Terima kasih pak untuk invitasi, saya akan coba, saya mau ke "kesantunan berbahasa" pada seminar minggu depan di kampus*'. By expressing the utterance, the speaker seemed to lack of verb treasure to express the verb 'invitation' in Indonesian language which should appropriately be '*undangan*'. The speaker's confusion in arranging sentence, i.e. which part of sentence shall be placed as an adverb of place following a verb or as a complement placed at the end of the entire sentence made his/her expression sounds confusing. The preposition *ke* must always be followed by a place or event and the name of event is usually placed after the event.

In situation 6, some expressions failed to express clear meaning to hearer as they contain disagreement between subject, verbs, and complement. In utterance '*Terima kasih untuk mengundang, saya akan kehadiran*', the words *terima kasih* shall be followed by utterance '*karena telah mengundang saya or atas undangannya*'. In addition, the modal verb '*akan*' (will) shall be followed by verb '*hadir*' to make an acceptable sentence. The other case, '*saya akan hadir pada kehadiran anda*' also expose a puzzling information as it loses a proper part of speech. The sentence needs a noun expressing an event, or the bold word needs to be formed into a noun as it is preceded with preposition '*pada*' (on). Thus, the following word which suits to fill in the position is any word expressing an event, such as '*pesta*' (party), '*rapat*' (meeting), and so forth.

In situation 7, the utterance '*tidak apa-apa, kami adalah teman*' fosters an error of form, as '*kami*' is used when hearer is not included in an action. However, this case or context needs that the hearer is included as the doers, thus it has to use '*kita*' instead. The imperative sentence '*Tetapi mengemudi dengan aman*' sounds awkward as it misses the use of appropriate verb form. The used verb functions as declarative verb which does not mean to give a direction to hearer. Thus, the sentence should use '*mengemudilah*' or '*tolong mengemudi*' to make an imperative sentence. Utterance '*Saya bukan marah karena situasi itu*' also shows less appropriateness as *bukan* is used incorrectly and *karena situasi itu* sounds uncommon. The word *bukan* is not appropriately used to precede an adjective, thus it should use *tidak* instead, and *situasi itu* is not commonly used to refer to an event or incident. To make it more functional, the sentence should sound '*Saya tidak marah karena kejadian itu*'. The utterance '*Tapi hati-hati untuk sepeda motor*' does not also sound properly as it is not commonly uttered, even though in less formal verity. In order to make it proper, the sentence should sound '*Tapi hati-hati dengan sepeda motornya*' or '*Tapi hati-hati naik sepeda motor*'. Lastly, '*Tidak apa-apa, saya bisa menggantinya itu*' is less relevant grammatically as it uses double object pronouns '-nya' and 'itu'. The sentence should use only one of the two object pronouns to avoid ambiguity so that it can foster a clear intention.

Responses to situation 8 also foster a number of errors functionally. The utterance '*Terima kasih untuk baru*' to response to speaker's promise to change the hearer's torn book with a new one still consists of incorrect use of word '*untuk*'. The sentence should sound '*Terima kasih karena anda telah mengganti buku tersebut dengan yang baru*'. The utterance, '*Anda tidak harus akan menggantinya dengan yang baru*' in addition, also contains abuse of words *harus* and *akan* which are commonly used in English. However, the two words do not normally emerge mutually in a sentence. In order to make it more appropriate '*akan*' can be omitted that the sentence will function to express negative necessity. The sentence '*Tidak apa-apa bro, tetapi aku mau baru buku minggu depan*' indicates a mistake of noun phrase (NP) structure. The Indonesian NP structure should be N – Modifier, thus it will form '*buku baru*'. Lastly, utterance '*Tidak apa-apa temanku, itu tersebut robek di anda*' according to further discussion concerning what the speaker meant by writing such sentence should sound '*Tidak apa-apa temanku, buku tersebut sudah robek sebelumnya*'.

Situation 9 also exposes a number of abused forms or sentences. They are '*Terima kasih untuk dipromosikan chef, maaf tetapi saya tidak bisa memberi waktu*', '*Mohon maaf bapak, saya tidak bisa karena ada situasi keluarga*', '*Maaf pak, saya tidak bisa promosi karena keluarga saya memerlukan. Mungkin setelah tiga bulan saya bisa berpromosi, terima kasih*', '*Maaf boss, saya sibuk untuk keluarga saya*', '*Istrinya tidak ada waktu untuk anak-anaknya, jadi saya mau tinggal pada anak-anak anda untuk waktu kecil*'. The use of phrase *untuk dipromosikan chef* sounds awkward. The word '*terima kasih*' requires a clause '*karena saya sudah dipromosikan menjadi chef*, to make proper sentence. The phrase '*ada situasi keluarga*' to express a reason, also needs to be revised to be *ada urusan keluarga*. The clause '*tidak bisa promosi*' should be made as a passive clause to make an accepted sentence, therefore it should be '*tidak bisa dipromosikan*'. In addition, the clause '*saya sibuk untuk keluarga saya*' should be '*saya sibuk karena urusan keluarga*'. The use of possessive adjective -nya is inappropriate which should be using -saya as the speaker wants to express his or her family, therefore it should be '*Istri saya tidak ada waktu untuk anak-anak saya*'. And at last, '*jadi saya mau tinggal dengan anak-anak anda untuk waktu kecil*' should be '*jadi saya mau tinggal dengan anak-anak saya untuk sementara waktu*'.

Pragmatic-linguistically, speakers' performance on refusal SA above exposed evidence of pragmatic transfer. It is obviously recognized that speakers' production relies very much on their L1, in this case English language. The case of transfer can be explained as follows.

The clause '*setelah ujian itu*' in the sentence '*tidak apa-apa, setelah ujian itu tolong datang ke kelas*' was formed based on speaker's L1 knowledge 'after the exam' and is not very common in Indonesian. The clause should be '*setelah ujian*' to make it sounds more appropriate. The other sentences containing transfer from L1 to L2 can be seen on the sentence '*...hari examnya saya belajar juga, Maaf, maaf tidak ada mungkin*'. Transfer of L1 (English language) is clearly viewed here that *hari examnya* was derived from English pattern 'on the exam day' which in Indonesian sounds

awkward. '*Tidak ada mungkin*' was also derived from the form 'there is no possibility' which should be expressed '*tidak memungkinkan*' or '*tidak ada kemungkinan*'.

The clause '*saya punya istirahat*' and '*saya akan mengantar anda di sana*' also indicate that L1 still dominate speakers' mind. To express 'I will have a rest' is very common in their L1, however it should certainly be converted into Indonesian clause '*saya mau beristirahat*'. In addition, adverb of place '*there*' was figured out to be '*di sana*' which should be '*ke sana*'. A part from these examples, utterances '*Ya saya terima bro. Aku mau pergi dengan kamu. Aku akan senang*' indicated that speaker converted it from the English utterance 'I'd like to', which, common Indonesian expression should merely say '*saya senang bisa ikut*'.

'*Terima kasih untuk undangan*' shows a transfer. It is very common in speaker's L1 to embody the preposition 'for' in 'Thank you for the invitation'. However, grammatical Indonesian sentence should be '*Terima kasih atas undangannya*'.

Using phrases, for instance noun phrase (NP) usually confuses the participants. Their L1 knowledge which formulizes NP with Adjective – Noun or Modifier – Noun triggers the speaker to produce sentence '*Saya mau ke "Kesantunan berbahasa" pada seminar minggu depan di kampus*'. Another example is the use of '*baru buku*' which should be '*buku baru*'. The speaker did not seem to recognize that Indonesian NP construction is formulized with N – Adjective / Modifier.

The case of part of speech also puzzles the speakers. They failed to comprehend and determine which is noun and verb. The utterance '*saya akan kehadiran*' was formed because of speaker's belief that *kehadiran* is a verb.

### B. Sociopragmatic Errors and Transfer

Sociopragmatic error seemed to occur less frequently than pragmalinguistic error. However, it was still significant to indicate that speakers were less competent. The case was triggered by speakers' insufficient knowledge of aspect of social status, i.e. power (P) and distance (D).

The utterance '*Kapan anda mau berbelanja ke supermarket? Katakan padaku*' contains inappropriate use of '*anda*' and '*padaku*' as the hearer whom the speaker talked with was his or her superior at work who has +P and +D. At office or workplace context, communicating with superior requires polite and formal words and expression. The Indonesia utterances utilized seemed that the speaker speaks to his or her workmate who have the same power or no distance with him or her.

Another utterance '*Ya pak, sebentar. Sepuluh menit dan saya bisa mengantar anda ke supermarket*' contains sociopragmatic errors as it is violating the principle of politeness. On the basis of Indonesian culture, communicating with someone who is superior at work requires the speaker to be obedient to the principle. Although addressing system with '*pak*' (sir) was considered honorific, but the use of subject '*anda*' is not polite when addressing such an interlocutor, as he or she has higher power (+P) and there is distance between them (+D). In line with this case, speaker's utterance '*Ya terima kasih untuk undangannya. Saya akan hadir pada seminar tersebut*' expressed to his or her lecturer, also indicates that the speaker still has insufficient knowledge of sociopragmatic. Although it sounds nice and shows correct grammatical items, the utterance is still considered less appropriate socially as it omits addressing system '*Pak*', an addressing term which has high sense of respectfulness in this context.

In contrast, inappropriate utterance also occurs in the following sentence, where speaker of the utterance should use colloquial sentence as the hearer has lower social status (-P and -D). The utterance '*Tidak apa-apa, kami adalah teman*' is not appropriately used by the speaker to his or her staff at office context. This utterance violates politeness principle in Indonesian culture. The expression '*kami adalah teman*' indicates that the speaker and the hearer have close relation. However, the fact indicates that both speech participants do not have close relation.

Lastly, the utterance '*Terima kasih untuk dipromosikan chef*' and '*Maaf boss, saya sibuk untuk keluarga saya*' also fail to position the speaker as someone who respects his or her superior. The utterance should use some markers to show that he or she shows a respect, for instance by saying '*Terima kasih Pak, saya sudah dipromosikan menjadi Chef*' or '*Terima kasih, karena Bapak telah memberikan kesempatan kepada saya menjadi Chef*'. The second utterance also sounds odd, as the speaker used term of address '*Boss*' to speak with his or her superior in a formal situation. In other words, the speaker should embed term of address '*Pak*' (sir), and avoid the use of '*boss*' and use '*Pak*' or '*Bapak*' instead.

There are some transfers the speaker made seeing from view point of sociopragmatic. The transfers are fully influenced by the knowledge of speakers' L1 which are contradictive to L2 pragmatic knowledge. There is cultural difference on how to address someone at different context (cf Bu, 2011). For instance, in L1 context, it is common to mention name and to use term of address '*boss*' or pronoun '*you*' but in Indonesian culture, '*you*' referring to '*kamu*' or '*anda*' is not commonly used to address someone who is '*superior*' at work.

The fact of participants' production can clearly give an indication that they are considered to be less competent pragmatically (pragmalinguistically and sociopragmatically). It can obviously be seen from their responses of the nine situations given that they are still a lot of errors on forms they produced. They were able to produce forms, such as noun phrases, clauses, sentences of Indonesian language but they were constructed inappropriately. There were a number of difficulties the speakers faced, such as constructing NP order, using possessive adjectives, using modal verbs, using subject and object pronoun. Most of research participants could produce relatively short answer. They were also formed

monotonous sentence patterns. This is caused by the fact that grammar still plays an important role for and they have insufficient L2 knowledge.

The fact clearly assures us that in order for them to be able to create good utterances, they have to be proficient at Indonesian language as the target language. Even though, in general some findings of work on pragmatic transfer and pragmatic competence concluded that level of L2 proficiency do not affect learners' L2 pragmatic competence particularly pragmatic transfer (Hui, 2010) and grammatical competence cannot predict speakers' pragmatic competence (Sajaya, 2017), this study emerged a contradictive result. It can be concluded that proficiency level can determine speakers' performance of L2 (Alhadidi, 2017) and transfer of pragmatic from L1 to L2 will decrease if study level of Learners' L2 increases, or the higher is their L2 proficiency level, the more competent they are at performing L2 sentences (Loutfi, 2016).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The study successfully concluded that participants were not considered to be competent pragmatically as they produced pragmlinguistic and sociopragmatic errors. A lot of pragmlinguistic errors were triggered by misconception of using phrase, clause or sentence patterns which made on the basis of their L1. The pattern of NP was mostly made in their L1 comprising Adjective – Noun which, in Indonoesian language, it should be formed Noun – Adjective. The use of verbs and nouns in sentences was frequently switched so that they sound awkward. In addition, prepositions, adverb of places, and specific verb 'have' were used pursuant to English pattern. Apart from this error, sociopragmatic errors were also found frequently. The participants frequently referred to their L1 system which generalize interlocutor with same personal pronoun. The use of 'Anda' was always done to refer to interlocutor who has higher power (+P) and far distance (+D), such as inferior at work or teacher at school. It should be embodied and varied with 'Anda', 'Tuan', 'Bapak or Ibu' and other. "Maaf bos" also sounds awkward when it was used to respond to the owner of a work place or the employer. Thus, "maaf Tuan, Nyonya", "maaf Bapak or Ibu" should be used instead.

Transfer of pragmatic was mostly undertaken as participants were influenced by and relied on their L1 (cf. Bu, 2011; Wang, 2015) and this was done mostly by participants with lower competence than higher competence (Alhadidi, 2017). This was done as their shortage of L2 pragmatic knowledge. The transfers were mostly done as a result of participants' less competence of L2 pragmatic knowledge. The findings were supportive to that of Alhadidi's (2017) and Loutfi's (2016) that transfer of pragmatic is caused by a condition where participants' L2 knowledge is not sufficient and when their study level of L2 decreases. The notions converse that of Hui's (2010) and Sanjaya's (2017).

Further studies are required to be undertaken considering the fact that this study still has some weaknesses. First, number of participants involved was relatively limited. Bigger number of participant need to be involved to find more varied data for analysis. Second, more than one speech acts should be involved to see representative data. In order to find more natural data of speech acts, oral role play card need to be utilized apart from DCT.

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# A New Paradigm for the Etymology and Trend Study from the Perspective of Culturomics\*

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**Abstract**—As an emerging discipline in 2011, culturomics belongs to cultural studies mainly by way of diachronic research and large-scale corpora, so it could be significant for the etymology and trend studies. In this paper, a large-scale diachronic corpus was established based on culturomics, and the condition and quality basic-level category vocabulary (BLCV) is taken as examples for analyses, so as to obtain relevant data and conclusions. It is shown that about 90% of the condition and quality BLCV was originated earlier than Sui, Tang and the Five Dynasties, and the first-level BLCV is earlier than the second-level and the third-level in aspect of origin time. The higher BLCV level, the greater the use rate increase, with more obvious stable development in the diachronic respect. Thus, culturomics, as a new paradigm in linguistic researches, is confirmed to be feasible, distinctive and irreplaceable in an era of big data.

**Index Terms**—culturomics, etymology, trend study

## I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese lexicon has undergone great changes from ancient times to today. Ancient monosyllables are usually used as morphemes to form numerous disyllables, and some of them never cease to broaden, narrow and transfer their meaning, which gradually generate the modern Chinese lexicon system. In this process, some of vocabularies are still popular and significant in Chinese; some are active and invigorated by forming other new vocabulary; and some are ceased and left in history together with ancient Chinese language.

Previously, researches on Chinese lexicon's diachronic development are inseparable from the classification of diachronic development law in this system. However, emerging "culturomics" provides a revolutionary means of obtaining such data.

Culturomics is an emerging inter-discipline that studies human's specific ethnic behavior and cultural trends through the quantitative analysis of digitized texts based on big data corpus. This term, first described in a Science article named Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books by Harvard researchers Jean-Baptiste Michel and his team (2011), is to make up for the limitations and subjectivity of traditional humanities research due to the limited reading and knowledge of researchers themselves.

They cooperate with the Google Books, and based on the digital library of 5,195,769 books with a total of 500 billion vocabularies between 1500 and 2008, conduct quantitative analyses for a range of cultural patterns in language use and trends over time using Google Ngram. Then, Google further develops and opens Google N-gram Viewer, which can directly visualize time-frequency maps of keywords frequencies according to different languages and time scales.

Its arising also attracts other researchers to studying different culture from this perspective, and some significant achievements are also made. In SCOPUS, EBSCO and Wiley Inter Science, 52 academic theses, covering such topics as historical phenomena (Juola, 2013), and writing style (Hughes, 2012) are searched with "Culturomics" as the keywords.

But in China, a few relevant researches are conducted at present, and only 3 theses are searched in CNKI, Wanfang data and VIP database. Shao Peiren and Lin Qun (2012) used culturomics to extract Chinese culture and model its characteristics, and proposed that construction of Chinese culture gene base by culturomics could be a way to protect, inherit and disseminate Chinese culture. Guo Chonghui, Wei, and Ren Xiaoling (2014) reviewed the culturomics-related research at home and abroad, and put forward a model of cloud-based processing platform for digitalized documents. Zhao Haiying, Jia Gengyun, and Pan Zhigeng (2016) suggested that culturomics theory can be applied in cultural computing to study the cultural evolution and development. Nevertheless, there are no researches on applying culturomics to specific Chinese cultural issues.

Chinese BLCV has close and inseparable links with its lexicon in the diachronic development since ancient times. One reason is that many Chinese BLCV are themselves the "living fossils" of Chinese passing down; and the other is

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that “productivity” of many today’s BLCV is formed when ancient Chinese monosyllables are evolved to the modern disyllables. Thus, it has vital significance to study Chinese BLCV etymology for understanding Chinese etymology and the trend. On the other hand, culturomics possesses unique advantage in such researches. Based on the diachronic corpus, BLCV generation and development can be studied. According to the generation and length of time, as well as the specific usage conditions in each era, the diachronic literacy and development laws of BLCV can be described and summarized. This complements the traditional paradigm of the etymology research, which usually involves a large amount of literature research and glyph analysis.

In this paper, Chinese condition and quality BLCV<sup>1</sup> (seen in the Appendix) extracted previously is taken as examples to analyze the feasibility and specific technical details of culturomics into the Chinese etymology and its trend study, so as provide a new etymology paradigm.

## II. ESTABLISHMENT OF DIACHRONIC PRAGMATIC CORPUS FOR CONDITION AND QUALITY BLCV

According to culturomics, a larger-scale Chinese diachronic pragmatic corpus should be established first. Hence, “Online Corpus Website<sup>2</sup>”, is selected as the raw corpus of ancient Chinese in this research. All the data are crawled in a category of condition and quality vocabulary and then undergone a secondary processing. Finally, an expected diachronic corpus with the total volume of 100 million condition and quality Chinese vocabularies is established.

This corpus contains about 100 million condition and quality Chinese vocabularies from Zhou Dynasty to Republic of China, with most Chinese ancient classics compiled in *The Four Branches of Literature* included, for example, *The Book of Songs*, *The Book of History*, *The Book of Changes*, *The Book of Tao and Teh*, *The Analects*, *The Works of Mencius*, *Zuo's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, *The Verse of Chu*, *The Book of Rites*, *The Great Learning*, *The Doctrine of the Mean*, *The Spring and Autumn Annals*, *Erya*, *Hung Lieh Chuan*, *Records of the Grand Historian*, *Intrigues of the Warring States*, *Records of the Three Kingdoms*, *A New Account of the Tales of the World*, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, *Complete Tang Poems*, *Zhuziyulei*, *Creation of the Gods*, *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, *Heroes of the Marshes*, *Journey to the West*, *A Dream in Red Mansions* and *The Scholars*.

The details of the corpus establishment are shown as below:

### A. Data Crawling in a Category of Condition and Quality Vocabulary

Keywords (Chinese condition and quality vocabulary) are input in the website [www.cncorpus.org](http://www.cncorpus.org), and the searched data are saved as text files. In the end, 8869 text files are obtained totally, and each file contains the pragmatic examples of one condition and quality vocabulary from all the dynasties. Taking “纤纤” as an example, raw data crawled online are shown as below (in the original format with the first 20 example sentences, and the rest represented by “...”):

“Corpus searching \_ Corpus online” ([www.cncorpus.org](http://www.cncorpus.org))

Type: ancient Chinese corpus

Searching vocabulary: 纤纤

2014-6-8 15:20:45

No.	Sentence	Book name	Dynasty
1	夫绵绵不绝, 必有乱结; [纤纤] 不伐, 必成妖孽	the Art of War _ Spring and Autumn and Warring States Period	
2	娥娥红粉妆, [纤纤] 出素手	Nineteen Ancient Poems _ Wei, Jin and Six dynasties	
3	云中的明月; 为什么, 她红妆艳服, 打扮得如此用心; 为什么, 她牙雕般的 [纤纤] 双	Nineteen Ancient Poems _ Wei, Jin and Six dynasties	
4	娥娥与 [纤纤] 同是	Nineteen Ancient Poems _ Wei, Jin and Six dynasties	
5	写其容色, 而娥娥是大体的赞美, [纤纤] 是细部的刻划, 如互易, 又必 格不顺	Nineteen Ancient Poems _ Wei, Jin and Six dynasties	
.....”			

It can be shown that the data are basically structuralized, and the searched vocabularies are obviously marked and separated, which is convenient for format adjustment and storage.

### B. Structure Adjustment and Storage of the Data

Structure adjustment include two aspects: The structure contains such several fields as "ID, Word, Pragmatic Text, Source and Dynasty"; the searched condition and quality vocabulary can be extracted from the crawled corpus and classified into the "Word" field.

Those condition and quality vocabulary can be thus extracted by nesting the mid function of sql statement into instr function. First, in the "Pragmatic Text" field, the searched vocabularies after "[" are extracted and saved as a temporary field A; second, the text before "]" in the temporary field A are extracted; and last, the extracted vocabulary is saved in the field "Word".

<sup>1</sup>Song Fei. Construction of basic-level condition and quality category vocabulary lexicon in international Chinese Teaching [D]. Minzu University of China. 2015

<sup>2</sup>website: <http://www.cncorpus.org/index.aspx>

After data storage, the field "ID" is for the serial number of the pragmatic text; "Word" for the condition and quality vocabulary; "Pragmatic Text" for the specific context in which the searched vocabulary appears; "Source" for the text source; and "Dynasty" for the dynasty in a diachronic order.

The total volume of data storage reaches 9,368,062, and one pragmatic text represents one piece of data, containing one condition and quality vocabulary.

### III. EXTRACTION AND ANALYSIS OF DIACHRONIC PRAGMATIC DATA FOR BLCV

According to the age labels, the chronological distribution of the corpus is divided into nine periods: Zhou Dynasty; Spring and Autumn and the Warring States; Han Dynasty, Wei, Jin and Six dynasties; Sui, Tang and Five dynasties; Song Dynasty; Yuan and Ming dynasties; Qing Dynasty; and the early Republic of China. Based on the statistics, overall distribution of the condition and quality vocabulary in the corpus is obtained, of which the diachronic order and usage trend are analyzed in this study.

#### A. Analysis of the Diachronic Order

The dynasties that 312 Chinese BLCV<sup>3</sup> first appear in the corpus are shown as below (excerpt):

TABLE. I  
DYNASTIES OF BLCV FOR THE FIRST APPEARANCE IN THE CORPUS (EXCERPT)

ID	Vocabulary	Dynasty	Level
1	大	Zhou Dynasty	First level
2	多	Zhou Dynasty	First level
3	好	Zhou Dynasty	First level
4	新	Zhou Dynasty	First level
5	长	Zhou Dynasty	First level
6	快	Zhou Dynasty	First level
7	近	Zhou Dynasty	First level
8	深	Zhou Dynasty	First level
9	高	Zhou Dynasty	First level
10	热	Zhou Dynasty	First level
...	...	...	...
31	乱	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
32	薄	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
33	严	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
34	旧	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
35	满	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
36	白	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
37	粗	Spring and Autumn and the Warring States	Second level
38	假	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
39	低	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
40	远	Zhou Dynasty	Second level
...	...	...	...
197	灵活	Yuan and Ming dynasties	Third level
198	真诚	汉 Han Dynasty	Third level
199	清晰	Wei, Jin and Six dynasties	Third level
200	艳	Spring and Autumn and the Warring States	Third level
201	丑	Zhou Dynasty	Third level
202	臭	Zhou Dynasty	Third level
203	国产	Han Dynasty	Third level
204	便宜	Spring and Autumn and the Warring States	Third level
205	懒	Wei, Jin and Six dynasties	Third level
206	崇高	Zhou Dynasty	Third level
...	...	...	...

As is shown in the table, BLCV is classified into three levels, with the first ten pieces of BLCV data excerpted from each level. The statistics suggest that ten BLCV of the first level start to appear in Zhou Dynasty. As for the ten BLCV of the second level, one first appears in the period of Spring and Autumn and the Warring States and the rest nine in Zhou Dynasty; And as for the ten of the third level, many vocabularies start to appear in later eras such as Spring and Autumn and the Warring States; Han Dynasty; Wei, Jin and Six dynasties; as well as Yuan and Ming dynasties.

The overall statistics of dynasties that BLCV in each level first appear are shown as below:

<sup>3</sup>Song Fei. Construction of basic-level condition and quality category vocabulary lexicon in international Chinese Teaching[D]. Minzu University of China. 2015

TABLE. II  
STATISTICS OF DYNASTIES FOR THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF BLCV IN EACH LEVEL

	First level	Percentage	Second level	Percentage	Third level	Percentage
Zhou Dynasty	27	90.00%	97	58.43%	22	18.97%
Spring and Autumn and the Warring States	1	3.33%	31	18.67%	41	35.34%
Han Dynasty,	0	0.00%	12	7.23%	11	9.48%
Wei, Jin and Six dynasties	1	3.33%	9	5.42%	18	15.52%
Sui, Tang and Five dynasties	1	3.33%	7	4.22%	9	7.76%
Song Dynasty	0	0.00%	4	2.41%	4	3.45%
Yuan and Ming dynasties	0	0.00%	2	1.20%	5	4.31%
Qing Dynasty	0	0.00%	3	1.81%	1	0.86%
the early Republic of China	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	1.72%
(not appearing)	0	0.00%	1	0.60%	3	2.59%

According to the overall statistics, except these three Chinese vocabularies “稔” (Spring and Autumn and the Warring States), “重要”(Wei, Jin and Six dynasties) and “硬” (Sui, Tang and Five dynasties) among 30 BLCV of the first level, the rest 27 first appear in Zhou Dynasty, accounting for 90% of the first level. Among 166 BLCV of the second level, 97 vocabularies first appear in Zhou Dynasty, accounting for 56.43% with a little bit decrease compared with the first level, and besides, one does not appear in the corpus. As for the third level, this proportion only accounts for 18.97%, showing a further decrease. In addition, 41 vocabularies, being the most in this level, start to appear in the period of Spring and Autumn and the Warring States, accounting for 35.34%. BLCV of this level also is the only one that new vocabulary appears in each historic period.

Thus, the diachronic order of those BLCV appearance exhibits a trend that the first level is earlier than the second and the third level, and is highly consistent with the hierarchic BLCV. All of those indicate that these extracted and hierarchic BLCV not only possess the aforesaid features, but also have earlier etymologies.

### B. Analysis of Usage Trend

The so-called usage trend refers to the fluctuation of every condition and quality BLCV in different dynasties. Because of the unbalanced lexicon vocabulary in every era as well as long time-span in the diachronic corpus, with great changes of the vocabulary and grammar, it is difficult to find a general method and tool for word segmentation, and thus, the frequency used in the modern Chinese corpus cannot reflect the frequency of the text per unit. In this research, the ratio (also called "frequency" for the convenience) of the number of texts with condition and quality BLCV to the total number of texts with condition and quality vocabulary is employed to make it comparable among BLCV usage in every era. According to statistics, the total number of texts with condition and quality vocabulary in every era is shown below:

TABLE. III  
THE NUMBER OF TEXTS WITH CONDITION AND QUALITY VOCABULARY IN EVERY ERA

Era	Text number
Zhou Dynasty	53834
Spring and Autumn and the Warring States	341009
Han Dynasty	772296
Wei, Jin and Six dynasties	1350315
Sui, Tang and Five dynasties	3398536
Song Dynasty	3614784
Yuan and Ming dynasties	2189302
Qing Dynasty	1608064
the early Republic of China	1077925

The means of “adding the difference between neighboring frequencies”, which was used for the usage trend analysis of the BLCV acquisition order previously, is still applicable here. Namely, the frequency of one BLCV in an era subtracts from the last era, and then all the resulting differences are added together. A positive sum displays an overall increase trend of usage for that BLCV over times, or otherwise. The sums calculated are shown below (excerpt):



TABLE. IV  
SUM OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE NEIGHBORING FREQUENCIES

ID	Vocabulary	Sum of the neighboring difference	Level
1	大	-0.0129423664	First level
2	多	0.0016954401	First level
3	好	-0.0007132258	First level
4	新	0.0032481051	First level
5	长	-0.0005766758	First level
6	快	0.0008652944	First level
7	近	0.0018971524	First level
8	深	0.0023264076	First level
9	高	0.0034097778	First level
10	热	0.0006085338	First level
...	...	...	...
32	薄	-0.0005755121	Second level
33	严	0.0033981364	Second level
34	旧	0.0042978418	Second level
35	满	0.0075252267	Second level
36	白	0.0014476421	Second level
37	粗	-0.0000914321	Second level
38	假	-0.0003311653	Second level
39	低	0.0001335042	Second level
40	远	0.0005383437	Second level
41	正	-0.0013260831	Second level
...	...	...	...
197	灵活	0.0000000000	Third level
198	真诚	-0.0000003671	Third level
199	清晰	0.0000038980	Third level
200	艳	0.0001302411	Third level
201	丑	0.0026250550	Third level
202	臭	-0.0004226437	Third level
203	国产	-0.0000018357	Third level
204	便宜	0.0000538387	Third level
205	懒	0.0000011228	Third level
206	崇高	-0.0000343681	Third level

The above table shows the results of adding the neighboring difference among condition and quality BLCV of these three levels. It can be found that, different from the acquisition order, an increasingly obvious uptrend of diachronic usage for these BLCV from the third level to the first level in the process of emergence and development. For example, the first ten BLCV of the third level has more negative sums than the other two levels, so the total value is correspondingly smaller; then is the second level; and the biggest is the first level.

From the perspective of acquisition order, the higher the BLCV level, the lower its use rate with the improvement of learners' language proficiency. However, in respect of diachronic etymology and the development, the higher the level, the higher the use rate increase over time. Hence, BLCV level could be linked to its diachronic stableness, with the higher the level, the greater the diachronic stableness.

IV. CONCLUSION

Data obtained by means of culturomics suggest that about 90% of BLCV appears earlier than Sui, Tang and Five dynasties, and is featured with an earlier origin in respective of condition and quality BLCV etymology. In addition, it has a ladder pattern for the emerging times with the earliest being the first level BLCV and the latest being the third level.

During the emergence and development of condition and quality BLCV, the biggest use rate increase is the first level of the BLCV, then the second level, and the smallest is the third level. Hence, in respect of diachronic development of lexicon, the higher the BLCV level, the higher the use rate increase over time, and the higher BLCV level, the greater the diachronic stableness.

It is also the first try to apply culturomics into linguistic researches and thus make some valuable linguistic conclusions, with those distinctive vocabulary-related data that is hard to acquire in other paradigms. By this way, culturomics is confirmed to be feasible, distinctive and irreplaceable in linguistic research and provides a new paradigm for relevant studies.

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#### APPENDIX

TABLE I  
HIERARCHY CORPUS OF BLCV

First level	1 大	7 近	13 坏	19 少	25 难
	2 多	8 深	14 静	20 真	26 重要
	3 好	9 高	15 早	21 老	27 美
	4 新	10 热	16 稳	22 细	28 短
	5 长	11 小	17 轻	23 晚	29 重
	6 快	12 强	18 富	24 硬	30 冷
Second level	1 乱	35 黄	69 及时	103 软	137 轻松
	2 薄	36 中	70 公	104 残	138 松
	3 严	37 久	71 弱	105 紧张	139 生动
	4 旧	38 充分	72 行	106 高级	140 详细
	5 满	39 光	73 突出	107 净	141 荒
	6 白	40 努力	74 暗	108 穷	142 浑
	7 粗	41 严重	75 合理	109 慢	143 危险
	8 假	42 古	76 直	110 复杂	144 紫
	9 低	43 有些	77 友好	111 虚	145 瘦
	10 远	44 一切	78 香	112 女	146 浅
	11 正	45 安全	79 厚	113 暖	147 湿
	12 生	46 实	80 野	114 彩	148 母
	13 紧	47 死	81 全面	115 淡	149 旱
	14 空	48 先进	82 阴	116 狂	150 甜
	15 积极	49 一般	83 丰富	117 清	151 胖
	16 特别	50 精	84 公开	118 灵	152 傻
	17 青	51 自然	85 切实	119 挺	153 灰
	18 红	52 健康	86 宽	120 曲	154 随便
	19 忙	53 熟	87 年轻	121 圆	155 俗
	20 外	54 认真	88 伟大	122 凉	156 格外
	21 欢	55 具体	89 正常	123 成熟	157 平静
	22 余	56 便	90 纯	124 公正	158 外来
	23 原	57 正式	91 怪	125 蓝	159 聪明
	24 密	58 只	92 强烈	126 牢	160 脏
	25 亲	59 副	93 平	127 尖	161 热闹
	26 均	60 错	94 齐	128 烂	162 光荣
	27 易	61 明显	95 方	129 幸福	163 难得
	28 广	62 贵	96 必要	130 热情	164 扎实
	29 对	63 响	97 公共	131 发达	165 稀
	30 全	64 民主	98 文明	132 惨	166 严肃
	31 男	65 亮	99 零	133 美好	
	32 苦	66 偏	100 简单	134 盲目	
	33 黑	67 恶	101 坚决	135 脆	
	34 华	68 绿	102 破	136 适当	
Third level	1 灵活	25 腐败	49 廉洁	73 高贵	97 委婉
	2 真诚	26 勇敢	50 大方	74 单调	98 断断续续

3 清晰	27 模糊	51 传统	75 悲观	99 专制
4 艳	28 业余	52 片面	76 酥	100 没出息
5 丑	29 酸	53 皱	77 粗暴	101 迟钝
6 臭	30 谨慎	54 抽象	78 威风	102 矜持
7 国产	31 节约	55 咸	79 凹	103 幼小
8 便宜	32 温柔	56 平和	80 谦虚	104 冒失
9 懒	33 消极	57 好听	81 自私	105 世故
10 崇高	34 秘密	58 顽固	82 稠	106 小气
11 人为	35 俊	59 朦胧	83 不妥	107 下贱
12 坚强	36 笨	60 时髦	84 恭敬	108 无礼
13 匆匆	37 乖	61 简陋	85 奢侈	109 痴情
14 冷静	38 涩	62 含糊	86 有为	110 轻薄
15 老	39 反动	63 贪	87 无能	111 褐
16 宏伟	40 不平	64 朴实	88 倔强	112 轻浮
17 乐观	41 腥	65 有用	89 狡猾	113 不和
18 辣	42 鼓	66 空虚	90 不起眼	114 没用
19 有趣	43 钝	67 无知	91 胆小	115 博学
20 持久	44 孤独	68 无私	92 可耻	116 本分
21 窄	45 短暂	69 冷淡	93 生硬	
22 繁荣	46 无情	70 糙	94 无理	
23 客气	47 天真	71 过时	95 中型	
24 初级	48 骄傲	72 深沉	96 难听	

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# Counteractive Measures for the Tribulations Faced by Intermediate Students of Selected Colleges of Lucknow, While Teaching and Learning English

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**Abstract**—The present study attempts to highlight the issues related to the Tribulations and Counteractive measures for teaching and learning English to Intermediate students of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (UP), India. The language policy in intermediate college education emerged as a social and personal problem. The quality of English Language teaching in majority of Indian Intermediate Colleges presents a very appalling picture. Teachers' language proficiency, exposure to language and teaching materials is major concerns for quality English language learning. In reality intermediate students' situation in UP is very difficult. They don't have good opportunities as the big cities' students have. These students consider English as a subject not as a language. So they focus only on examination not on the learning. This is an area which needs proper investigation. This study and the remedial measures suggested at the end will hopefully help students and teachers in learning and teaching English easily and appropriately. The study will also be useful for teachers, scholars, course designers and material producers of English language teaching.

**Index Terms**—counteractive, tribulations, remedial measures and intermediate students

## I. INTRODUCTION

There are two important factors with regard to the teaching of English to the Intermediate students:

- (a) Mother tongue interference and
- (b) The stark truth that the foreign language is the product of a communal, cultural and social habit.

The second factor is very often blatantly ignored by the teachers of English in India. The reason for this is the controversial claim that there is an independent variety of English, which should be called 'Indian English'. Hence meddling with English culture is of peripheral importance. This is a questionable premise and will only damage the progress of teaching an internationally acceptable variety of English used by the Indian students. The present study has, therefore, undertaken the task of analyzing the very crucial areas of spoken and written English— Pronunciation, speaking, spelling/vocabulary and grammar. It would be apt to highlight a few important concepts of language acquisition and a brief historical survey of ELT situation in India.

ELT Situation in India:

In the Indian context the introduction of English in India needs to be grasped fully in order to throw light on the priority of the skills in the teaching curriculum at different levels. We do agree with Bloomfield (1963) that "To work out the comparison between two languages, the descriptive data should be available." If a language is spoken in a large area, differences are bound to be there. Therein lies the difficulty of comparison by any researcher in this area.

The introduction of English in India can be surveyed through a clearly marked out set of phases from the 'fateful' advent of the East India Company on the Indian coast in the sixteenth century through the British occupation of India by the end of the eighteenth century or early nineteenth century when the sun never set on the global empire that the English had built up to fulfill their colonial ambition to the significant year of 1857 to 15 August 1947. When the East India Company came to India it was purely for commercial purposes, later it realized the tremendous potential of resources, which it could exploit for profit. As the Company expanded its commercial activities it needed people from the Sub-continent to act as interpreters between the Company and its Indian partners. These people needed to know English for effective mediation between the British businessmen and the Indian participants. Thus the earliest need for introducing English on to the Indian Sub-continent was to be at the oral level initially. Hence an artificial speech community, --- artificial because the most important component of interaction at the cross cultural levels was absent --- consisting of the Indian and British business partners was necessitated. This brought into existence a sort of creolized English. As the business relationship and contact grew and got diversified the need for reading and writing was felt. This continued throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the absence of any authentically documented record of English teaching during this period one can surmise that there must have been a growing shift from the exclusively oral skill to reading and writing as well. No deliberate attempts were made during this period by the British

to start any systematic schooling in English. Side by side with the business and political dimension of the activities of East India Company we have an interesting phenomenon taking place behind the door. This was East India Company's import into India of missionaries along with the merchandise. These missionaries were devout Christians committed to the expansion of their religion in the Far East. It is they who started the teaching of English in the schools established in India and funded by the Christian zealots on the British isle and Europe. These schools were started in the far flung eastern border areas and in the relatively liberal minded and cosmopolitan towns like Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, the centers of business in India. These schools aimed at imparting instructions to the have-nots as well as the elitist classes. The have-nots were tempted with dole-outs and better means of livelihood after education while the elitist class was interested in getting their children acquire the necessary skills in the English language for social prestige and opportunities for preferment in the wake of the almost imminent prospect of growing British influences.

The crucial decision about the teaching of English and the relative emphasis on the skills was to be taken when the British were in firm control of the rein of power in India. They needed two things: one, they wanted their domination over the Indian Sub-continent to be acceptable to people by way of creating facilities for secondary school education which was, in fact, a welfare stunt; secondly they needed man-power to assist them in their governance of such a huge country.

After Independence the Indian leaders gave considerable thoughts to the problem of teaching English as a foreign language, as well as using English as a medium of instruction in higher education. Because of the linguistic diversity of India, it was felt by the Constitution framers that English should be allowed to be used as the second official language of the administration for 15 years. However, at the expiry of the dead line the linguistic riots in Madras in 1965 compelled the government to amend the Constitution more than once to allow English as a subsidiary official language and medium of instruction at the University levels. The issue of the use of English as a medium of instruction in higher education was hotly debated by a number of Commissions appointed by the government from time to time. The Radha Krishnan University Education Commission (1948) recommended the use of English for the purpose of enabling students to read books in English and gain knowledge. The Kunjru Commission set up in 1955 by the University Grants Commission was categorically in favour of retaining English as the medium of instruction in higher education. The same was the opinion of G.C. Banerji Committee appointed by the University Grants Commission in 1960 to discuss the objectives of teaching English. The specific Report of the English Committee, 1965, recommended that the teaching of English be organized for the purpose of using it as a library language -- an obvious emphasis on the skill of reading only. The Kothari Commission appointed by the Government of India in 1964 had opined that "English will, for a long time to come, continue to be needed as a library language in the field of higher education." However, it was the Study Group, consisting of specialists' appointed by the Government of India in 1964 which recommended that the skills of listening and speaking be emphasized at both the secondary school and advanced levels.

The emphasis on reading at the cost of the skills of listening and speaking was because of the prevailing international scenario until the middle of the last century. International interaction was not growing at any faster speed than before. Hence, proficiency in oral communication in English was not considered pedagogically of paramount importance. This situation was not confined only to India but to the other parts of the world where English was taught as a foreign language.

There is no short-cut to suggest a remedy for ill equipped teachers. A teacher must realize that any living language is deeply rooted in the culture of the region or the country where it belongs. Teaching a language, therefore, is teaching the culture of the native speaker of the language. One banal example will suffice to substantiate our observation above. In English the terms of greeting 'good morning', 'good afternoon', 'good evening' and 'good night' are all related to time. In Hindi there is only one term *Namaskara* denoting the social value of humanity. These commonly encountered terms have their cultural bearings. When we communicate in writing, the words of the foreign language do not present much difficulty because in conventional orthography only segmental features of the language --- e.g. the spelling system --- can be shown. When these very words are spoken a host of cultural implications arise. Teachers' own sound grounding in the cross-cultural similarities and differences reflected in the language use is of great importance. Robert Lado has written a full-length book on *Linguistics Across Culture* (1957) in his attempt to explain that since the cultural content of a language is an integral component of its very being a foreign language, a teacher will do well therefore if the cultural similarities and differences are given due importance.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As we know that for research work we have to see the past studies to find out the research gap. To fulfill these gaps we went through a number of studies. A brief analytical review of the writings of recognized authors and of previous research studies substantiates that the researcher is quite well acquainted with the previous studies in the concerned field.

Indeed, review of the related literature provides the academic guidance to the researcher. The researcher had noticed that basically all these studies focused on five aspects of English language teaching-learning such as (a) Methodology of Teaching, (b) Communication Skills, (c) Examination and evaluation issues, (d) Teaching- Learning Problems Identification and (e) Teacher Competence and Attitude. The details of these studies are given below in the forth coming paragraphs:

Maratab, Zeeshan, Romana, Sobia (2015) attempted to conduct their study on the "Pronunciation Difficulties of Urdu Speakers Learning British Accent". The Objectives of the study were: a. to explore the difficulties of the Urdu speakers learning accent. (b) to facilitate the Urdu speakers learning British accent by highlighting the issues and causes behind them. Tools: A questionnaire was conducted. Findings: Learning British accent for an Urdu speaker is not an easy task especially the absence of the native like environment makes it more difficult. British accent has its factors such as absence of proper connection between spellings and its pronunciation, very complex stress pattern, silent letters, multiple sounds of one letter etc. which makes learning tougher for Urdu speakers.

William, Raja & Selvi, (2011) attempted to conduct their study on causes of problems in learning English as a second language as perceived by higher secondary students. The Objectives of the study were: (i) to identify the leading cause of problems in learning English as a second language. (ii) to find out the significant difference if any in the causes of problems in learning English in regard to sex, locality of school, optional subject, habit of reading English newspaper and habit of listening to English news. Tools: A questionnaire was conducted for the students. This study involved data collection through survey method. Recommendations: The government should often conduct in-service training to train the teachers to use English language in classrooms. They should try to bring reforms in the pattern of examination. Separate marks could also be allotted to test the spoken language of the students. Children are more successful when their parents are involved in their education.

Qudsiya. Hashmi (2016) attempted to conduct her study on a study of the "Difficulties in Learning of English Faced by Hindi and Urdu Medium Students of India and Indian Expatriates in Saudi Arabia." The Objectives of the study were: (i) to examine the use of English as a first, second and third language in school curriculum as defined by various agencies of the state apparatus. (ii) to examine the issues that might have been overlooked while designing the curriculum for the teaching of English in the non-English speaking world. (iii) to study the process of learning English in India against the backdrop of societal changes and other relevant factors. Tools: 1. Specifically designed assignments, quizzes and questionnaire to test the linguistic capabilities of learners. 2. Teachers questionnaire. Findings: The researcher finds teaching English very serious problem which has huge ramifications as far as the future of the students and our education system is concerned. We are all a part of a system that does not allow a child to think for himself. Not only is there no room for creativity and subjectivity, our teaching methodology focuses entirely on the quantity of education given in terms of time and books, but not on the quality of teaching. The focus is on the number of hours that a teacher is teaching, but not even remotely on the 'what' and the 'how' of the teaching process. While the student's attendance holds supreme importance, his/her interest and 'learning' is a matter of no concern. So long as we hold such a utilitarian and reductive approach to our method of education, the results will continue to be as dismal as they have been in the current research. Recommendations: Based on the results and conclusions, following are some of the recommendations: 1- Diagnostic analysis needs to be done by the concerned teachers of English to understand the problems, 2- A comparative analysis needs to be performed to deal with the teaching-learning situations, 3- A proper strategy needs to be evolved to cater to the needs of the bilingual learners of English.

P. Shrinivasalu. Reddy (2012), conducted a study on "Problems in Teaching and Learning English as a Second Language in India" The Objectives of the study were: (i) to improve the teaching practice (ii) to bring clarity in teaching concepts (ii) to co-ordinate the principles of teaching. Tools: A questionnaire was conducted. Findings: Some of the major findings of the study were lack of clear cut policy, lack of exposure to the language, non-availability of teaching learning material, lack of good teachers, lack of motivation, large classes and faulty examination system. Recommendations: The teachers have to gear up to meet the demands of the situation and successfully perform their duties. The objectives and needs of teaching are to be matched. The principles and methods of teaching should be co-ordinated to promote better standards of achievement.

Shruti Pal (2018) conducted a study on "Mother Tongue Influence on Spoken English." The Objectives of the study were: (i) to find out the English pronunciation problems faced by speakers of Hindi. (ii) to devise classroom suggestions to overcome the identified problems. Tools: Three kinds of tools were designed for the purpose of this study. a. questionnaire. b. pre-test tool. c. 50 teaching activities related to the identified problem were constructed and used in the classroom with the aim of helping learners improve their pronunciation. Findings: The data analysis helped identify and conclude: - The major pronunciation problem areas faced by speakers of Hindi were: 1. Fricative sounds such as /s/ /z/ /ʃ/ /dʒ/ 2. Plural markers 3. Consonant clusters 4. Vowel sounds which differed from the Hindi sound system and had varied spelling. The results of this study help us understand these factors and have implications for classroom planning and curriculum transaction. Recommendations: It is thus important to understand the factors affecting correct spoken English. Teachers in the Hindi speaking belt should help their learners work on their pronunciation skills by planning appropriate classroom activity and instruction.

Arnab Chaudhary and Jayanta Mete (2017) tried to attempt their study on the topic "A Study on English Teaching Learning Method in a Hindi Medium School in Nadia District of West Bengal." The Objectives of the study were: (i) to illustrate ways in which a bias in favor of English medium poses serious problems in accessing knowledge. (ii) How do we empower a learner to become an active creator of knowledge and to acquire and develop new skills? Tools: 1. questionnaire. 2. A sample survey of 52 students in a Hindi medium school. Findings: a. A majority of Hindi medium students affirmed that they felt disadvantaged by pursuing education in Hindi medium. b. A greater percentage of students in Hindi were more confident in expressing their understanding in their own words as compared to English

medium students. c. A significant proportion of Hindi medium students had difficulty in accessing English medium resources. Recommendations:- For redefining education and to make them active agents in creating knowledge for change, it is important to deepen awareness about ways in which language governs the learning-teaching process. There should be a serious need of knowledge laboratories or institutional arrangements where teachers can upgrade their abilities and be equipped to deal with the needs of the students. The approach of developing text books for students also needs to be changed.

Maninder Kaur Kainth and Mahesh Kumar (2014) attempted to conduct a study on "Teaching English Language at Engineering and Technology Institutes In India: Problems And Remedies" Objectives of the study were: a. to trace the problem faced by both teachers and students in the English teaching and learning process at the undergraduate level in engineering institutes b. to present the contemporary situations in India with regard to English and suggesting remedies for it. Tools:- A survey method was used with the teachers as a tool to find out the cause of the problem. Findings:-The study revealed that a. there is an urgent need to teach life skills and job-oriented English language skills b. the teachers should build confidence in students by playing the role of a facilitator c. the teachers should assess the present and future needs of the learners. Recommendations: a. there is an urgent need to teach English as a life skill which will help the students to be successful in living a productive life. b. there is an urgent need to teach engineering students job-oriented English language skills. c. the teachers should customize their teaching methodology according to the need of the learners and should play the role of a facilitator rather than an instructor.

G. Vijay (2014) attempted to conduct his study on "Constraints of Teaching English in Engineering Colleges." Objectives of his study were: a. to make learners acquire all the four skills in both formal and informal contexts b. to make them acquire language skills by using e-materials and language lab components. Tools: He used a survey method with the teachers of Anna University Chennai. Findings:-His study revealed that a. teachers face a difficult task when students are not motivated to learn English. b. Teachers face challenges such as irrelevant syllabus, lack of motivation etc c. teachers need to continuously improve their communicative skills in English. Recommendations: a. teachers need to continuously improve their communicative skills in English. b. the teachers should openly face the challenge of irrelevant syllabus, heterogeneous background of students and lack of motivation. c. the syllabus content and the evaluation system should also be improved.

Priya Sasidharan (2012) attempted to conduct her study on "A Needs Based Approach to Teaching and Learning of English for Engineering Purposes." Objectives of the study were: a. to assess the English language needs of Engineering colleges of Orissa b. To examine the existing English syllabus currently taught in the engineering colleges of Orissa and to ascertain how far they meet the students' communicative needs. c. to identify the academic and professional needs of engineering students at different engineering colleges in the Indian state of Orissa. Tools:-She conducted her study by a questionnaire based survey among students and teachers. Findings:- The study indicates that engineering students need not only linguistic competence in English but also certain life skills and technical skills related to language learning. b. syllabus should be able to handle real life situations on completion of their engineering course. c. the syllabus of Communicative English course needs to be addressed immediately to improve the quality of ELT in the Engineering programs. Recommendations: a. to develop professional competence, the awareness of social and cultural aspects related to engineers' workplace can be exercised in the classroom by selecting authentic materials. b. the students should be provided facilities and guidance in developing technical English skills, with a proper orientation and practice they can develop a broad perspective to face future workplace needs. c. the teachers should give a lot of practice to students in lab classes, Power-point presentations, interview sessions, report writing, and group discussions.

### III. METHODOLOGY

Significance of the Study: English is considered as a world language because of its immense ascendancy all over the world. At this stage, learning English is a kind of fashion. Most of the Indian students from rural areas think that English is the only source which can help them in getting good jobs, luxurious life, high status and prosperity in the society. They feel that if they will learn English, they will be successful person in the world. But when they hear anything in English they feel hesitant and nervous. In Indian government schools, English starts from 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> standard. As the students come from rural areas for learning English they want to learn English through their mother tongue, so bilingual grammar translation methods are adopted in language classes. These methods don't help learners in learning English specially listening and speaking. It has been observed that in most of the intermediate colleges where medium of instruction is Hindi they offer English courses but listening and speaking practice is ignored. Moreover, this process minimizes the real learning activities as a whole. The concept of efficiency of a language teaching method depends mainly on five different components as mentioned below. (a) Aims and objectives of teaching, (b) Teaching materials (according to the level of the learners), (c) Testing & Evaluation procedures, (d) Listening and speaking practice and (d) Teacher's/learner's motivation.

Further, all the above mentioned five components should be critically analyzed so that we can provide maximum benefits to learners. It is clearly visible that the first three modules i.e. aims and objective of teaching, teaching materials, testing and evaluative procedures function externally and the last two points operate internally. Thus, the interaction and the meaningful coordination between the teacher and the learner is, to a large extent dependent upon the

sensible relationship between the aims of teaching, testing and evaluating techniques, the study material and practice of listening and speaking regularly.

#### A. Statement of the Problem

Identification of the Counteractive Measures of the Tribulations Faced by Intermediate Students of Selected Colleges of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, while Teaching and Learning English.

#### B. Limitations of the Study

The present study was delimited to the intermediate students and English teachers those who teach English at the Intermediate level in selected colleges of Lucknow. UP, India i.e. Babu Banarsi Daas College, Lucknow and Karamat Hussain P.G. Girls College, Lucknow.

#### C. Choice of Informants

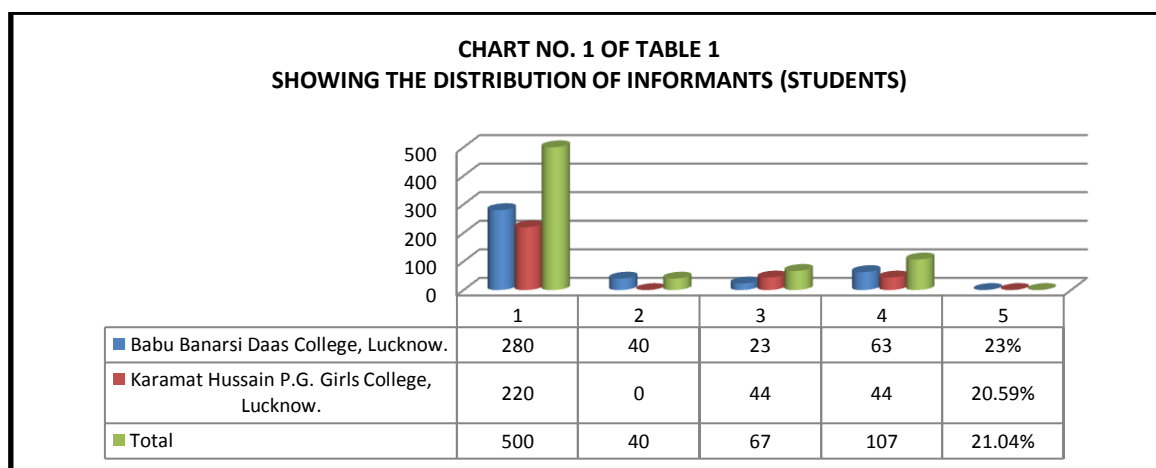
The corpus of the data for analysis was selected from the Intermediate students of Babu Banarsi Daas College (BBDC), Lucknow and Karamat Hussain P.G. Girls College (KHGC), Lucknow. These students mostly come from the rural areas of Hindi and Urdu speaking regions. Hence selection of informants for the present study was felt to be more meaningful. These informants who had been speaking Hindi/Urdu as their first language were identified because they had some sort of uniformity in their speech utterances as well as diversity because of the regional differences of their previous schooling. Out of total 500 students, 107 students were keenly offered to respond to the questionnaires and take the question paper specially prepared for the purpose of collecting data for this research. Therefore, the investigator took 107 students as the informants of the study. As the strength of the students of Engineering and Education of both the two institutions varied to a greater extent, we did combined investigation for the purpose of the study. The details of both the Institutions under investigation were given as under:

We have provided questionnaire to 220 students in Karamat Hussain P.G. Girls College, Lucknow, only 44 students returned and in Babu Banarsi Daas University, Lucknow 280 questionnaire have been distributed and out of them only 63 students have returned the questionnaire. The details of the informants are shows in the following table & Chart.1.

TABLE I  
TABLE SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMANTS (STUDENTS)

S.No.	Name of the College	Strength	Informants Size			Percentage of Informants
			Boys	Girls	Total	
1.	Babu Banarsi Daas University, Lucknow.	280	40	23	63	22.5%
2.	Karamat Hussain P.G. Girls College, Lucknow.	220	0	44	44	20.59%
3.	Total	500	40	67	107	21.04%

The number was deliberately limited not exceeding 107 students. The record of all the above informants and their particulars were maintained in the questionnaire.



#### D. Choice of Material

(i) In order to be able to grasp the violation or neglect of the socio-cultural component in an interactive speech act, a detailed questionnaire was prepared.

(ii) A sentence list including simple words, compound words and words involving functional shift of stress for analyzing the stress and intonation patterns of English.

(iii) A test of English language skills which measures informants' English level was prepared to investigate the oral and aural abilities of the informants. This test was consisted of Listening & Speaking, Writing, Grammar & Vocabulary and Pronunciation.



IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The corpus of the data contains editing, classifying and tabulating the statistics which was collected from the Intermediate students and English teachers those who teach English at the Intermediate Colleges of Lucknow, i.e. Babu Banarsi Daas college, Lucknow, and Karamat Hussain P.G. Girls College, Lucknow, through the management of various tools on the selected informants. Further, this arrangement also presents and illustrates certain modes which are helpful in the analysis of the gathered data. The data is analyzed by using the IBM SPSS Statistics 20 data editor which is a latest software to edit, classify, tabulate and analyze data. The “Data Analysis” discusses the meaning of suitable and dependable outcomes and the inter relationships among the outcomes.

A. Analysis of Teachers’ Questionnaire

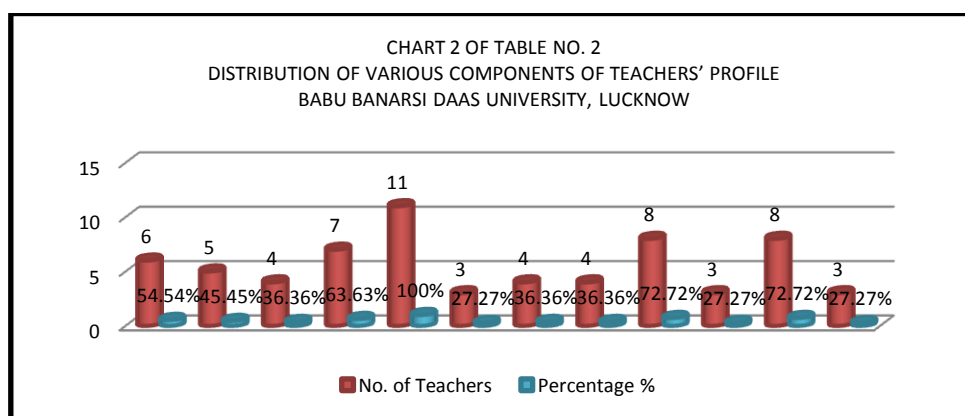
The first section of the Teachers’ Questionnaire contained the general and demographic information of the sample of the teachers such as their age, educational qualification, experience and work load. In short, it is presented a brief profile of the sample of various aspects of the college teachers. The distribution of the sample of teachers by various segments such as gender, age, qualification, experience and weekly work load, is shown in the table below:

TABLE II  
DISTRIBUTION OF VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF TEACHERS’ PROFILE BABU BANARSI DAAS COLLEGE.

S.No.	Components	No. of Teachers	Percentage %
1	Gender		
	Male	6	54.54%
	Female	5	45.45%
2	Age		
	Below 29	4	36.36%
	Above 30	7	63.63%
3	Qualification		
	Post Graduate	11	100%
	Pursuing Ph.D	3	27.27%
	Ph.D.	4	36.36%
	B.Ed/M.Ed.	4	36.36%
4	Experience		
	Below 5 years	8	72.72%
	Above 10 years	3	27.27%
5	Weekly Work Load		
	16-18 hours	8	72.72%
	10-12 hours	3	27.27%

All the teacher respondents in Babu Banarsi Daas University, Lucknow possess Masters Degree in English Literature. 4 of them possess the Ph.d. Degree, 4 of them have M.Ed. degree and 3 other teachers are pursuing their Ph.D. 8 out of 11 teachers (72.72%) have got less than 05 years of their teaching experience at the U.G. level and the remaining 3 teachers (27.27%) have got experience of more than 10 years. Depending upon the strength of the college, 8 out of 11 teachers (72.72%) have got the maximum work load of 18 to 20 hours per week. The remaining three of them (27.27%) reported that they engage 10 to12 hours per week. The following graph No.4.1.2 shows the various components of teachers’ profile and their numbers.

The following chart is showing the percentage % of the teachers’ profile of Babu Banarsi Daas University, Lucknow.



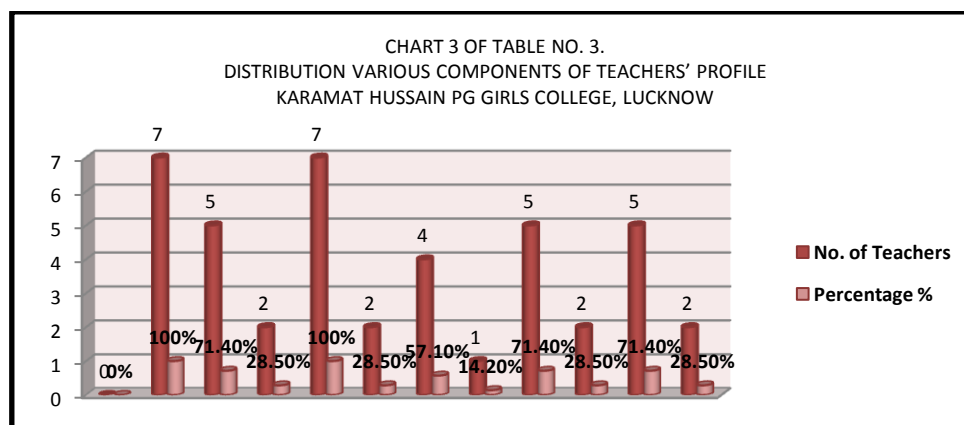
The next table shows the profile of teachers of Karamat Hussain P.G. Girls College, Lucknow.

TABLE III  
DISTRIBUTION VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF TEACHERS' PROFILE KARAMAT HUSSAIN PG GIRLS COLLEGE, LUCKNOW

S.No.	Components	No. of Teachers	Percentage %
1	Gender	Male	0%
		Female	100%
2	Age	Below 29	71.4%
		Above 30	28.5%
3	Qualification	Post Graduate	100%
		Pursuing Ph.D	28.5%
		Ph.D.	57.10%
		B.Ed/M.Ed.	14.2%
4	Experience	Below 5 years	71.4%
		Above 10 years	28.5%
5	Weekly Work Load	16-18 hours	71.4%
		10-12 hours	28.5%

According to the above table there are 7 female teachers between 28 and 55 years of age. The age wise composition of the sample indicates that 71.4% of the teachers are below 29 years of age and the remaining 28.5% teachers are aged above 30 years of age.

All the teachers of this college possess master's degree in English Literature. 4 of them possess Ph.d. degree, 1 of them has M.Ed. degree and 2 other teachers have been pursuing their Ph.D. 05 out of 7 teachers (71.5%) have got less than 05 years of their teaching experience at the U.G. level and the remaining 2 teachers (28.5%) have got experience of more than 10 years. Depending upon the strength of the college, 5 out of 7 teachers (71.5%) have got the maximum work load of 18 to 20 hours per week. The remaining 2 of them (28.5%) reported that they engage 10 to 12 hours per week. The following Chart No.3 shows the various components of teachers' profile, their numbers and percentage (%).

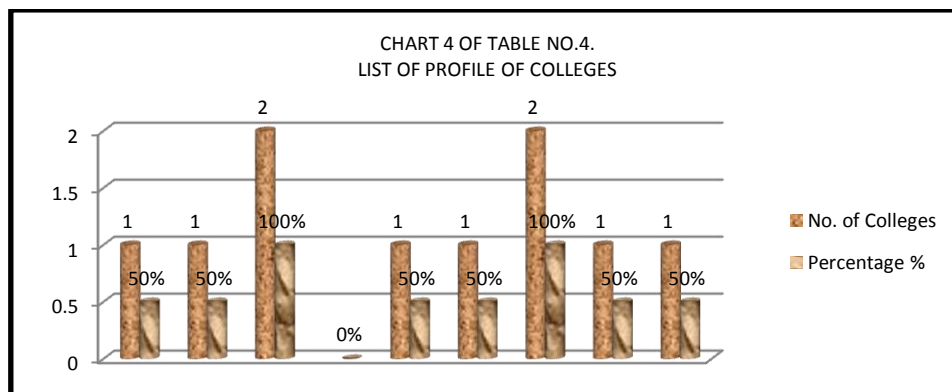


In the same way the sample of the two colleges is further categorized into five different segments on the basis of status, locality, medium of instruction, discipline and the nature and type of the college. The detailed description of the profile of the colleges is displayed in table No.4.

TABLE IV  
LIST OF PROFILE OF COLLEGES

S.No.	Details	No. of Colleges	Percentage %
1	Status	Self Finance	50%
		Grant-in-aid	50%
2	Locality	City	100%
		Town	0%
3	Medium of Instructions	Hindi/Urdu	50%
		English	50%
4	Discipline	100%	
5	Type of College	Co-education	50%
		Women's College	50%

The following Chart No. 4 shows the percentage of the status, locality, medium of instruction, discipline and the nature and type of the college.



Out of the two colleges under study, one college is English medium; one is Hindi/Urdu medium college in Lucknow division. One college is situated in city area, while the other is situated in the rural area. Accordingly both colleges provide same courses such as Engineering, BBA and BCA. Both the colleges have common English text book for each course.

The qualitative analysis of all the 40 items pertaining to the following aspects of teaching-learning components in English is included in this segment. The components contained questions pertaining to:

- ❖ Methodology of Teaching and Teaching practices
- ❖ Syllabus designing and
- ❖ Examination and Evaluation Methods

**B. Data Analysis of Students' Questionnaire**

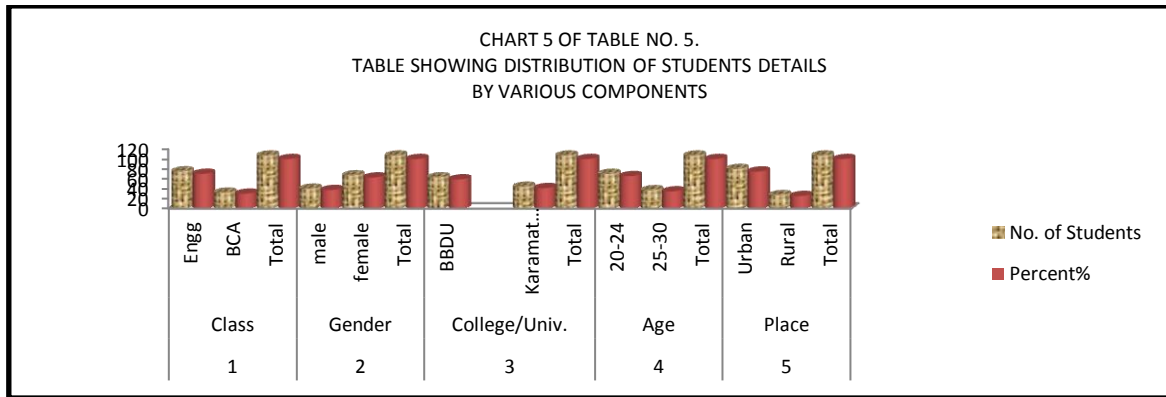
We had prepared a separate questionnaire for the students to gather the data for analysis of problems faced by students, in teaching and learning process at the intermediate colleges. The questionnaire was divided into six parts. The items of questionnaire Part-1 showed various personal & academic aspects of the informants. Part-II acquires information regarding the importance of English, mother tongue, schooling and family information of the students. Part III asked questions about "What do informants think about English?" Part IV discussed "how often the informants use English in different places" Part V covered the problems of four English Language skills, and Part VI sheds light on various aspects of importance of English in India.

We have maintained a personal record sheet to collect various personal and other details of the students'. The informants under study were requested to fill-in the personal record pro forma before taking the test. The personal record pro forma provided various personal details such as the gender, mother-tongue, place of schooling, medium of instruction, study of English subject and so on. All the details are given below in the tabular form:

TABLE V  
TABLE SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS DETAILS BY VARIOUS COMPONENTS

S.No.	Components	No. of Students	Percent%
1	Engg	75	70.1
	BCA	32	29.9
	Total	107	100.0
2	Male	40	37.3
	Female	67	62.7
	Total	107	100.0
3	BBDU	63	58.8
	Karamat Husain College	44	41.2
	Total	107	100.0
4	20-24	70	65.4
	25-30	37	34.6
	Total	107	100.0
5	Urban	80	74.7
	Rural	27	25.3
	Total	107	100.0

The above table shows the consolidated data of the informants. All these information were discussed separately in respective segments. The following Chart No.5 shows the diagrammatical analysis of the above table.

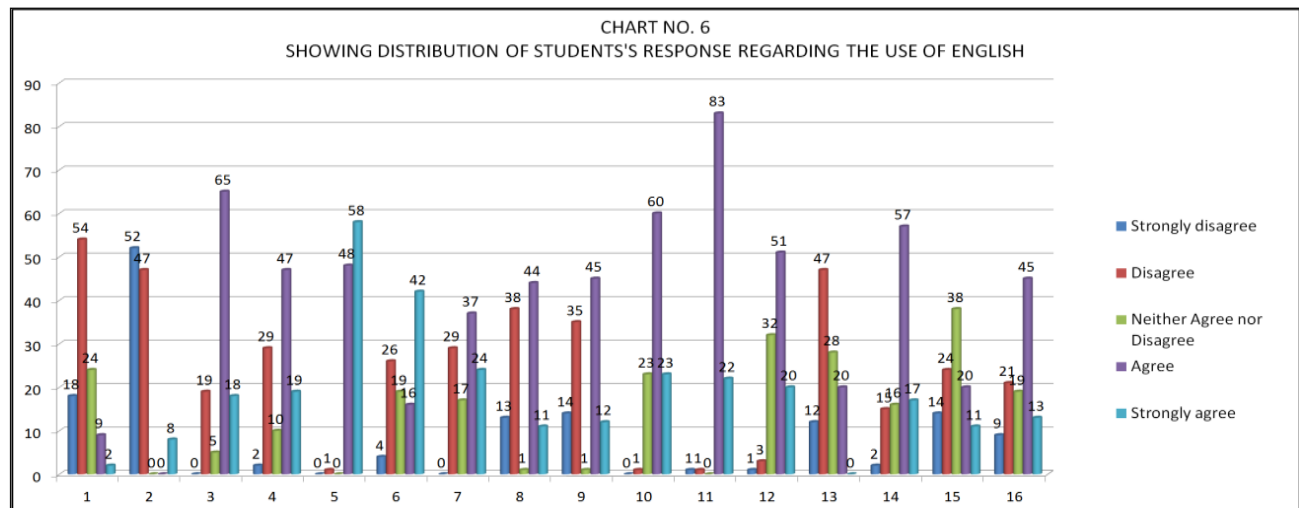


The above table and Chart state the consolidated data of the informants' personal details.

The questions and possible responses in the questionnaire were stated in a manner assumable to rapid, unambiguous coding and processing. We have shown here only part I and part V of the questionnaire as examples. The other parts of the questionnaire were not shown to avoid the length of the paper. See the following charts.

**TABLE VI**  
**SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS RESPONSE REGARDING THE USE OF ENGLISH.**

	I think English is a very difficult language	I learn English because my parents force me	I learn English because I want to understand the native speakers	I want to learn English because my English is very poor	I think English is very important for my future	I think English is fun	I think I should join an English course	My English is poor because I came from Hindi medium background	My English is good because I came from English medium background	I think English is necessary for travelling abroad	I think my teachers' English pronunciation is good to understand	I think my pronunciation of English is good enough to be understood by the listeners	I think my pronunciation of English is poor because I have been taught like this	I think American pronunciation is different from Indian English pronunciation	British English pronunciation is easier than American English pronunciation	British English is closer to Indian English
Strongly disagree	18	52	0	2	0	4	0	13	14	0	1	1	12	2	14	9
Disagree	54	47	19	29	1	26	29	38	35	1	1	3	47	15	24	21
Neither Agree nor Disagree	24	0	5	10	0	19	17	1	1	23	0	32	28	16	38	19
Agree	9	0	65	47	48	16	37	44	45	60	83	51	20	57	20	45
Strongly agree	2	8	18	19	58	42	24	11	12	23	22	20	0	17	11	13
Total	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107



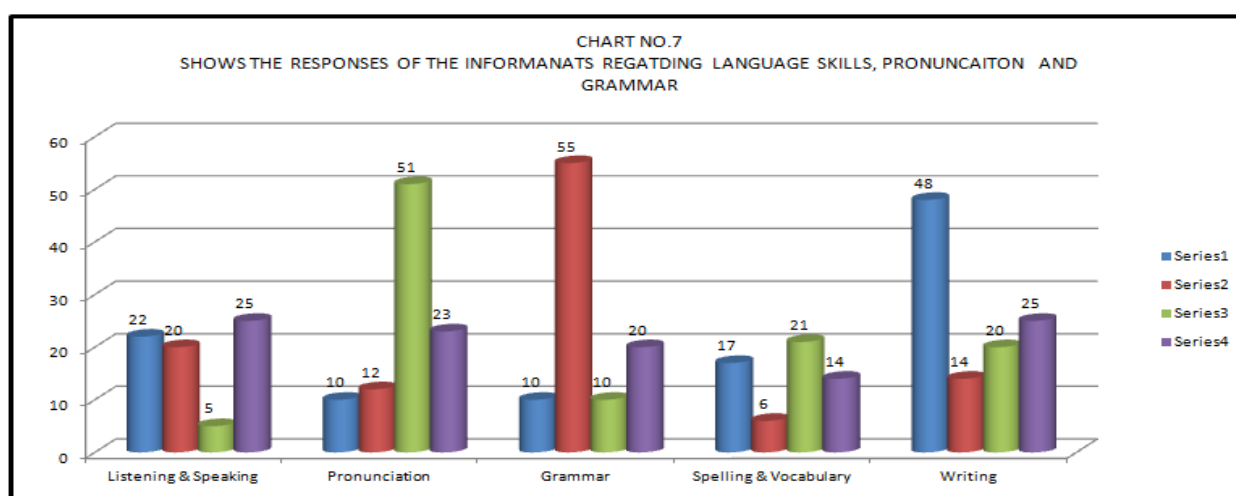
The consolidated data of the informants' was shown in the above table and chart. The responses of the informants were discussed discretely in respective segments viz. problems related to the use of English, thinking about English, why English is poor or good, British English or American English, etc. 54% students mentioned that English is not very difficult for them. 47% students reported that their parents do not force them to learn English. 65% agreed that they learn English because their English is very poor. 83% students mentioned that their teachers' pronunciation is good to understand. 44% of them reported that their English is poor because they came from Hindi background while 45% mentioned that their English is good because they belong to English medium schools. 57% students reported that

American English is difficult than British English on the other hand 20% of them say British English is easier than American English and 45% agreed that British English is very close to Indian English.

The following table mentions the data of the informants' related to the difficulties they face in different domains of English, viz. Listening & Speaking, Pronunciation, Grammar, Spelling & Vocabulary, Writing etc. All these details were discussed separately.

TABLE VII  
SHOWS THE RESPONSES OF THE INFORMANTS REGARDING THE LANGUAGE SKILLS, PRONUNCIATION, & GRAMMAR

Language Skills	Which of the following language domains do you feel is difficult to learn	Which of the following language areas do you feel is easy to learn	In which of the following language domains do you need special attention	Which one is the most interesting lesson about English
Listening & Speaking	22	20	5	25
Pronunciation	10	12	51	23
Grammar	10	55	10	20
Spelling & Vocabulary	17	6	21	14
Writing	48	14	20	25



The consolidated data regarding language skills of the informants' is highlighted in the above table and chart. The responses of the informants were discussed separately. 22% students mentioned that listening and speaking is difficult for them, 20% reported that listening & speaking is easy while only 5% of them need special attention in this domain and 25% of them say that it is very interesting for them. 10% students reported that pronunciation is difficult for them, 12% said that it is easy while around 51% of them need special attention in this area and 23% of them feel pronunciation very interesting for them. As far as grammar is concerned 10% students mentioned that Grammar is difficult for them, 55% reported that it is easy for them while other 10% need special attention in this domain and 20% reported that it is a very interesting subject. Spelling & Vocabulary is difficult for 17% students on the other hand only 6 reported it difficult while 21% students need special attention in this subject and 14% said that it is a very interesting area. Writing is more difficult than speaking that is why around 48% students reported that Writing is difficult for them while 14% mentioned it easy for them. 20% said that they need special attention and 25% felt that writing is an interesting subject.

Some students considered English as a tough subject and they had mentioned that as they lacked proper foundation at school level, they face difficulty in grasping the language in the right context while other mentioned that the regional medium of instruction at the school level was one of the reasons for the poor foundation of their language efficiency. On the other hand some students reported about their problem of poor comprehensive ability so that they could not grasp the context of their lessons due to their poor level of vocabulary. Some of them face problems during their examinations particularly while attempting long questions. Others reported that the heterogeneous nature of their class influences their interactive abilities negatively.

### V. FINDINGS

It was stated by many sample teachers that the present system of lecturing did not give adequate extent for mounting communicative and comprehensive abilities of the students. It has been mentioned by the number of teachers that they go to their classes with their text books and start reading from the book and tell the meaning and difficult part of the text in their mother tongue, we can say that they use grammar translation method. It was also observed that some other teachers adopted the direct method, taught English through the medium of English to heterogeneous group of students in each and every class. Thus, the style and the methodology of teaching varied from teacher to teacher and from

college to college. Those teachers, who adopted the grammar translation method, used regional language to the maximum extent. It was noted that these methods would not help the students to learn communicative skills. So, the present system which did not emphasize on the development of all the four language skills was found to be totally examination oriented and teacher centered. Hence, this faulty method of teaching was also considered as a problem which poses some difficulties for the students. Many other findings have also indicated the need to change traditional lecturing style and recommended various other techniques and methods to promote better learning language abilities.

All the respondents discussed this issue and their discussions concluded with the following suggestions. The focus should be shifted from the teachers to the students. It is true that good teachers are more valuable than good methods of teaching. The teachers' skills of application of those aspects would matter in the class room teaching-learning process. So, the teacher should choose appropriate style and method to do justification to their teaching.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND REMEDIAL MEASURES

The study is to find out some remedial measures to minimize the ELT problems; we analyzed each and every problem during the course of data analysis of the test results and questionnaires given to the students and teachers. The investigation has concluded with the following remedial measures, suggestions and recommendations.

It was suggested that all the teachers should be encouraged to follow CLT approach in their classes.

- ❖ The syllabus designers should measure the suitability of the text books and their relevancy in accordance with the teaching methods, examination and evaluation system.
- ❖ The teacher should use role play technique for teaching presentation and spoken English.
- ❖ English words should be pronounced with the correct stress patterns.
- ❖ Teachers should also take their students to banks, offices, to teach them situational conversations practically.
- ❖ Oral approaches, situational teaching, audio lingual approach, communicative language teaching, which emphasize on all the aspects of skills should be implemented in the class room.
- ❖ The learners should be encouraged to develop reading habits in order to minimize their pronunciation problem.
- ❖ Need based language courses which improve the teachers' efficiency and promote efficient ELT should be executed.
- ❖ Special remedial classes should be arranged for weak learners.
- ❖ All the colleges should be encouraged to modify the curriculum to cater to the needs of the students.
- ❖ Workshops and Seminars should be arranged from time to time for teachers.
- ❖ It was also recommended that the students should always be encouraged to participate in talk shows and debates.
- ❖ The teacher should teach students how to present their views and compare them with others.
- ❖ The teachers should pay full concentration on designing interesting lesson plan which may help to motivate the students.

We ended our discussion with a reference that a teacher of English should keep in mind that he has to select his teaching methodology for a specific group of students according to the level of the students. However, to give equal importance to instruction and practice in all the components of the language will be wasteful and may create confusion. The teacher has to select his priority for a particular teaching period where a relatively greater emphasis would be given to the teaching of a particular component. A skillful and trained teacher can, no doubt, handle an integrative teaching methodology which will ward off the monotony which, after sometime, creeps into a largely drill-dominated instructional period. It also gives an impetus to the motivational factors among the learners.

Whatever the methodology, the teacher should constantly keep in view the importance of English Language Skills. If he/she has considerably reduced the errors normally made by the students, half of the battle with regard to the teaching English to non-native speakers will be won automatically. The teaching of English will be useful only to make the students aware of the suggestions mentioned in the research.

In the present study we have relied for the substantiation of our observations mostly through examples taken from the actual utterances of the students. We have tried to induct the methodology and techniques discussed in this research for improvement. It is needless to emphasize the validity of the fact that language is product of culture. We can say that one has learnt a foreign language only when he has been acculturated in the target language. In other words, the learner has to imbibe in his speech-habits the cultural nuances of the foreign language before he can claim to have learnt the language. The experience of students' competence after twelve years of their schooling in an environment of 'immersion' in the foreign language environment is not very encouraging in the context of the Indian family and social life. The learner, returning home from the foreign language situation, reverts to the use of his/her mother tongue. In certain neo-rich and so-called high society the use of the foreign language in homes is very often ridiculed as artificial and conceited.

The above statement should not be misconstrued as an aspersion on any class of people in India. What we want to bring home is that as we teach the English language without reference to the cultural context, we cannot do the same with the teaching, which have heavily built-in cultural implications. This is because without acquiring the skill of using the basic things he will be misunderstood in his interactional contact not only with the native speakers but also with those in his own country. This is why we have concentrated, in our study, on only the four language skills, vocabulary

and grammar. As we have mentioned that the study has a pedagogical angle and is proposed to be of utilitarian value. Hence, the discussion of the theoretical aspects has been kept at the minimum level.

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# On the Derivation of Oblique Object Construction in Mandarin Chinese

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**Abstract**—This paper explores the derivation mechanism of oblique object constructions in Mandarin Chinese. Based on the Morphological Fusion and the Minimize Exponence in Distributed Morphology, this paper proposes that the oblique object is assigned by the preposition and then the verb, which is intransitive, and the preposition undertakes morphological fusion. As a result, the verb is spelled out in the phonetic components and the oblique object occurs directly after the verb. We infer that “Ta chi shitang” (He eats in the canteen) and “Ta zai shitang chifan” (he eats in the canteen) have different generation mechanisms by exploring the different generation mechanisms of “Ta chi shitang” (He eats in the canteen) and “Ta zai shitang chifan”(he eats in the canteen). They cannot be converted from each other.

**Index Terms**—oblique object construction, derivation mechanism, distributed morphology, morphological fusion, minimize exponence

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is one class of verb-object construction in Mandarin Chinese that can take the object after the intransitive verb, such as:

- (1) chi shitang  
eat canteen  
'to eat in the canteen'
- (2) xie maobi  
write writing brush  
'to write with the writing brush'
- (3) fei Shanghai  
fly Shanghai  
'to fly to Shanghai'
- (4) shui xiaochuang  
sleep small bed  
'to sleep in the small bed'

In this type of construction, “canteen”, “Shanghai”, “writing brush”, “small bed” are not direct objects of verbs, but rather non-core/peripheral arguments of verbs, occupying the position of the direct object in the surface structure. (Sun, 2009).

Zhu Dexi (1982) argues that the after-verb composition of this construction is "quasi-object", but he did not give a corresponding explanation for the cause of this kind of quasi-object. Xing Fuyi (1991) maintains that this construction is a phenomenon of “object substitution” and distinguishes between ordinary object and generation object. In previous studies, most syntacticians in the circles of generative grammar used the name of Sun Tianqi (2009), which called this type of construction as the oblique object construction. This article continues to use this name. On the basis of summarizing relevant studies, we point out the problems of these studies, and then uses the Minimize Exponence and the operation of "morphological fusion" in the distributed morphology to explore the generation mechanism of the oblique construction in Mandarin Chinese, mainly focusing on how to solve the problem of licensing the oblique object. The Minimize Exponence promotes the development of DM theory. The morphological fusion is the concrete realization of the Minimize Exponence, which better embodies the economy of the language system. The oblique object construction in Mandarin Chinese is in line with the Minimize Exponence by using the operation of morphological fusion. We propose that the oblique object is assigned by the preposition and then the verb, which is intransitive, undertakes morphological fusion with the preposition. As a result, the verb is spelled out in the phonetic components and the oblique object occurs directly after the verb. We also explore the different generation mechanisms of “Ta chi shitang”(He eats in the canteen) and “Ta zai shitang chifan”(he eats in the canteen). We infer that “Ta chi shitang”(He eats in the canteen) and “Ta zai shitang chifan”(he eats in the canteen) have different generation mechanisms. They cannot be converted from each other.

## II. RELATED RESEARCHES



For the oblique object construction, the researchers are mainly concerned with two questions: how is the oblique object generated, and what are the conditions for the legitimacy of the oblique object? Below we briefly review a few representative assumptions and then point out their problems.

*A. Light Verb Hypothesis*

Lin (2001) first proposed the use of light verb theory to deal with the construction of the oblique object in Mandarin Chinese. Lin (2001) believes that the light verb is an eventuality predicate, which concludes that the light verb is not included in the semantic structure of the verb. It is realized in the syntactic layer. The verbs in Mandarin Chinese are not as strict as the corresponding English verbs, so Chinese is less restricted in terms of semantic interpretation of objects than that of English. There is no selective relationship between Chinese verbs and their objects, and a light verb connects a verb (whether it is transitive or intransitive) and its subsequent arguments. Unconventional objects like the oblique object are not selected by the main verb, but by the light verb. The main verbs of the oblique object construction are incorporated into light verbs, which ultimately form the surface structure of the oblique object construction. There are four types of oblique objects in Mandarin Chinese, such as tools, locatives, time and reason, which are permitted by the light verbs USE, AT and FOR.

Feng Shengli (2005) inherited and developed the theory of light verbs, and maintains that the complex relationship of unconventional verbs in Mandarin Chinese is caused by the movement of light verbs. Light verbs can be divided into two categories according to their external forms: one is a light verb or an empty verb with no sound, and is represented by the symbol DO; the other is a light verb with a sound, denoted by *do*. The light verb without sound directly triggers the syntactic movement of the subordinate verbs it controls to the *v* position and merges with it. The movement needs to be strictly defined and the most fundamental condition is that the moved verb must be c-commanded by the light verb, which is shown in Figure 1 (Feng, 2005).

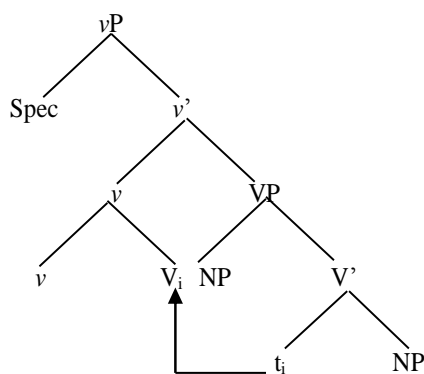


Figure 1 Light verb movement of unconventional verb-object structure

The use of the hypothesis of light verbs to analyze the oblique object construction has a certain explanatory power. However, Lin (2001) provides three verbs of USE, AT, and FOR for the analysis of the the oblique object construction. The three verbs cannot explain the usage of “eating the mood” and “cry the Great Wall” in the oblique object construction. Feng Shengli (2005) did not conduct asufficient and reasonable argument for the establishment of the light verb DO without sound, which affected the persuasiveness of the analysis.

*B. Empty Component Assumption*

Guo Jimao (1999) expounds that the oblique object is permitted by the corresponding implied components. Guo believes that this kind of construction implies a semantic predicate, indicating the relationship between the verb and the following noun. This implied "predicate" is mainly embodied in verbs, prepositions (+ locative) or conjunctions. For example, "flying Shanghai" is "fly + (to + Shanghai)".

Yang Yongzhong (2007a) believes that Vi+NP can be regarded as the product of the syntactic displacement of words, which is generated by the conversion of “Vi+Prep+NP” or “Prep+ NP+Vi”. Yang Yongzhong (2007b) further points out that Vi+NP implies an empty argument and an empty predicate. The empty predicate is responsible for the permission of the oblique object. The “Ta chi shitang” (He eats in the canteen) is converted by “he eats 0 (he) 0 (in) canteen”.

Yang Yongzhong (2009) uses verb movement to explain the generation of the oblique object construction. Take “Ta chiguo shitang” (he ate in the canteen) as an example. Yang thinks that the sentence first generates “Ta zai shitang guo chi fan”(he in the cafeteria has eaten). The aspect marker “guo”(has) attracts the verb to move, and generates “Ta zai shitang chiguo fan” (he has eaten in the canteen). The verb continues to move to the front of the prepositional phrase along with the aspect marker, generating “Ta chiguo fan zai shitang” (he has eaten at the canteen) and then generated by prepositional deletion to generate “Ta chiguo shitang” (He has eaten the canteen). But Yang did not explain the lack of “fan” (rice).

Cheng Jie (2009) proposes the “virtual preposition hypothesis”, arguing that the intransitive verb followed by the

non-core argument structure (IVO) in the noun phrase arguments to establish the relation through a virtual preposition P and the verb. Then it forms a verb phrase [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>v'</sub> V [<sub>PP</sub> [<sub>P'</sub> P DP]]]]. That is to say, such a noun phrase is actually a PP projected by the virtual preposition P.

The analyses of the above three scholars can solve the problem of the licensing of the oblique object. However, setting a corresponding empty predicate or empty preposition for each the oblique object construction will encounter technical troubles in the syntactic operation.

### C. Applicative Construction Hypothesis

Sun Tianqi (2009) used the phenomenon of application to analyze the oblique object construction. Pylkkänen (2002) abstracts a syntactic category of Applicative Phrases that allows for non-core arguments. The non-core component is in the position of the specifier of the applicative phrase, i.e. the applicative argument. constructions such as "chi shitang"(eat the canteen) belongs to the high-applicative construction defined by Pylkkänen (2002), and the applicative phrase is incorporated above VP, as shown in Figure 2 (Sun 2009).

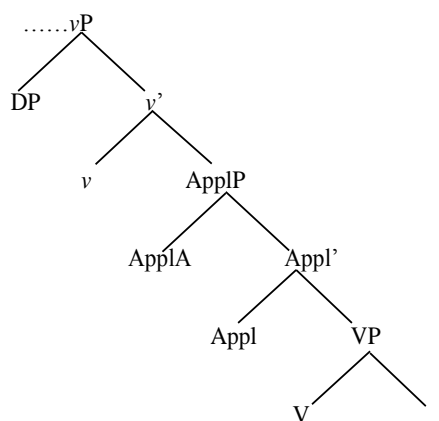


Figure 2 The tree of high-applicative construction

The applicative construction hypothesis can reasonably explain the phenomenon that the non-core arguments occupy the core argument position, but the content verbs have to undergo multiple movements, which will make the process of syntactic derivation more complicated and the syntactic operation is not economical.

### D. The Hypothesis of the Oblique Object Right Adjuncted to the VP

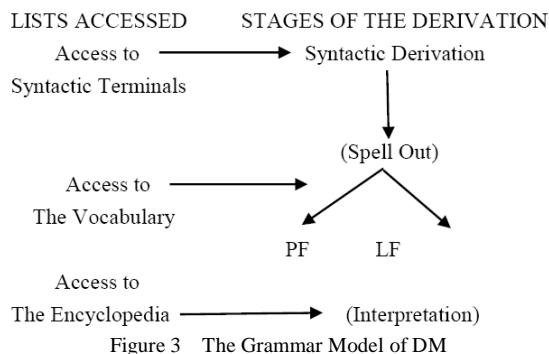
Han Jingquan and Xu Mengmeng (2014) used the phase theory to derive the generation of the oblique object. They argue that in the oblique object construction "Ta chi shitang"(he eats the canteen), the empty object "e" generated in the inner argument of the verb. The oblique object is actually formed by adding the prepositional phrase right to the VP after the preposition falls off. Since "e" does not have a phonetic feature, it will not be spelt out and finally the oblique object appears after the verb.

## III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the following, we introduce the theoretical framework of our paper, including the architecture of Distributed Morphology, the Minimize Exponence and the operation of fusion in Distribution Morphology.

### A. Distributed Morphology

Distributed Morphology (DM for short); (Halle & Marantz, 1993); (Embick & Noyer, 2001, 2007) is highly consistent with the MP in the basic architecture, but there is a unique insight into the relationship between syntax and shape. For the purposes of this paper, it has two core claims that can be adopted. One is "single engine hypothesis" i.e. the rules of morphology are the same as the rules of the syntax, and words and phrases are generated by basic operations such as merge and move. The second is "distributed morphology". The biggest difference between DM and the MP is that it eliminates the Lexicon that contains the individual nature of all the vocabulary in the MP and splits the Lexicon into three lists. List 1 is called the "Syntactic Terminals", including roots and abstract morphemes. List 2 is the "Vocabulary" whose purpose is to provide phonological content for abstract morphemes and roots. List 3 is the "Encyclopedia", located in the end of the derivation, which is responsible for providing the final semantic interpretation. Correspondingly, the morphological correlation operation is not in the Lexicon as assumed by the classic MP once for all. The one-time completion is done in two parts. The first part starts from the syntactic terminals and ends with the Spell-Out operation, belonging to part of the narrow syntax. Pure syntactic rules are used here, namely merge and move. The second part happens during the derivation from Spell-Out to PF, where the language computational system accesses the Vocabulary and fills the most matching Vocabulary Items into the syntactic structure according to the relevant rules. This is the "Late Insertion" operation. The grammar model of DM can be represented as Figure 3.



*B. Minimize Exponence*

There is a central contradiction in grammar for a long time: on the one hand, we must use words to maximize the clarity of information, and on the other hand we must convey this information in the most effective and economical way. To resolve this contradiction, Siddiqi (2009) proposes the Minimize Exponence, which prefers fusion of morphemes to concatenation.

(5) Minimize Exponence

The most economical derivation will be the one that maximally realizes all the formal features of the derivation with the fewest morphemes.

The gist of this economy constraint is that the best utterance is the one that conveys the most amount of information with the least effort (measured in number of morphemes that have to be pronounced). In terms of the production of an utterance, this constraint captures the struggle between the need to be maximally contrastive and the need to be maximally efficient. (Siddiqi 2009: 4)

*C. Morphological Fusion*

Embick (2015) maintains that in the DM framework, the operation of fusion creates one morpheme (with one Q position) from two by combining the features of the two morphemes prior to the application of Vocabulary Insertion.

The Minimize Exponence promotes the development of DM theory. The morphological fusion is the concrete realization of the Minimize Exponence, which better embodies the economy of the language system.

IV. OUR ANALYSIS

The Minimize Exponence and morphological fusion provide us with a theoretical tool to analyze the oblique object construction in Mandarin Chinese.

Larson (1988) points out that the verb's object and complement are different, so the syntactic structure position should be different. The verb object has substantive, satisfying the verb's requirement for the argument structure, and should be merged at the Spec-VP position. The verb complement has predicative, complements the verb itself, and should be merged at the VP-Comp position. The verb complement is more semantically close to the verb than the verb object. Therefore, in (6), "chi" (eat) is first merged with the complement "zai shitang" (in the canteen), as shown in Figure 4.

- (6) Ta chi shitang.  
 he eat canteen  
 'He eats in the canteen'

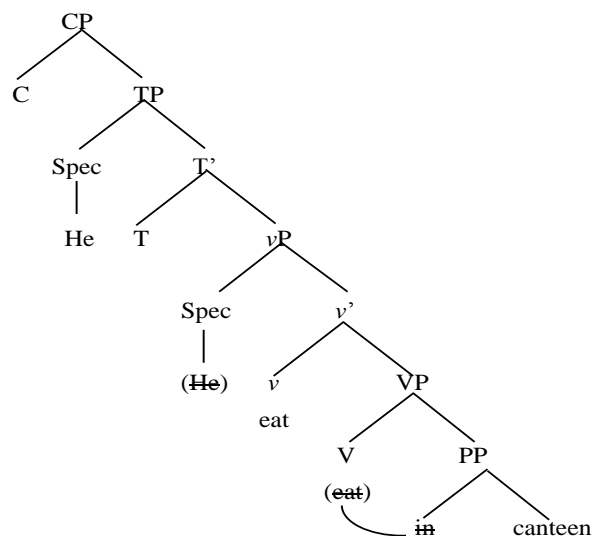


Figure 4 The generation process of “Ta chi shitang” (He eats the canteen)

Let us take (6) as an example to explore the specific derivation process of the oblique object construction.

In the case of (6), when the derivation of the oblique object construction begins, the syntactic terminals have the following terms “ta; chi; zai; shitang” (he; eat; in; canteen). According to Baker (1988), when there is a preposition in the D-structure, the preposition assigns theta role and Case to the NP, then the preposition and the verb are incorporated, which is called morphological fusion in the DM framework. V first merged with “zai shitang” (in the canteen) to form a VP. Then, the words “zai” (in) and “chi” (eat) are fused, and only “chi” (eat) is displayed in the morphology. Then VP and *v* are merged into *v'*, “chi” (eat) copies a copy to *v*, and DP “ta” (he) is generated at Spec-*v*P. Then *v*P and T are merged into TP, which is attracted by the EPP feature of T, and DP “ta” (he) copies a copy to Spec-TP and nominative Case is assigned to “ta” (he). Finally, TP and C merge into CP, and the derivation of “ta chi shitang” (he eats canteen) is completed. According to the Copy Theory of Movement (Chomsky, 1993, 2005), the components in brackets in Figure 6 represent copies left in place forms a chain of words with the merged copy. After the syntactic operation is completed and the spell-out begins, the components in the brackets often have no phonetic realization. The morpheme “zai” (in) are fused with the morpheme “chi” (eat), and they are not spelled out at the PF level, thus forming the oblique object construction. The analysis mode based on the morphological fusion operation embodies the basic spirit of the Minimize Exponence and reflects the economy requirements of the language system.

Our analysis also applies to the structure of the oblique object construction that the previous literature believes cannot supplement the corresponding “implicit components”, such as “ku changcheng” (Crying the Great Wall), “chi wenhua” (Eating the culture), “ji gongche” (Squeezing the Bus), etc. We believe that in these oblique object constructions, the intransitive verbs have the phenomenon of merging with the corresponding prepositions. For example, the “ji” (squeezing) of “ji gongche” (Squeezing the Bus), semantically implies “crowding in”, “squeezing” and “getting on the bus”. “ku” (cry) of “Crying the Great Wall” semantically implies “cry because of...” and the “chi” (eat) of “chi wenhua” (eat the culture) semantically implies “eat because of...”. In the end, these prepositions are merged with the previous verbs and are not spelled out at PF.

Next let’s look at the example (7) that semantically corresponds to Example (6):

- (7) Ta zai shitang chifan.  
 he in the canteen eat  
 ‘He eats in the canteen’

“zai shitang” (in the canteen) in the example (7) is a prepositional phrase, which is the adverbial of the entire sentence. In terms of Larson (1988), the DP “fan” (rice) is merged in the [Spec, VP] position, and the feature checking is performed with the V “eat” to obtain the accusative Case, and assuming the theta role of the patient of the V. Then, VP merges with the light verb *v*, V “chi” (eat) copies a copy to *v*; DP “ta” (he) merges at the [Spec1, *v*P] position to form a phase *v*P, and DP “ta” (he) assumes the theta role of agent.

According to the interface condition (Chomsky 2008), after the phase *v*P is generated, “fan” (rice) is handed over to the PF and the LF for processing. At this time, the prepositional phrase PP is generated at the [Spec2, *v*P] position, and the prepositional phrase PP is formed by the combination of the preposition “zai” (in) and the noun phrase “shitang” (canteen), and the preposition P is responsible for assigning “shitang” (canteen) the accusative Case. Then *v*P merges with T; attracted by the EPP feature of T, the DP “ta” (he) at the *v*P edge copies a copy at the [Spec, TP] position and the nominative Case is assigned by T. Finally, TP merges with C to generate a CP with a declarative tone. After the phase CP is handed over to the PF, the highest copy on the chain is spelled out, generating “ta zai shitang chifan” (he eats in the canteen), as shown in Figure 5.

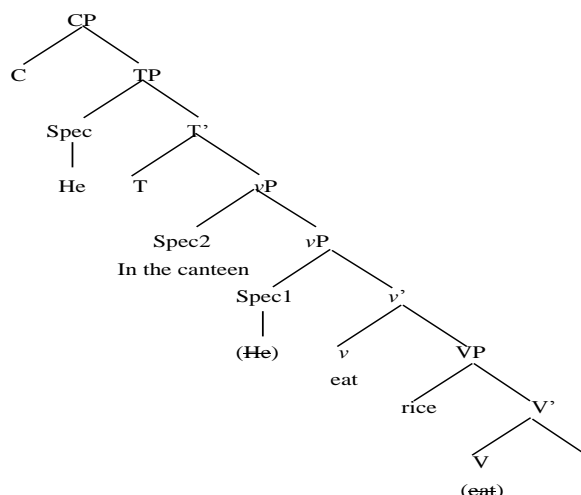


Figure 5 The generation process of “ta zaishitang chifan” (he eats in the canteen)

Comparing Figures 6 and 7, it can be seen that the process of “ta chi shitang” (he eats the canteen) and “ta zai shitang chifan” (he eats in the canteen) is different, so we conclude that “ta chi shitang” (he eats the canteen) is not converted from “ta zai shitang chifan” (he eats in the canteen). The “chi” (eat) in “ta chi shitang” (he eats the canteen) is an intransitive verb. It is not possible to assign a theta role to “shitang” (canteen) and case-mark it. The locative of the “shitang” (canteen) is given by the preposition “in” that is base-generated at the [Comp, VP] position, and “zai shitang” (in the canteen) is the complement of the verb. Then “chi” (eat) and the preposition “zai” (in) undergo the operation of morphological fusion, only “chi” (eat) is spelled out at the PF level, and finally form the oblique object construction “ta chi shitang” (he eats the canteen). While “chi” (eat) in “ta zai shitang chifan” (He eats in the canteen) is a transitive verb that can assign a theta role to the “fan” (rice) and case-mark it. The prepositional phrase “zai shitang” (in the canteen) is a prepositional phrase, functioning as an adverbial, base-generated in the position of [Spec2, vP]. As a result, We infer that “ta chi shitang” (he eats the canteen) is not converted from “ta zai shitang chifan” (he eats in the canteen).

V. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we use the Minimize Exponence theory and the syntactic operation of morphological fusion in Distributed Morphology to explore the derivation of the oblique object construction in Mandarin Chinese. The Minimize Exponence promotes the development of DM theory. The morphological fusion is the concrete realization of the Minimize Exponence, which better embodies the economy of the language system. The oblique object construction in Mandarin Chinese is in line with the Minimize Exponence by using the operation of morphological fusion. We propose that the oblique object is assigned by the preposition and then the verb, which is intransitive, undertakes morphological fusion with the preposition. As a result, the verb is spelled out in the phonetic components and the oblique object occurs directly after the verb. We also explore the different generation mechanisms of “Ta chi shitang”(He eats in the canteen) and “Ta zai shitang chifan”(he eats in the canteen). We infer that “ta chi shitang” (he eats the canteen) is not converted from “ta zai shitang chifan” (he eats in the canteen).

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# Indonesian Vocabulary Mastery of Early-aged Children in *Paud Melati Makassar*

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**Abstract**—Early-aged children are individuals from 0 to 6 year old with unique characteristics and in the stage of growth and development, both physical and mental. Several aspects developed for their education include moral and religious values, social, emotional feelings, autonomy, language, cognitive, physical/motor skill, and art (Ramli, 2005, p.50). The development of these aspects affect each other, that is why it has to be optimally developed in every activity. One aspect of those basic skills should be developed in early-aged children is language. The objectives of this research are to describe (1) the quantity of Indonesian vocabularies in early-aged children; (2) certain Indonesian word classes in early-aged children; (3) certain scopes of Indonesian vocabularies in early-aged children; (4) Indonesian basic sentence pattern in early-aged children; (5) Indonesian basic sentence features considered by the form of integrative phrases; (6) Indonesian basic sentence features considered by the number of integrative phrases. The results of the research show that the vocabulary quantity of early-aged children varies due to external and internal factors. It triggers their inputs to vary from one to another. Word classes mastered by them include noun, verb, adjective, adverb, numeral, pronoun, and preposition. Based on the findings in the field, they have also mastered several vocabulary scopes, such as kinship, activity, place, number, color, universal objects, and animal types. In line with that, sentence patterns that have been mastered by them are *FN-FV*, *FN1-FN2*, *FN-FA*, *FN-Num*, and *FN-FP*.

**Index Terms**—vocabulary mastery, early-aged children

## I. INTRODUCTION

Early-aged children are those with the age range from 0 to 6 year old. They undergo a rapid and fundamental process of growth and development for the next phase of life. In these years, they have as what is called as sensitive period where they are specifically easy to receive stimulation. Main developments occurred during this period revolves around certain mastery and environmental control or commonly referred to the period of exploration. Children want to know the state of their environment, how the mechanism, how it feels, and how they can blend with their environment (Hartati, 2005, p.7).

Those early-aged children are in the most rapid stage of growth and development, both physical and mental (Suyanto, 2005, p.5). Then it is appropriate to state that early age is the golden age, where they are significantly potential to learn many things quickly. Vocabulary mastery plays an important role in developing aspects of language skills. A child who masters vocabulary, will be able to speak well and fluently. The vocabulary mastery has an ultimate function in a child's development. It is because those children who master lots of vocabulary tend to have self-confidence and are able to influence their peers to behave as they wish than those children with limited vocabulary (Hamboro 1995, p.43). Several mastery efforts of children's basic vocabulary skills can be done through the provision of stimulus from an early age. By doing so, it is expected that their skills in language will be better developed and their vocabulary will be also increased.

Vocabulary mastery plays an important role in developing aspects of language skills. A child who mastered the vocabulary well, then the child is easily able to speak well and fluently. A better vocabulary mastery also greatly affects the ability of children to communicate in both oral and written. With enough vocabulary, the child is more likely to express his thoughts, ideas, and feelings to others. Children who learn vocabulary from an early age will be trained in related language because the child's brain has been embedded of various kinds of vocabulary. The language that they possess can not be separated from the number of vocabularies they have mastered. Children who master lots of vocabularies will hardly face difficulties in speaking and delivering sentences or in the form of language.

Pursuing this further, vocabulary mastery is one of the main conditions which determines personal success in language skills. Tarigan (1984, p.109) states that an individual's language skills depend on the quantity and quality of his vocabulary. The richer vocabulary a man has, the greater possibility for him to be skilled at speaking. Learning a

language means learning vocabulary. It intends that vocabulary is the most important element in a language. A language is meaningful because the existence of its vocabulary. That is why the ability of one's language is vital. It can affect the ability of thinking and learning process in children's life.

#### A. *Early-aged Children*

A child is a small form of human beings with potentials to develop. They have certain unique characteristics which makes them different from adults, but then also will develop into a complete human adult. According to Law on National Education System (2003), "early-aged children are those in the age range of 0-6 years". They have certain unique characteristics unlike adults. They are always active, dynamic, enthusiastic and curious about what they see and hear, as if they have never stopped learning. Mansur (2005, p.88) reveals that "early-aged children is a group of children who are in a special growth and development process according to its extents".

In line with this, Hartati (2005, p.7) also reveals that "early-aged child is a human or individual who has a particular pattern of development and needs which is different from adults". It is also added by Mulyasa (2012, p.16) that early-aged child is an individual who is experiencing the process of growth and rapid development with the amazing progress. One similar statement from Mustafa (2002, p.35) is that early-aged children are those who defined as ages one to five years. This understanding is based on limitation of developmental psychology includes infancy or babyhood from 0-1 years, early childhood, and children with age range from 6-12 years.

Furthermore, Bredekamp (1992, p.6) classifies early-aged children into three, that is infant group (0-2 years), children group with ages of three to five years, and children with ages of 6-12 years. Early age period in the course of human life is an important period for brain growth, intelligence, personality, memory, and other aspects of development.

Early age is the period of growth which determines future. Once the importance of early age, Freud (in Ramli, 2005, p.2) argues that early age is an important and unique event, which then forms the foundation for the structure of human personality. The age of kindergarten is one of the age range of early age, that is from ages of 4 to 6 years (Depdiknas, 2009, p.1).

As mentioned earlier, it can be concluded that early-aged children are individuals with ages from 0-6 years who have unique characteristics and in the stage of growth and development, both physical and mental. Early-aged children education will help the process of growth and development into a better human being or well maturity.

The period of children at an early age is a stage of development that lasts from the end of infancy to the age of five to six years. At this stage, many children take the time to play alone or perform various activities with his friends for their development. During this stage, children also individually learn to do all things related to the skills for school preparation. Furthermore, Krathwohl (in Lubis, 2009) in his book of *Evaluation of Values Education* states that the process of forming values in children can be divided in five stages: 1) receiving stage; (2) responding stage; 3) valuing stage; 4) organizing value stage; and 5) characterization stage. These five stages support each other for achieving maximal value creation in children.

#### B. *Characteristics of Early-aged Children*

Cross in Madyawati (2016, p.16) argues that there are several characteristics of early-aged children as follows:

##### 1. Egocentrism

A child sees outside world from his own view, according to his own knowledge and understanding, limited by his narrow feelings and thoughts. Children are so influenced by their simple minds that they are unable to penetrate the feelings and thoughts of others. They are incapable to understand the true meaning of an event and place themselves in others' life or mind. They are very attached to themselves and consider that their personality is one and closely integrated with their environment which make them cannot be separated from it.

##### 2. Unique Characteristic

Each child is different. Children have different innate, interest, capabilities, and life background. Although there is a general pattern of sequences in child development that can be produced, the patterns of development and learning still differ from one another.

##### 3. Spontaneous Expression or Behavior

The behaviors that children show are commonly genuine or not covered up. They will get angry or cry if they want to. They show a cheerful expression in joyful moment and mournful expression when they sad, no matter where they are or with whom.

##### 4. Being Active and Energetic

Children love to do various activities. As long as they stay awake, they will never stop or get tired from activities and rarely bored. Especially when they deal with a new and challenging event. Motion and activity for them is something that involves physical movement rather than sitting and paying attention to their teacher.

##### 5. Strong Curiosity and Enthusiasm for Things

This behavioral characteristic stands out at the ages of 4-5 years. Children of this age concern, talk, and question various things that they have seen and heard, especially new things.

#### C. *Vocabulary Mastery*



Vocabulary mastery is very important in language. The richer vocabulary a man has, the greater possibility for him to be skilled at speaking or language (Tarigan, 1989, p.23). In line with that, Jamaris (2005, p.43) also suggests that the ability of vocabulary mastery is divided into two kinds, that is receptive and productive mastery. Receptive mastery is the process of understanding spoken language by others. It is defined as passive mastery. While productive mastery is the process of communicating ideas, thoughts, and feelings through form of vocabulary. Vocabulary mastery in daily activities or life has a very big role, because one's thoughts can only be clearly understood by others if expressed by using vocabulary. Furthermore, Pustejovsky in Jamaris (2005, p.12) confirms that a person's language capacity is a reflection of his ability to classify and show the meaning of a particular word.

#### D. Theories of Language Mastery

##### 1. Theories of Behaviorism

This theory was pioneered by Skinner (1957, p.68) who published a book entitled *Behavior of Organism*. This book confirms Skinner as the leading originator of behaviorism in the United States. The theory of language acquisition by Skinner is known as the operant-conditioning theory. This theory of language acquisition is no longer emphasized by the importance of stimulus, but that stimulus which follows response. Suyitno (1990, p.3) states that behavior can be observed based on responses that appear after attracted by stimulus. Behaviorists basically argue that humans are not equipped with innate potential in language acquisition. The human mind is *tabula rasa* or a blank sheet that will later be filled with the association of stimulus derived from environment and responses outside the organism (Akhadiah et al., 1997, p.63). According to the theory of operant-conditioning, man as a language acquirer is passive and reactive. Instead of being passive and reactive all the time, they are bound to stimulus and reinforcement to behave which come from others. Thus, human verbal behavior as the language acquirer depends on external factors, especially environment, not psychiatry as internal factor. (Saryono, 1991, p.13).

Behavioral psychologists assert that habit has important characteristics. The main reason is habit can be observable. As Watson (1924, p.23) points out, the principle of discovery in real psychology is that its object can be seen, touched, or observed. Watson (1924) rejects the existence of an internal process, because according to him, the mental process is an irrational object, can not be proven, and magical. The habits are automatic. It means that habit can be displayed spontaneously, without much thought and full consciousness (Suyitno, 1990, p.3).

##### 2. Theories of Nativism

The view of nativism as represented by Chomsky (1972) holds that the influence of the surrounding environment is not too important. Chomsky (1972) criticized the operant conditioning theory concerning the process of language acquisition. Skinner (1957) proposes the phenomenon mechanism of a stimulus-response reinforcement in which there is stance, training, and etc. This statement was rejected by Chomsky (1972) that the description of language behavior can not be simply a description of the external stimulus and the corresponding response. The study of language behavior should be a description of the innate human ability to acquire language. Because human has been naturally provided with genetic lingual ability.

The nativist theory holds that there is a strong linkage between biological factors and language development. According to this theory, there is a role of biological evolution in shaping individuals to be a linguistic creature. Along with children's physical and mental growth, language development is also increased and improved.

##### 3. Theories of Cognitivism

According to Piaget in Purwo (1990, p.99), language is not a separate natural feature, but one of several abilities derived from cognitive maturation. The environment does not have much effect on children's intellectual development. Language is structured or controlled by logical reasoning. The development must be based on more fundamental and common changes in cognition. Thus, the sequences of cognitive development determine the sequences of language development.

Piaget in Purwo (1990) asserts that the complex structure of language is not something obtained by nature or learned from its environment. This structure arises as a result of the continuous interaction between cognitive function level of children and the lingual or other environment. Cognitive development is not mere result of organism maturity and environmental influences, but rather the interaction between the two (Gunarsa, 1997, p.136). Piaget (in Purwo, 1990) confirms that there are systems that regulate from within, a biological view, which enable organisms to possess digestive, blood circulatory, respiratory, and others. This is also the case with the cognitive system, the regulating system inside is then influenced by environmental factors. Undoubtedly, cognitive theory emphasizes the working of mental, both comprehension and production. In other words, children's language comprehension is seen as a result of cognitive processes that constantly evolves and changes. Thereupon, stimulus is an input for children which processed in their brain.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research which describes what is in accordance with the facts contained in the field. Bogdan and Taylor (1992, p.21-22) explain that qualitative research is one of the research procedures which produces descriptive data in the form of speech or writing text and the behavior from the people observed.

This research design uses qualitative with descriptive method by collecting, classifying, analyzing, interpreting data, and drawing conclusion. Semi (1993, p.23) states that “descriptive research method is not only applied by numbers, but emphasized on the depth of comprehension among the empirical concepts”.

Vocabulary mastery is an understanding or ability to use words in language skills both orally and writing. Early-aged children are those from birth until the age of approximately eight years (0-8). This research was conducted in PAUD Melati Makassar, which is located at Jalan Mapala, Makassar City.

The research uses descriptive data which implies vocabulary as the main data is descriptive source by explaining the details of vocabulary mastery of early-aged children. Moreover, the data in this research is collections of speech uttered by early-aged children in the forms of Indonesian vocabularies.

The descriptive research shows the findings by using qualitative descriptive method. The data is obtained and analyzed qualitatively. Direct observations through recording and writing technique are used to obtain the data of speeches produced by the children. The analysis of the research data is based on the transcribed recording and field notes made during the observation.

### III. RESULT

Indonesian word classes mastered by early-aged children are nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, numerals, pronouns, and prepositions. It is by considering that the quantity of Indonesian vocabulary varies in each child. Based on the data obtained, the vocabulary quantity of girls are more than boys. Those girls are *Na* 109, *Rr* 133, *Nd* 113, *Fa* 115, *Rh* 112, and *Az* 105. While for boys such as *Uw* 101, *Rf* 107, *Rz* 113, *It* 110, *Di* 111, *Fd* 98, and *Zi* 107.

TABLE I  
INDONESIAN WORD CLASSES MASTERED BY EARLY-AGED CHILDREN

Research Subject	B/G	Age									
Uw	B	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V	A	Adj	Pro	Pre		Num	
Nd	G	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V	A	Adj	Pro	Pre	Conj	Num	
Rr	G	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V	A	Adj	Pro	Pre	Conj	Num	
Rf	B	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V	A	Adj	Pro	Pre	Conj	Num	
Na	G	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V	A	Adj	Pro			Num	
Fa	G	5 <sup>th</sup>	N	V		Adj	Pro		Conj	Num	
Rz	B	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V		Adj	Pro	Pre	Conj	Num	
It	B	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V		Adj	Pro			Num	
Ra	G	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V		Adj				Num	
Di	B	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V		Adj	Pro	Pre	Conj	Num	
Fd	B	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V		Adj	Pro	Pre		Num	
Az	G	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V		Adj	Pro			Num	
Zi	B	6 <sup>th</sup>	N	V	A	Adj		Pre		Num	

Based on the findings in the field, early-aged children have mastered several scopes of vocabularies among others, kinship, activity, place, number, size, color, universal objects, animal types, and body parts.

There are also five basic pattern of Indonesian sentence found, such as FN-FV, FN<sub>1</sub>-FN<sub>2</sub>, FN-FA, FN-Num, and FN-FP. In line with that, here are the following word classes mastered by early-aged children.

#### A. Noun Class

*Feet, animal, dog, fire, sea, flower, wind, egg, knee, bird, father, tooth, stone, stick, toy, their lockers, their stones, their planes, their cheeks, their body, their hands.* Based on the data, it can be seen that early-aged children has known the name of various objects around him. The known objects are generally concrete. Early-aged children initially master noun class because it is often found in everyday life. The noun forms found are original or basic nouns and derivative nouns.

#### B. Verb Class

Based on the data found in the field, early-aged children has mastered verb class such as *walk, eaten, drunk, recite, thrown, bark, burn, breathe, closed, lick, blown, spin, bind, burned, move, rocking, shopping, sounds, sit, cook, fall, sew, push, be careful, walk, kicked.* The verbs mastered by them are verb forms of basic verb. The forms found are original or basic nouns and derivative nouns. The verbs mastered by them are verbs in the basic form, affix verbs, and reduplicated verbs.

#### C. Adjective Class

Several adjectives mastered by early-aged children such as *short, slippery, salty, heavy, new, small, long, sick, dirty, hot, tight, beautiful, tall, funny, allergy, quick.* The adjectives found are in the basic and iterative form.

#### D. Adverb Class

Vocabularies related to adverbs found in the data include *must, already, also, can, ever.* The word *ever* becomes the aspect marker, while the modality marker by the word of *already*.

### E. Pronoun Class

The vocabularies associated with pronoun is *saya, engkau, kita, -ku, nya, -mu* (me, you, us, my-, it, your-). Personal pronouns found are *saya, engkau, kita, kamu*. While demonstrative pronouns found are *itu* (that) and *ini* (this). The possessive pronouns which state ownership are *-ku, nya, mu-*.

### F. Numeral Class

In numeral class, there are *one, two, three, four, five, many, few*. The vocabularies of *one, two, three, four, lima* are main definite numeral words, while *many* and *few* are are main indefinite numeral words.

### G. Preposition Word Class

In the preposition word class, the vocabularies found are *for, in, from, with, to, than, and*. Word *in, and* are indicated as the prepositions of location and time. Word *to* indicates location or place, while *with* is the preposition for tool and means. *Than* is the preposition of comparison and *to* indicates recipient or purpose.

### H. Word Class of Conjunction

The words of conjunction found are *because* and *if* which become as subordinating conjunctions. While *or* and *but* are coordinating conjunction.

### I. The Scopes of Indonesian Vocabularies Mastered by Early-aged Children

Based on the findings in the field, early-aged children have mastered several scopes of Indonesian vocabularies as follows:

1. Kinship;
2. Activities;
3. Place/Location;
4. Numbers;
5. Sizes;
6. Colors;
7. Universal Objects;
8. Animal Types;
9. Body Parts

## IV. DISCUSSION

In this research, the quantity of children varies from one to another. Among six girls observed, the vocabulary mastered are in the range of 112 to 133 vocabularies, while the seven boys in the range of 98 to 113 vocabularies. Several factors caused the differences are internal and external factors. It is showed that girls have more vocabulary than boys. They are more open-minded, braver, more talkative, rather than boys with introvert behavior.

Early-aged children only master the vocabulary majority which associate with activities and concrete words such as *egg, fish, fruit, walk, burn* and so forth. Early-aged children are still unable to comprehend abstract words such as *fat, tall, and etc.*

The scopes of the vocabulary mastered by early-aged children include kinship, body parts, pronouns, numeral, and main verbs as basic vocabulary. The increasing age makes the mastery of a child's vocabulary will also increase along with their language experience. However, each child with their own unique characteristics creates individual's differences in vocabulary amount they acquire at their own age respectively.

The findings show that early-aged children have used five patterns of basic sentence. As Samsuri points out that in Indonesian language, there are five patterns of basic sentence, such as a) FN-FV; b) FN1-FN2; c) FN-FA; d) FN-FNum; and e) FN-FP.

In line with that, the findings also show that the children have mastered five patterns of basic sentence related to the earlier statement by Samsuri. The sentences used by early-aged children have structural alignment with English sentences tested by Chomsky to 40 kindergarten children in the US.

Several sentences mastered by early-aged children are relatively simple sentences with transitional construction which indicate that the arranging rules are not yet fully as sentences used by adults. Based on the data, the sentences used by those early-aged children are active and declarative sentence. The characteristics of children's basic sentence considered by the integrative phrase that is *FN-FV* and transitive and intransitive verb are found in those early-aged children's sentences.

The findings show that *FN-FV* integrative phrase are still simple because it still uses an old simple form. By observing the data, there are not much inflectional morphemes. It is not because those early-aged children do not use complex morpheme yet, but they are still in stage of trial.

## V. CONCLUSION

The quantity of vocabulary varies from one to another. This is due to several factors such as external factors of different family backgrounds. In addition, girls have more vocabularies than boys.

Early-aged children have mastered Indonesian word classes, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, numerals, pronouns, conjunctions, and prepositions. The most dominant word classes mastered by them is noun class due to its concrete. The scopes of Indonesian vocabularies mastered by early-aged children include kinship, activity, place, number, size, color, universal objects, animal types, and body parts.

Based on the data obtained, the findings of this research show that early-aged children in *PAUD Melati Makassar* have mastered five patterns of basic sentence such as: a) FN–FV; b) FN1–FN2; c) FN–FA; d) FN–FP; and e) FN–FNum.

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# Second Language Learners' Strong Preference for Self-initiated Self-repair: Implications for Theory and Pedagogy

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**Abstract**—This study employs a theoretical framework informed by Conversation Analysis to analyse the self-repairs of a particular group of teenage Chinese EFL learners. With an aim to report on the current development of the participants in using English socially in terms of managing repairs, this study explores their second language (L2) discourse in three communicative tasks. Audio-recorded conversations were analysed and searched for the four sequences of repair. Comparison of the participants' preference for repair sequence to native speakers shows that they can manage repairs and maintain conversation interactively and socially just as native speakers. This suggests that they should be treated as normal social beings in the language classroom and not to be interrupted by the teacher when troubles arise from conversational interaction. Thus, this study provides an account of the current development of these young learners in using the L2 interactively and socially, which holds implications for research on second language education as well as for classroom teaching.

**Index Terms**—self-repair, conversation, analysis, second language education

## I. INTRODUCTION

Repair is understood as alterations made to prior speech to deal with certain problems. Self-repair, in particular, refers to the kind of repair in which a speaker changes a part of his/her speech to manage a problem of his/hers. The problems can be related to a speaker's own production, the interlocutor's comprehension and their two-way interaction.

This study focuses on the self-repair behaviour of a group of teenage Chinese EFL learners. Their self-repairs are investigated to understand the current development of these young learners in using the L2 interactively and socially. The repair behaviour based in these teenage EFL learners' classroom discourse is considered worthwhile for study for two reasons. First, concerning the subjects - teenage learners, they constitute the majority of English learners in China. Second, as for the context of study - the classroom, it is where the most common and regular form of English language learning and teaching in China takes place. By placing the lens of study in the classroom discourse of these young learners in their English lessons, an as broad and meaningful perspective as possible can be gained to study L2 self-repairs.

The theoretical framework that has influenced and informed this study is Conversation Analysis, from which the study of self-repair originated. Conversational analytic perspective sees speakers as interactants and self-repairs as an organisational mechanism in conversational interaction. It seeks to understand the operation of repair in social language use. In the bulk of CA-oriented work, the most important and relevant result to this study is reported by a group of ethnographers, Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977), that self-initiated self-repair is the most preferred repair sequence of native speakers. They attributed this strong preference for self-repair to the ordering of turns in conversation. Initially, their results were not intended to shed light on L2 education.

This study follows conversational analytic traditions and aims to generate knowledge that can inform research and pedagogy in L2 education. To be more specific, this study attempts to identify the different repair sequences in L2 speakers' discourse, which is collected from their performance in communicative tasks, and to discover whether learners show the same preferences for repair sequence as native speakers. A comparison between the participating learners and native speakers is expected to shed light on the following issues: whether the self-repair behaviour of L2 learners are constrained by the same factors as native speakers; whether L2 learners have developed the ability to manage repairs, to maintain a conversation and to use the language interactively and socially as native speakers. These answers can contribute to an understanding of the current status of socialisation of learners into the L2 community and generate implications for related research.

Results of the study will be linked back to the language classroom. It will suggest suitable treatments for the teachers to apply to L2 learners' problems that arise from their interaction during tasks. Questions such as whether the teacher should stop a speaker when his/her production contains trouble, and whether the teacher's treatment towards learner problem should differ according to task types will be answered.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will begin by introducing the most important CA theories related to self-repair, followed by an overview of empirical studies based in the L2 classroom that bear the most relevance to the current study. Gaps that inform the research questions of this particular study will be identified at the end.

### A. The Conceptualisation of Repair in CA

The concept of “repair” originated from conversational analytical studies (Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977), where it is conceptualised as an organisational mechanism operating in conversational turn-taking behaviour. Repair is described as a conversational device that addresses “recurrent problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding” (Schegloff et al., 1977, p. 361). The problem that is encountered in the production of an utterance and that triggers attempts to solve it is referred to as a “trouble source”, be it a problem of factual knowledge or of language use by the interlocutors.

Within the framework of CA, researchers prefer to adopt the term “repair” instead of “correction”. Though “repair” and “correction” are both corrective activities, they are not two equivalent terms. “Correction” refers to the replacement of an error with a correct utterance. “Repair”, on the other hand, is found sometimes occurring in cases where no noticeable error is detected. Thus, Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977) have suggested that “repair” should be used to account for the much wider phenomenon.

Studying repair is considered necessary and worthwhile not only because it is a frequently occurring phenomenon in the most common use of language - conversation, but also because the organisation of repair is the self-righting mechanism for dealing with intrinsic troubles in language use.

### B. Four Trajectories of Repair

Researchers following the CA approach study repair in the domain of conversational interaction and distinguish between four different types of repair sequences in terms of the two possible agents (i.e., “self” and “other”) who can initiate and/or complete a repair. With reference to “self” and “other”, a distinction is drawn between self-repair and other-repair, the former referring to a repair by the producer of the trouble source while the latter is a repair by the listener. A self-repair can result from self-initiation (SISR) or other-initiation (OISR). An other-repair can be initiated by the producer of the trouble source (SIOR) or the interlocutor (OIOR). In the later discussion in this paper, the notion of “self-repair” includes both types of SISR and OISR. Below, examples (from Schegloff et al., 1977) of each kind are illustrated. Lines marked with arrows indicate that they contain the initiations and completions of repairs, which are in italics.

**Self-initiated self-repair (SISR):** the producer of the trouble source initiates and completes the repair.

- (1) N: She was giving me a:ll the people that  
 → were go:ne this *yea:r* I mean this  
 → *quarter y' // know*  
 J: Yeah

**Other-initiated self-repair (OISR):** the interlocutor, other than the speaker of the trouble source, identifies a problem and initiates a repair, which is then completed by the producer of the trouble source.

- (2) Ken: Is Al here today?  
 Dan: Yeah.  
 → Bob: He *is*? hh eh heh  
 → Dan: Well he *was*.

**Self-initiated other-repair (SIOR):** the producer of the trouble source initiates a repair, but it is later completed by the interlocutor.

- (3) B: He had dis uh Mistuh W- whatever k-  
 → *I can't think of his first name, Watts* on, the one that wrote l/ that piece,  
 → A: *Dan Watts*.

**Other-initiated other-repair (OIOR):** the interlocutor initiates and completes the repair.

- (4) Lori: But y'know single beds'r awfully thin tuh sleep on.  
 → Sam: *What?*  
 Lori: Single beds. // They're-  
 → Sam: Y'mean *narrow* ?  
 Lori: They're awfully narrow // yeah.

### C. Preference for Self-initiated Self-completed Repair

Empirical research has shown that in L1 everyday talk, speakers have a strong and robust preference for self-initiated self-repair. This was initially reported and described by Schegloff et al. (1977) following their close examination of a huge corpus of conversations between native adult speakers in daily life settings. It is revealed that self-repair is vastly more common than other-repair as participants jointly construct meanings in and through sequential order of action and talk (Wagner & Gardner, 2004). As further stressed by Schegloff et al. (1977), self-repair and other-repair are not two independent types of possibilities. Instead, they are related and constrained by the organisational mechanism operating

in conversation, especially the turn-taking system. Evidence for the preference for self-repair lies in the inherent structural bias in conversational interaction (Seedhouse, 2004): with the first two opportunities to repair a speaker's own trouble in his/her own turn. As Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998, p. 66) put it, "turns are designed to facilitate self-repair, or display the speaker's sensitivity to the appropriateness of self-repair and the (possible) impropriety of other-repair."

#### *D. Language Socialisation*

Countering to the unveiling and the description of a predominant preference for self-initiated self-repair in conversation of adult native speakers, an exceptional context in which other-initiations and other-repairs prevail is adult-children talk (Schegloff et al., 1977). This is accounted for by the children's not-yet-competent nature of operating in the social domain of talk and conversation. The occurrences of other-initiations and other-repairs in this case are termed as "a vehicle for socialisation" (1977, p. 380) by the writers. It is assumed that after this transitional phase dominated by other-adjustments, with adequate competence acquired, the formerly not-yet-competent users of self-initiations and self-repairs will demonstrate the routine organisation of repair in conversation in their talk. When learning an L2, learners are put in a similar position to children - they are considered as veterans or novice of the majority community. They learn to understand and use the target language through social experiences of participating in community activities, in this case, in the language classroom (Sarangi & Roberts, 2002; Ochs, 2002). How learners' preference for different sequences of repair can be mined for insights into their language socialization is under-researched.

#### *E. The Organisation of Repair in Language Classroom*

Schegloff et al.'s (1977) finding that in natural conversation, interactants' preference is given to self-initiation and self-repair has been examined and applied in research on L2 education. Studying the organisation of repair in the language classroom is of value for L2 teachers and learners for it helps to understand how misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication are managed (Seedhouse, 1999, 2004).

Both naturalistic classroom research (Buckwalter, 2001) and classroom experiment (Shehadeh, 2001) have been conducted to investigate the repair phenomena in learner discourse. Results from their analysis show a clear preference for self-initiation and self-repair as learners participate in communicative tasks. They prove that the preferences of non-native speakers in repair sequences are in line with that of adult native speakers of English. As for pedagogical practices, Buckwalter (2001) supports the use of communicative activities in the language classroom as this can encourage learners' language production and provide them with more opportunities to identify trouble in their speech and reformulate their utterances. However, it is not specified what treatments towards learners' problems and their repair attempts to solve these problems are recommended. Shehadeh (2001) concludes that both self-initiation and other-initiation matter for learning and suggests that other-initiated adjustments can positively affect learners' repair behaviour during communicative activities by reminding them of a correct solution.

A "variable" approach (Van Lier, 1988; Kasper, 1985; Jung, 1999) has been proposed to understand repair in the L2 classroom, which argues that the organisation of repair differs in contexts with different pedagogical goals. Van Lier (1988) analysed how repairs were conducted to orient to different goals in L2 classrooms and suggested that repair was highly relevant to the activity and context where it occurred. Kasper (1985) identified two different phases in L2 lessons: language-centred and content-centred. According to her, learners' preference for repair patterns depends heavily on the type of classroom activity. In language-centered activities, the most prevalent repair sequence is other-initiated self-repair, in which case the teacher initiates and the learner completes the repair. Content-based activities, with a focus on the meaningful use of the target language, on the other hand, see less occurrences of this repair sequence. Seedhouse (1999, 2004) extended the 'variable' approach to repair in the L2 classroom and suggested a context-based element to enrich it. According to Seedhouse (2004), L2 classroom context is by no means a "monolithic or undifferentiated whole" (p. 142). He identified three types of context: (1) form-and-accuracy context; (2) meaning-and-fluency context; and (3) task-based context, and studied the repair patterns in these contexts. He concluded that each context had its particular pedagogical focus and its typical repair organisation, and there was a reflexive relationship between them.

These studies discussed above contribute to our knowledge of the repair phenomena in learner discourse in L2 classroom. However, they are primarily descriptive and are limited in terms of pedagogical implications. Plus, none of them reflects on the socialisation process of L2 learners in the classroom context in terms of their repair behaviour.

#### *F. Repair Behaviour of Chinese EFL Learners*

More recently, L2 self-repair behaviour of Chinese learners has also been investigated. Chen and Pu (2007) analysed the features of self-repairs of college non-English majors in the CET (College English Test), while factors such as age differences (Wang, 2007) and gender differences (Chen, Li & Zhao, 2005) in self-repairs of Chinese college students studying English have also been the focus of attention. However, these studies did not shed light on the interactive or social aspects of learners' execution of self-repairs and none of them examined teenage Chinese learners' self-repairs.

#### *G. Identification of Gaps*

The above review on repair shows that a CA approach to studying L2 learners' self-repairs is of value but has not focused on generating specific suggestions for research and pedagogy concerning L2 learners yet. Researches on the

repair behaviour of L1 speakers have provided a clue for the socialisation of native-speaking children. Notwithstandingly, the socialisation of L2 learners into a community of a different language, especially in the perspective of producing the different repair sequences, has not been touched upon.

### III. METHODS

Informed by the gaps identified in the Literature review, two research questions were generated as follow:

**RQ1:** What is the most common repair sequence of teenage Chinese EFL learners?

**RQ2:** What implications do this hold for research and pedagogy?

#### A. Research Methodology

This study adopted the case study approach. With a focus on learners' L2 behaviour which primarily occurs within the language classroom, and considering the limited time for the researcher to engage with the young participants and collect data from them, as allowed by the school authority through negotiation, the researcher engaged in a short-term, small-scale classroom-based case study.

#### B. Participants

The participants were six teenage Chinese EFL learners in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year at Secondary school (15-year-old). Equally divided between the two genders, the participants were organised into three pairs: boy-girl, boy-boy and girl-girl. These selected students were all at lower intermediate level of proficiency. This was different from previous studies of L2 self-repairs (van Hest, 1996; Kormos, 1998), in which participating learners were at different levels of proficiency, ranging from beginners to advanced learners. The reason behind this had to do with the context of the study - the language classroom, in which the teacher would engage with learners who were more or less similar in terms of their proficiency level (Kazemi, 2006). They had learned English for more than six years. The majority of them had no prior living or learning experience in English-speaking countries. It might be questioned that there was too small a number of participants to generate insights. Here, a defense would be drawn with reference to the nature and focus of this study: a close examination of repair in learner discourse. Including a large number of participants could sacrifice the depth of analysis into the details of talk, which is against the focus of this study.

#### C. The Tasks

In this study, data were collected by means of three pair-work communicative tasks. The format of the tasks was decided to be pair work between students because (1) it would fulfill the aim of this study which focuses on self-repairs during learner-learner interaction; (2) both the participants and their English teacher stated that pair-work discussion was part of their regular classroom activities and that participants were familiar with it.

The participants were offered four tasks in which they chose three. The four tasks included were initially chosen by the researcher because (1) they were recognised by researchers (e.g., Pica, Kanagy & Falodun, 2009) as the task types that could generate most opportunities for L2 production and interlanguage modification in the classroom; (2) they had proved to be the most effective ones in eliciting spontaneous speech and learner-learner interaction in the pilot study. The three tasks decided by the participants were (1) the information-gap task "ask the right question, (2) the story telling task and (3) the jigsaw task "complete the picture". The task topics and contents had been discussed with and approved by their English teacher.

#### D. Data Collection

Learners' self-repair data was collected through audio recording. A complete record of the utterances made by the three pairs of participants during their engagement in each of the three tasks was captured and made available through time for analysis. This was made possible by placing a tape recorder on the desk between the two participants when they were talking. The sound quality it resulted in was excellent.

#### E. Data Analysis

To enable thorough analysis of data for quantification of the four repair sequences, the full text generated from the participants' task performance was transcribed (see transcription notation in Appendix A). The four different types of repair sequences suggested by earlier conversational analysts were identified and distinguished in the corpora. Reporting of them was accompanied by illustrating examples of each type of repair sequence found in participants' conversational data. Counting, a form of quantification, was applied to obtain the number of cases of each repair sequence, and to generate respective ratios that then enabled comparison. By comparing the number of the different repair sequences in participants' conversational data, their preferences were indicated. Most importantly, these L2 learners' preferences in repair would be examined to see if they were in line with what native speakers had shown.

### IV. RESULTS

By analysing the full transcripts of the nine independent conversations made by the three pairs of participants, a sum of 198 instances of repairs were identified. They were analysed with reference to the two possible agents - "self" and



"other", who can either initiate or complete the repair.

Next, examples of identified SISR, OISR and SIOR will be discussed. No cases of OIOR were identified in the data.

- (5) → Ann: on the (.) on the east of the *carpet* there (.) oh no!
- Ken: What happened?
- Ann: er on the east of the *sofa* there is a:: coffee table.
- Lori: They're awfully narrow // yeah.

This is an example of SISR. Ann was describing the position of the coffee table to Ken when she said "on the east of the carpet". Then shortly, and suddenly, she called out "oh no" when she realised a mistake in her speech. This is the initiation of repair. Ken immediately responded to Ann by asking what her concern was. Following this, Ann replaced "carpet" with "sofa", thus, repairing the trouble.

- (6) → May: it's a:: singer (.) she is (.) dead
- Sue: many singer *is* dead (.) *were* dead.

This is also an example of SISR. May was giving Sue clues to guess the name of a singer. In Sue's response, she initiated and completed a repair in the same turn by replacing the verb "is" with "were" to go with the adjective, many, which assumes plurality, and the fact that it is in the past that they died.

- (7) → Sue: yah on the same line same line. So do you have:: (.) garden chairs?
- May: yes the garden chair is::(.) er is in the balcony (.) *right one and (.) left one*
- Sue: *one?one?//*
- May: *one in right and (.) one in (.)// left*

This is an example of OISR. May was attempting to describe the different positions of the two garden chairs on the balcony when she said "right one and left one". However, her description was confusing to Sue. So Sue partially repeated the trouble source in a rising tone and this initiated May's repair in the next turn, in which she changed "right one and left one" to "one in right and one in left".

- (8) → Ann: when someone is *in* (.) *dangerous* wha what do he:: say
- Ken: *什么?(what?)*
- Ann: *In danger.*

This is also an example of OISR. In the beginning, Ann wrongly collocated the two words "in" and "dangerous" together which confused Ken. So Ken asked "什么?", which meant "what?" in English and this reminded Ann of her mistake in the previous turn and initiated her repair in the next turn, by changing "in dangerous" to "in danger".

- (9) → Tim: the manager (.) take took him in (.) took him with took him to the (.) security guard's room and the security guard ask the woman where's the (.) where's the (.) em:: wine from, and the woman was (.) *so::=*
- Roy: *nervous=*
- Tim: yeh, so nervous but (.) but he

This is an example of SIOR. In the beginning, Tim introduced part of a story and was about to describe the woman's feeling when he encountered difficulties in searching for a proper word. The stretching of the sound /o/ in "so" was considered his indication of a problem in speech and the initiation of a repair. This was followed by Roy saying "nervous", completing the repair. With the problem in word search solved, Tim continued with his story in the next turn.

Having presented how a repair is identified as belonging to which certain type of repair sequence, two graphs that were generated from the quantification of all repairs are shown below.

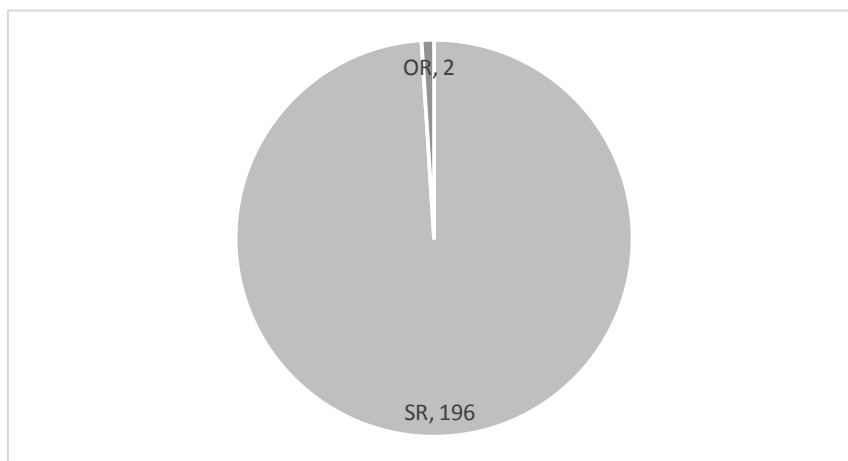


Figure1. The distribution of self-repairs and other-repairs in participants' data

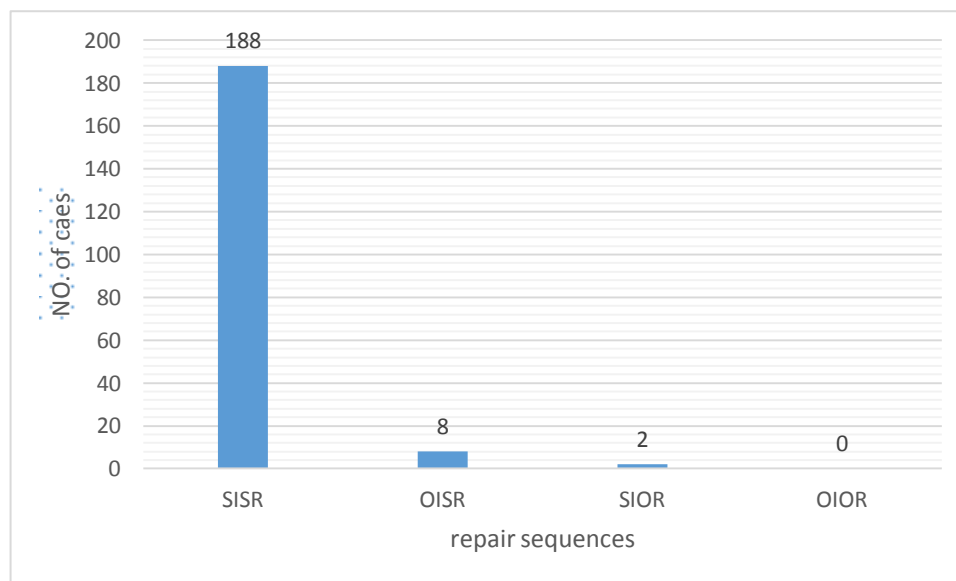


Figure 2: The distribution of the 4 types of repair sequences

The pie chart in Fig. 1 and the bar graph in Fig. 2 have enabled comparisons of the number of occurrences of different repair sequences in a more straightforward manner. Fig. 1 demonstrates that participants showed an overwhelmingly strong preference for self-repairs to other-repairs, as 99% of the instances are self-repairs. Fig. 2, which further breaks the two general categories, self-repairs and other-repairs, down into four independent types of repair sequences, SISR, OISR, SIOR, and OIOR, shows that the vast majority of repairs produced are self-initiated self-repairs, with 95% of the 198 cases belonging to the category of SISR. OISR constitutes for 4% of all instances, ranking the second most commonly occurring repair sequence. The remaining 1% are two cases of SIOR and no instance of OIOR is identified from the collected data.

## V. DISCUSSION

The current study focuses on teenage Chinese EFL learners' conversational repairs during classroom communicative tasks. Analysis of results has clearly revealed that this particular group of teenage non-native speakers of English show a predominant preference for self-initiated self-repairs.

The participants demonstrated exactly the same characteristics as adult native speakers of English in the management of repairs during conversational interaction. Notwithstanding their limited proficiency in the target language, they managed conversational interaction in the same manner, in terms of the organisation of repair, as adult native speakers do. Specifically, in most of the cases identified in the data, they realised a trouble without being reminded, initiated a repair by themselves and completed it with their own efforts. Seldom did they intend to remind the interactants of his/her troublesome production or correct a problematic item produced by their interactants. The fact that they were not native speakers of the language did not endanger their ability to maintain conversational interaction with an interlocutor. Although they were in the process of learning a language, it did not interfere with their ability to use the language interactively and socially.

This shows that, as far as the ability to converse is concerned, "non-native speakers" are normal social beings just like native speakers, which holds implications for both research and pedagogy.

For research, it must be pointed out that the abstraction of "non-native speaker versus native speaker" is distorted. The fundamental difference between these two groups is only in terms of their linguistic competence. However, "non-native speakers" have been alienated as a social group that is fundamentally different from native speakers. Such distinction between "non-native speaker" and native speaker is commonly observed in past research topics, for example, *Variation in Native Speaker Speech Modification to Non-Native Speakers* (Gass & Varonis, 1985), *Delayed next turn repair initiation in native/non-native speaker English conversation* (Wong, 2000). As is shown in the current study, there is not any qualitative difference between "non-native speaker" and "native speaker" in terms of managing troubles when using the language interactively and socially. The label of "non-native speaker" placed on L2 learners does not prevent them from successfully cooperating in communication and maintaining social interaction. Thus, it is argued that L2 learners are functioning just the same as native speakers in using a language interactively and socially, so they should not be treated as a distinct social group in research.

The results also hold implications for pedagogy. In classroom teaching, teachers should realise that their students are in the process of being socialised into another community in which the target language is used. That is to say, the students should be prepared to use the language socially, to communicate with the language and to construct a conversation in the language. The researcher agrees with Buckwalter's (2001) advice that L2 learners should be engaged

in more communicative activities in which they can have more opportunities during the process to detect problems and figure out solutions. However, one step needs to be taken further from here. In communicative activities, whenever a problem is identified by the interactants in their conversation, the teacher's reaction - what he/she does towards learner problems, is important and should follow some guidelines. The suggestion proposed by the researcher is opposite to what Shehadeh (2001) has advised. According to Shehadeh (2001), other-initiated adjustments, including teacher-initiated repairs, can promote second language learning as it reminds the speaker of an error-free solution, thus, increasing his/her language accuracy. On the contrary, the researcher believes that the teacher should not initiate a repair upon hearing learner's problematic production during communicative task performance. The reason lies in the nature and purpose of communicative activities, which is to train learners' communicative skills, to enable them to have the ability to converse and maintain interaction in the target language and to provide them with opportunities of using the L2 communicatively and socially.

In conducting communicative activities, teachers are not advised to interrupt a learner during his/her flow of spontaneous speech even if errors occur. As has been reported by Schegloff et al. (1977), the only circumstance in which other-initiated adjustments prevail is conversations between fully-competent language users and not-yet competent language users in the social domain, like parent-children talk. Though L2 learners do not have full linguistic competence, they have proved to be normal social beings, as is shown in their management of repairs. As a result, they should be treated correspondingly in the language classroom and be given the chance and right to self-initiate a repair. Otherwise, the language classroom turns into a protective environment, in which learners would possibly develop some habits that are socially inappropriate in the community in which the target language is used. In speaking, they would tend to spend more time planning speech because they focus more on language accuracy and avoiding linguistic errors. This can lead to inefficient communication that is unfavourable in social interaction. In hearing and interacting, because of their sensitivity to inaccuracy, they would possibly point out problems in their interlocutors' speech and initiate repairs. This is against social norms in the L2 community in which native speakers' language use presented a strong skewing towards self-initiations and self-repairs. Therefore, in learners' use of the L2 during communicative activities, their preference for the self-initiated self-repair sequence should not be interrupted by their teacher.

There may be concern that without the intervention of teacher-initiated adjustments, the accuracy of learners' production will be endangered. In fact, this can be taken care of in other kinds of activities which focus on linguistic accuracy, rather than communicative activities which particularly aim to help L2 grow in communicative competence.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Adult speakers' strong bias for self-initiated self-repairs has been known for decades. It is in more recent research related to second language education that adult non-native speakers' preference for self-initiated self-repairs is revealed and studied (e.g., Kasper, 1985; Shehadeh, 2001; Buckwalter, 2001). However, the socialisation process of language learners into the L2 community in terms of their repair management, which can have some significance for both research and pedagogy, was under-researched. Therefore, the present study fills the gap by examining L2 learners' self-repairs and seeks to understand the current development of these learners' capabilities in using the L2 interactively and socially, and generate possible implications for research and pedagogy.

The examination of the L2 learners' repair in this study shows that, when participating in communicative tasks as interactants, they proved to be successfully functioning social beings in the same way as native speakers in terms of the management of repairs. This can have certain significance for research in second language education, as it informs that in spite of the difference in terms of linguistic competence, a line should no longer be drawn between non-native speakers and native speakers, as both these two groups have the same characteristics - a strong preference for self-initiated self-repair in the organisation of conversation. This can also hold implications for pedagogy. It is suggested that in classroom teaching, what the teacher does in reaction to learners' problems and their self-repairs should differ according to pedagogical aims. In communicative activities that focus on training learners' ability to converse and interact in the target language, whenever a learner's trouble arises from his/her conversation with an interlocutor, the teacher should not interrupt his/her speech to initiate a repair because such attempts are not in line with common practices in an interactive and social context and can negatively affect the learners' development of using a language interactively and socially. In other cases, for example, activities that are designed to improve learners' accurate use of language, teacher-initiated adjustments can be recommended.

## APPENDIX. TRANSCRIPTION NOTATION

<u>they</u>	Underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis.
(.)	A short pause
(+)	A long pause
=	Contiguous utterances: when there is no interval between adjacent utterances, the second being latched immediately to the first (without overlapping it), the utterances are linked together with equal signs
(( ))	A description enclosed in a double bracket indicates a non-verbal activity. Alternatively double brackets may enclose the transcriber's comments on contextual or other features.

- ? A question mark indicates a rising intonation. It does not necessarily indicate a question.
- . A full stop indicates a stopping fall in tone. It does not necessarily indicate the end of a sentence.
- :: Colons indicate that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter. The more colons the greater the extent of the stretching.
- underline Underlined words mark a section of speech noticeably louder than that surrounding it.
- italics* trouble source and repair
- ( ) Empty parentheses presents translations of preceding words.

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# Remodeling Teachers' and Students' Roles in Self-directed Learning Environments: The Case of Saudi Context

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**Abstract**—Traditional classrooms are markedly teacher-centered. EFL learners are largely urged to commit themselves to communicative learning environments which help them enhance their language performance. Self-directed learning is one of the approaches which proved to be highly effective in Foreign Language Learning (FLL). EFL teachers are usually encouraged to adopt self-directed learning practices in order to improve students' linguistic competence and performance. Recently, many Saudi universities integrated self-directed learning mode into EFL instruction. However, students' language performance, which is crucial to finding a job opportunity in labor market, is below the desired level. The study aims at remodeling teachers' and students' roles in light of students' perceptions of English self-directed learning. To achieve this ultimate goal, a questionnaire survey is administered and follow-up semi-structured interviews are held. Results showed that both male and female students have generally positive attitudes towards self-directed learning. However, many of them have real problems with understanding the nature of self-directed learning and how they should use it effectively. Therefore, both institutions and teachers are recommended to improve students' understanding and awareness of self-directed learning modes, and to rethink their roles.

**Index Terms**—self-directed learning, teacher's role, learner-centered, attitude and motivation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Traditional classrooms are markedly teacher-centered. EFL learners are largely urged to commit themselves to communicative learning environments which help them enhance their language performance. Self-directed learning is one of the approaches which proved to be highly effective in Foreign Language Learning (FLL). EFL teachers are usually encouraged to adopt self-directed learning practices in order to improve students' linguistic competence and performance. Recently, many Saudi universities integrated self-directed learning mode into EFL instruction. However, students' language performance, which is crucial to finding a job opportunity in labor market, is below the desired level. The study aims at remodeling teachers' and students' roles in light of students' perceptions of English self-directed learning. To achieve this ultimate goal, a questionnaire survey is administered and follow-up semi-structured interviews are held. Results showed that both male and female students have generally positive attitudes towards self-directed learning. However, many of them have real problems with understanding the nature of self-directed learning and how they should use it effectively. Therefore, both institutions and teachers are recommended to improve students' understanding and awareness of self-directed learning modes, and to rethink their roles.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Improving EFL students' competence and performance in Saudi universities has been an appealing area of research for many studies in the last decade. Despite all efforts exerted to fulfill such goal, students' academic level and vocational performance seem not to be satisfying. In addition, the overall classroom culture in Saudi Arabia, as well as in many countries, is not based on self-direction as students are principally required to absorb information, and to reproduce them in written exams to demonstrate comprehension. Accordingly, graduates are claimed to be less qualified in such a competitive labor market which usually witnesses massive changes. To cope with the mercurial nature of the labor market, traditional teaching methods would not achieve the expected goals, and accordingly more efficacious teaching methods based on hand-on experiences and self-motivated tasks are to be developed and integrated. In its annual reports since 2015, the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA), the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, adopted a similar stance as it urged higher education institutions to adopt non-traditional teaching methods, with emphasis on self-directed and independent learning. Such methods are thought to improve students' academic performance, to increase their motivation, to define their potentials and limitations, and to promote their independent thinking. Therefore, departments of English in the Saudi higher education institutions are called upon to commit themselves to these recent teaching and learning methods of which self-directed learning receives utmost attention in the present paper. Self-directed learning in Saudi educational context would help students optimize their

experiences, have passion for what they learn, evaluate different sources of information, and gain sustainable knowledge.

Self-directed learning is not simply a matter of students working alone. Rather, it is an active process in which both students and teachers have specific role. Unlike traditional teaching approaches, students in SDL environments are markedly proactive, while teachers help them use learning resources smoothly and effectively. Therefore, students are required to develop skills of decision-making, effective communication, self-management, and self-assessment to render the learning process more profitable.

### III. QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

1. How far are EFL university male and female students in the Saudi context acquainted with self-directed learning practices?
2. How do EFL university male and female students in the Saudi context view student-teacher relationship in self-directed learning environments?
3. What is the effectiveness of EFL students' selection of materials on improving their linguistic performance?
4. How do EFL university learners evaluate their overall experience with self-directed learning?

Answers to these questions are geared towards evaluating the teaching and learning methods adopted in Saudi Universities with special reference to the role of teachers and students. Adopting self-directed learning strategies are claimed herein to remodel such roles.

### IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-directed learning, usually addressed in line with concepts such as active learning, self-planned learning, self-regulated learning, independent learning, active learning, cooperative learning and autonomous learning, is essentially based on the notion of autonomy and self-reliance. Longman Dictionary of Language defines learner autonomy as “the principle that learners should be encouraged to assume a maximum amount of responsibility for what they learn and how they learn it.” Meanwhile, Cambridge Dictionary states that autonomy is “the ability to make your own decisions without being controlled by anyone else.” Autonomy, in an educational setting, refers to the ability of a student to set his educational goals and to take responsibility for his own learning, while teachers are still active partners in the educational process as they usually guide students through the different phases of learning. Hardy-Gould (2013) posits that learner autonomy takes place when the learner takes control and responsibility for their own learning, both in terms of what they learn and how they learn it.

The concept of self-directed learning emerged since the 1970s as it principally targeted adults (Knowles, 1975; Brookfield, 1984; Guglielmino & Guglielmino, 1991; Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991; Candy, 1991; Caffarella, 1993; Merriam, 2001; Long, 2010; Conner, 2012; among others). Furthermore, SDL was explored in different careers, including medical science (Shokar, et al., 2002; Pai et al., 2014; Premkumar et al., 2018), information technology (e.g. Bruce, 1995; Conner, 2012), teaching (e.g. Jarvis, 2004), and management. Recently, SDL was incorporated with technology-aided and online learning environments (Hartley & Bendixen, 2001; Song & Hill, 2007; Boyer, Edmondson, Artis, & Fleming, 2014). However, “it [SDL] should be adopted in a systemic manner keeping in mind heterogeneity of students with respect to skills” (Bhat, Rajashekar & Kamath, 2007).

#### A. *Learner's Attitude and Motivation*

It is largely claimed that learners' attitudes and motivation are inseparable as they promote each other, thereby enhancing academic efficacy. In principle, motivation manipulates “attention, concentration, imagination, passion, and other processes to pursue goals” (Wlodkowski, 2008, p. 3). Furthermore, it is important at the beginning and continuation of efforts to achieve the goals set (Nadi et al., 2011). Motivation, by nature, is closely related to readiness. In this regard, Francom (2010) maintains that learners' background knowledge and successful experience help predicting their effectiveness in a learning experience, and therefore support their readiness. In the area of foreign language learning, motivation and positive attitude play a crucial role as motivated learners seem to master that language. Gardner (2008) claims that both motivation and positive attitude are often considered collectively as motivation comprises of attitudinal implications and attitudes comprise of motivational properties. Bolduc (2000, p. 47) mentions two distinct categories of motivation which constitute all sorts of motives: the ‘biological push’ (internal motivation) and the ‘cultural pulls’ (external motivation). Intrinsic motivation emerges from within; it “refers to doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 71). The development of intrinsic motivation relies on various psychological needs such as autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Saeid & Eslaminejad, 2017). Meanwhile, external motivation is typically a result of external rewards. In other words, implicit and explicit motives help predict a learner's behavior.

McGrew (2008) envisages academic motivation as a subtype of reflectance motivation conceptually regarded as effective dealing with an environment. Such effective dealing with the environment requires the formulation of attitudes. Attitudes are not innate, but they are markedly learned, and by the course of time, they are revised and modified. By default, they are classified into negative attitudes and positive attitudes. In a similar vein, attitudes towards the target language are categorized into three types: (a) attitudes to the community and people who speak the target language; (b)

attitudes towards learning the language concerned; and (c) attitudes towards languages and language learning in general (Stern, 1991, p.376). It should be noted that the relation between self-directed learning and attitudes is integrative, i.e. positive attitude supports self-directed learning; and good experience with self-directed learning supports learners' positive attitudes towards learning.

#### *B. Learner Cognitive and Metacognitive Learning Strategies*

In cognitive psychology, learning a language is a holistic process which cannot be explored based on stimulus-response relations. Effective learning undeniably relies on effective information processing, the possession and quality of basic learning-to-learn skills and knowledge centered upon cognitive and metacognitive skills (Cornford, 2002). Veenman, Van Hout-Wouters, and Afflerbach (2006) argue that metacognition depends on cognition. The relationship between metacognition and cognition and between metacognitive and cognitive strategies is difficult to explain (Mehrdad et al., 2012). Teaching and learning are generally based on different metacognitive and cognitive processes featured in various academic situations. Metacognition deals with the control, awareness, and knowledge of one's learning. Through the evaluation and regulation of one's learning process, metacognition was often considered as a higher order intellectual process. Metacognition is usually treated as higher-order cognition. Blummer (2014) mentions six features characteristic of information behavior: differentiating, extracting, monitoring, chaining, browsing, and starting. The first three features are empirically described as metacognitive strategies. Wentworth Institute classified metacognitive strategies into various categories, such as: writing, comprehension, reasoning, problem-solving, organization, and self-regulation strategies.

Alkahtani (2016, p. 33) maintains that while metacognitive strategies include planning, monitoring, evaluation, cognitive strategies encompass rehearsal, organization, and elaboration. In a similar vein, learning strategies are divided into two major groups such as direct and indirect group. Direct learning strategies are involved in the learning process and they require mental processing, whereas indirect learning strategies are involved in the foreign language learning process. Cognitive strategies are included in direct strategies and metacognitive strategies are in indirect strategies (Oxford, 1990, p.37). Cognitive strategies help learners combine new information with previous information. With regard to language study, Cohen and Dörnyei (2002, pp. 171-190) provide a three-fold classification of strategies: (a) language learning strategies, i.e., thoughts and behaviors used by learners to improve their understanding of a target language; (b) language-use strategies, including retrieval, rehearsal and communication; and (c) self-motivating strategies, "which learners can use to increase or protect their existing motivation" (pp. 178-179).

#### *C. Student-teacher Relationship in SDL Environments*

In educational environment, the teacher is prototypically viewed as the center of the educational process, while students are always recipients. Self-directed learning is based on "both the external characteristics of an instructional process and the internal characteristics of the learner, where the individual assumes primary responsibility for a learning experience" (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991, p. 24). Reynolds and Miller (2013) state that "Relationships between teachers and children have been a focus of educators' concerns for decades, although this attention had taken different forms and had been expressed using a wide range of constructs and paradigms" (p. 199). In the learner-centered atmosphere, students are motivated to learn new things efficiently and independently. To be an effective self-directed learner, Greveson and Spencer (2005) argue, various factors are to be considered, including the subject matter, social, cultural and educational setting, past experiences, and relevant study skills.

Unlike teacher-centered classroom, learners learn through hand-on experience and direct contact with the learning environment and learning materials. Still, in SDL, teachers have crucial roles to play. In SDL environments, teachers are responsible for helping learners in case they need help, and also to help learners assess their needs. Teachers are furthermore urged to facilitate, motivate, and design communicative activities (Alnaim, 1998, p 3). The role of the facilitator is to guide, direct, inspire and lead the students wherever it needs. He has to guide students recognizing their weaknesses and strengths. In so doing, their motivation, courage, and confidence are supported to do their work perfectly. Teachers can design various communicative activities to motivate and engage the students to practice the new tips in the language learning (Kassem, 2018). Hiemstra (1994) lists the following roles of teachers in ideal self-directed learning environments: content resource, resource locator, interest stimulator, positive attitude generator, creativity and critical thinking stimulator, and evaluation stimulator. However, teachers are required to establish a boundary between students' decisions about selecting materials and learning strategies on the one hand and teaching methods on the other hand.

#### *D. Self-directed Learning in EFL*

To describe a learning experience as being markedly effective, learners ought to be committed to their learning goals in an interactive environment. Candy (1991) argues that SDL covers four domains including personal autonomy, self-management, independent pursuit of learning, and learner-control, all of which are crucial to foreign language learning. Benson (2011) maintains that language learners are urged to control their learning. To integrate self-directed learning in a curriculum, Guglielmino (2013) proposes four guidelines: first, creating an atmosphere supportive of such experience; second, promoting awareness of and reflection on self-directed learning; third, developing metacognition and assessment strategies promoting self-directed learning strategies; finally, providing real tasks and hand-on experiences.

Wang (2012) envisages self-directed learning as an effective pedagogy for EFL learners to improve "linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence beyond the language classroom" (p. 339).

Students' selection of the content to be learned would help them to develop the skill of lifelong learning, i.e. the how rather than the what. Self-directed learning integrates a gamut of skills – including effective communication, self-determination skills, self-management skills, research skills, decision-making skills, problem-solving skills etc. – as it targets the whole person. Furthermore, SDL environments foster collaboration, negotiation, critical thinking, meditation and sharing of ideas. However, this does not mean that self-directed learning does not have problems. For instance, Guglielmino and Guglielmino (1991) argue that "problems may arise, such as lack of resources or lack of time" (p.10).

In a case study on the tertiary level preparatory program in UAE, Ostrowska (2015) is interested in how learner independence becomes a curricular area. Following exploratory-interpretive method, he examines the responses of the teachers and learners to an Autonomous Learning Log. Instructors' and learners' attitudes towards the Autonomous Learning Log based on the different interpretations of the word autonomy. Findings show that learners were markedly passive, while teachers were symbolized as "the agents and controllers of education". The study recommended rethinking about autonomy to render it as a practical educational goal. In a similar vein, in the Saudi context, Alfalah (2015) examines how far Saudi English major university students are ready to participate in self-directed learning. Findings showed that though students had some misunderstanding of the learning tasks, they tended to participate in self-directed learning activities.

Khodary (2017) explored the effect of Edmodo, a closed social learning network, on developing Saudi EFL students' self-directed learning (SDL). The study targeted fifth level students at Languages and Translation Department, Arar Faculty of Education and Arts, Northern Border University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Findings showed that social networks helped students to develop skills of self-directed English learning. Al-Hazmi (2008), by means of interviews, qualitatively investigated the value of SDL in EFL programs as practiced by Saudi learners. Findings explained that students showed positive attitude toward SDL. Alhujayri (2014) examined the teaching methods and activities included in English teachers' practices aiming at encouraging learner autonomy at secondary schools in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A questionnaire survey was conducted and found that Saudi English teachers promote self-directed learning by employing child-centered and communicative language teaching pedagogy in the classroom, but for no clear goals.

## V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

With reference to the running research questions, the present study uses questionnaire and semi-structured interview to investigate EFL English major undergraduates' attitudes towards the self-directed learning mode, use of cognitive and meta-cognitive learning strategies, control of their self-directed learning behavior, areas in which they seek teachers' help. The research community is a group of 100 students (50 males and 50 females) from a number of Saudi universities. The whole group responded to the questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview was conducted with only 20 students representing different English departments. The questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews have been effectively used in understanding students' attitude towards EFL teaching methods with the ultimate goal of improving EFL instruction and students' linguistic performance. Therefore, it is postulated that questionnaires and semi-structured interviews help eliciting data on students' understanding and evaluation of self-directed learning methods. This hypothesis is supported by Norris and Watanabe's (2011) argument that surveys and semi-structured interviews are appropriate tools for researchers who do evaluation of language programs and teaching methods as they will be more likely to use the findings of these tools for understanding and improvement.

## VI. RESULTS

This section lists the basic results of the study tools, including the questionnaire and the semi-structures interviews.

### A. *Questionnaire Results*



TABLE I.  
SEX WISE PERCENTAGES OF SDL STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE; MALE (M), FEMALE (F).

Item No.	Statement	Agree		Disagree		Neutral	
		M	F	M	F	M	F
1	I prefer self-directed learning model more than the traditional teaching methods since I can select the learning content and make decision concerning the pace of study.	27%	27%	3%	5%	20%	18%
2	I can select the appropriate learning materials and sources.	32%	34%	2%	3%	16%	13%
3	I memorize the new words and phrases in a selective manner.	33%	32%	2%	1%	15%	17%
4	My English language has been improved due to my use of self-directed learning methods.	39%	35%	0%	2%	11%	13%
5	In self-directed learning, I consciously take notes of the key words and information	29%	35%	1%	0%	20%	15%
6	Usually I evaluate my learning process in order to identify the problems and find solutions.	34%	30%	4%	3%	12%	17%
7	I'm interested in learning English through newsletters, stories, articles, films and videos.	38%	34%	2%	0%	12%	14%
8	I have a clear understanding that the learner in the self-directed learning model has to prepare a detailed study plan including selecting the learning content and materials as well as making decision concerning my own pace of study.	24%	28%	4%	3%	22%	19%
9	I have prepared a detailed plan for my learning, including the selection of the learning content, materials and my own pace of study.	22%	19%	9%	10%	19%	21%
10	I feel I can learn independently without teachers' help or supervision.	22%	27%	9%	8%	19%	15%
11	If not reminded by the teacher, I may forget the tasks I have to do through self-directed learning.	18%	19%	16%	14%	16%	17%
12	I have a clear understanding that if I face any problems or difficulties in self-directed learning, I can seek the teacher or my classmates.	39%	36%	2%	3%	9%	11%
13	Self-directed learning is as indispensable as the role of the teacher in the classroom.	35%	34%	3%	2%	12%	14%
14	I prefer traditional teaching methods than the self-directed learning model.	15%	18%	15%	12%	20%	20%
15	I set clear objectives for my self-directed learning.	27%	29%	4%	4%	19%	17%
16	I hope I can do self-directed education during classes and not during leisure time.	27%	29%	7%	6%	16%	15%
17	I believe that the teacher should evaluate the students' achievements regarding their self-directed learning on a regular basis.	24%	30%	4%	4%	22%	16%
18	I will not do any self-directed learning unless there are exams, for example, mid-term or final exams.	19%	21%	13%	10%	18%	19%
19	I can finish all the course book exercises before the end of the semester.	26%	26%	6%	4%	19%	20%
20	In the self-directed learning model, I adopt and use different learning methods such as reading aloud, taking notes, and listening to general ideas, etc.	37%	35%	2%	2%	11%	13%
21	I can adapt to the self-directed learning methods in learning English at the university level.	36%	33%	1%	3%	13%	14%
22	I feel that I can do self-directed learning effectively without teacher's help.	26%	24%	9%	8%	15%	18%
23	I believe that student learning should be part of the teaching process done by the teacher in classrooms and should not be left to the learner in any way.	29%	28%	6%	7%	15%	15%
24	I can finish all the self-directed learning tasks without any push or supervision from the teacher.	18%	23%	10%	3%	22%	24%
25	I study and practice English language only before exams.	15%	25%	26%	17%	9%	8%

**B. Semi-structures Interview Results**

In the interviews with the students, they were asked to reflect on their experiences with self-directed learning.

Question No. 1. What are the problems and challenges do you face in self-directed learning?

The majority of students expressed that they used a limited number of self-directed learning strategies, and even they seemed not work in specific contexts. Some students also showed lack of interest in self-directed learning due to the hiatus between their interests and concerns and the materials selected by the teachers. They tended to learn about topics they have personal connection with since they would be much motivated.

Question No. 2. How far is the use of self-directed learning useful in improving your language skills?

Some students reported that sometimes their teachers discouraged them to use technology and online resources, such as mobile phones, laptops, and tablets in classrooms. Simultaneously, however, in writing classes, for instance, they asked to be allowed to use mobile phones or laptops in classrooms because they make the quality of their writing better. They also suggested that their departments should create and support language and conversation clubs run by peer students so that they can practice language and improve their language skills.

## VII. DISCUSSION

Based on the results reported in section (5.1) and (5.2), it seems that Saudi students at college level face some challenges once self-directed learning strategies are integrated in their English language departments. Most of the activities, practices and drills were selected, designed and administered by teachers. In other words, they used to be recipients as they lacked proper insights into the teachers' roles as facilitators and motivators. Another challenge is that many students underestimated the role of teachers assuring that they can acquire English language skills without teachers' support. Accordingly, they were administered to self-directed learning experiences where teachers assumed important roles, viz., in a self-directed learning environment; both students and teachers are real partners. Teachers were advised to initiate discussion with students to help them identify their needs, learning strategies and criteria for material selection. At the same time, teachers ought to be committed to providing continuous feedback, recommending materials based on needs analysis, and engaging students to reflect on their learning outcomes. No significant differences between male and female students are reported, however; furthermore, they showed considerable interest in self-directed learning modes as they were much more motivated to improve their language skills.

The major results of the present study stress the significance and efficacy of self-directed learning, especially in language learning. According to Bayley and Featherstone (2013), educational institutions have to be committed to developing self-directed learning modes in order to enhance students' learning and achievement. In a similar regard, Tait and Knight (2006) argued that many factors need to be considered for a successful and effective execution of self-directed learning modes, taking charge of one's learning, building and maintaining strong and productive teacher-pupil relationships, and providing the students with strong affective skills which could regulate their use of metacognitive learning strategies. Departments and colleges in Saudi educational contexts are called on to provide students with study skills guidelines about how to study effectively and how to use the study materials and resources to improve their language skills. They are encouraged to have advising centers that can be easily accessed by the students (cf. Dofs & Hobbs, 2011).

Teachers, in turn, are recommended to help their students gain a positive attitude toward self-directed learning, and to find a strategy to overcome all challenges and possible threats to such effective learning mode. In so doing, the learning process would be more innovative and creative. In this regard, they should involve students in selecting materials and resources, planning the curriculum, applying relevant learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. In respect of improving language skills, teachers should encourage EFL students to enhance their language performance and competence by designing an interactive learning environment inside and outside classrooms. Technology and online resources including Blackboard, language learning blogs, documentaries, and even YouTube are recommended to help promoting self-learning experiences.

## VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The present study sought to provide an evaluation of the current learning experiences as described by Saudi EFL students in a number of Saudi universities. Its main concern is surveying the challenges and problems they face, especially those related to their attitudes towards self-directed learning modes and their concept of teachers' roles. In order to investigate how EFL students perceive self-directed learning, a questionnaire was conducted to measure how far students take responsibility for their learning, set learning goals and objectives, and realize their strengths and weaknesses. Results indicated clearly that in spite of students' interest and positive attitude towards self-directed learning, many of the male and female students have real problems with understanding the nature of self-directed learning and how they should use it effectively. English departments at Saudi Higher education institutions are recommended to develop tools for the management of language learning through self-directed learning modes. Results stress the need to remodel teachers' and students' role in active learning environments. On the part of teachers, they need to teach their students self-directed learning strategies that enable them to learn autonomously and effectively. Teachers also are recommended to make the best use of Blackboard systems which are available in most Saudi universities in order to provide students with materials for self-study, tips and guidelines for self-directed learning.

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# The Cultivation of College Students' Critical Thinking Ability Based on Task-based Cooperative Writing

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**Abstract**—This study attempts to explore the effectiveness of task-based cooperative writing instruction on critical thinking and English writing development. To address the issues, an experiment is carried out between two university classes, who received task-based cooperative writing and traditional non-source based writing respectively. Based on the analysis, the major findings are obtained as follows. Firstly, task-based cooperative writing could effectively cultivate college students' critical thinking abilities in general and students' critical thinking affective disposition and cognitive skill to a significant degree in particular; Secondly, as for the 7 critical thinking sub-dispositions, the analyticity is improved to a significant level while CT-confidence, inquisitiveness, truth-seeking, maturity, open-mindedness and systematicity are not significantly enhanced. And as for the 6 critical thinking sub-skills, interpretation, explanation, inference, and analysis are all developed to a significant extent while self-regulation failed to reach the significant level; Finally, students' writing proficiency is also promoted. College students' critical thinking ability is positively and significantly correlated with their writing proficiency. Among the critical thinking sub-dispositions, there exists a positive correlation between students' writing quality and truth-seeking as well as maturity. And the correlations between the writing quality and all the critical thinking sub-skills are positive and significant.

**Index Terms**—critical thinking ability, task-based cooperative writing, writing quality

## I. INTRODUCTION

Cultivation of critical thinking (hereafter, CT) ability has been the central goal of modern education, especially for higher education and it has been infiltrated into the interdisciplinary teaching as well. In recent years, the domestic scholars pay more attention to CT and its exploration and have realized the significance and urgency of the CT in higher education. However, the current situation of CT absence in foreign language learners is evidential.

In the context of Chinese education, many scholars have done studies ranging from theoretical foundation to empirical researches of exploring how to improve students' CT ability in English teaching which involves writing to a great extent. Some studies attempt to assess students' current situation in CT (Wen, 2006). And Wen Qiufang (2006) also mainly focuses on English major student's CT ability and its assessment tool of establishment and evaluation validity as well. And some do researches to explore the strategies and methods of cultivating students' CT ability (Han, 2009; Ling, 2014; Yu, 2014). Their emphasis is a little different that some put the writing as an assessment tool of CT, while others consider CT cultivation as a method to improve writing proficiency. In general, they have made tremendous achievements in CT teaching model construction and put forward many strategies of developing students' CT in English writing teaching. However, no research explored how to foster college English students' CT abilities through task-based cooperative writing.

Therefore, in the integrated college English teaching, teachers have a major responsibility to provide various tasks to develop students' CT ability. Reading and writing are closely connected, and the process of writing can stimulate the application of CT skills, thus various tasks set in the process of writing like the task-based cooperative writing may improve students' CT ability and writing proficiency to some extent. So, this study attempts to explore whether the task-based cooperative writing will be beneficial to students' CT abilities.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Definition of Critical Thinking

CT is of practical importance and has theoretical interests in second language teaching. In recent years, it has become 'a buzzword' in the educational circles (Fisher, 2011, P.1), especially in domestic foreign language teaching.

John Dewey defined CT as "reflective thought", which means the active, persistent, and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it

tends (Dewey, 1933).

Facione et al. (1990), who dedicated to the Delphi Project, put forward a new and comprehensive definition of CT. In this report, CT is defined as: “purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential conceptual methodological, criteriological or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based” (Facione, 1990, P. 2). According to the Delphi Report, CT involves both critical thinking disposition (hereafter, CTD) and critical thinking skill (hereafter, CTS). As for the affective dispositions, it can be divided into seven sub-scales: analyticity, self-confidence, inquisitiveness, maturity, open-mindedness, systemacity and truth-seeking. As for the cognitive skills, it is composed of six sub-scales: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation, with analysis, evaluation and inference as the key three skills. Following the scholars, the definition from the Delphi report that the CT ability was constructed of skills and dispositions is ideal for this study.

### *B. Assessment of Critical Thinking Ability*

Since CT becomes a central focus, numerous CT assessment tools are also developed in order to measure students' CT ability. The most popularized assessment tools are the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (hereafter, CCTDI; Facione & Facione, 1992) and the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (hereafter, CCTST, Facione, 1990), which emerged from the Delphi report on CT, Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (Watson & Glaser, 1980), Cornell Critical Thinking Test, Level Z (Ennis et al., 1985), and the Qualitative Florida Scale for Critical Thinking Skills (hereafter, UF/QCTS; Tian, 2012) and so on. Among these measuring instruments, the CCTDI is to test students' CTD and the others are to measure students' CTS objectively or subjectively.

After literal translation, the origin version of CCTDI is not expected to mirror the Chinese students' CT disposition. So, the Chinese version of CCTDI (hereafter, CTDI-CV) is developed under the leadership of Peng Meici (2004). What's more, as for the assessment of CTS, the UF/QCTS has been adopted in many researches (Tian, 2012; Huang, 2013), whose scoring rubric and rating scale are established by the researchers around the constructs of explanation, inference, evaluation, analysis, interpretation and self-regulation (Facione, 1990). It can provide specific standards to assess a certain kind of CT skills based on writing.

Thus, in this study, CTDI-CV can be used to evaluate the general level of students' CTD and the standard of UF/QCTS can be employed to evaluate the specific sub-skills of students' CT in their writing. And these tests have been chosen for the subsequent study mainly for three reasons except for their validity and reliability: first, they are primarily consistent with and responsive to the Delphi Exercise on CT; second, they offer precise measurement to assess a specific cognitive skill or disposition essential for college English students applying to their writing; third, there are substantial studies base using these tests, which are helpful for the comparison purpose.

### *C. Task-based Writing*

Task-based approach was an approach on the basis of the application of task as the core element in language teaching or instruction. The task-based writing, with emphasis on depth of writing content rather than breadth, is exactly the reflection of CT. Wang Dongping (2005) has examined the effectiveness of the task-based writing in the college English writing teaching. In her research, the structures, main phrases and flow chart of a task-based writing approach were explained and such approach was prior to the writing product approach. Therefore, the task-based writing is a promising method in EFL writing instruction.

### *D. Definition and Component of a Task*

With regards to the quality of the writing production, the task-based approach mainly captures students' writing as a process, in which various tasks conducive to students' writing conception could be designed.

According to Jane Willis (1996), task is a goal-oriented activity. And tasks are considered as the central component of a three-part framework: Pre-task, task cycle and language focus. In the pre-task stage, extensive exposure could be provided for learners to recall the prior information or knowledge. And the topic and specific tasks should be clarified to raise learners' acquisition awareness and make them fully prepared for the task.

Ellis (2003) describes that task is a workplan that requires students to process language, with emphasis on evaluating whether appropriate contents have been delivered by obtaining certain outcomes from the tasks. And he put forward four standards for defining task: 1) mainly focus on meaning; 2) have a certain gap; 3) learners fulfill the activities by using linguistic materials and nonverbal sources; 4) have exact outcomes in addition to language use.

For this study, it is difficult to design writing tasks strictly within Ellis's standards of task. And Appel & Lantolf (1994) demonstrates that the fulfillment of a task mainly depends on the interaction between learner and task rather than on the inherent nature of the task itself. Therefore, the task in this study is an activity that mainly focuses on meaning and the interaction forms to inspire students to produce high accuracy and logic composition. And the adoption of task-based cooperative writing in the present study mainly follows Willis's framework of task.

### *E. Types of Writing Task*

The writing as one of the basic language skills is closely connected with reading, listening and speaking skills. Thus, the writing process is not confined to a certain task pattern and it enables different interdependent task types in

operation. For instance, Zhang Xinling & Zhou Yan (2016) investigated the influence of task type involving the impromptu, reading-to-write and reading-listening-writing on different levels of Chinese EFL learners' English writing process. Xu Hao & Gao Caifeng (2007) explored the effectiveness of reading-to-write teaching mode on students' writing ability and writing thoughts and reading ability. Delaney (2008) investigated the influence of the reading-to-write construct. Wang Wenqiu & Mou Fanghua (2013) explored that the reading-writing integration teaching mode is effective in bettering students' reading and writing ability.

And the group task with emphasis on mutual discussion could help students gather different ideas and get more familiarized with the writing topic. Li Shaofang (2009) claimed that the cooperative learning could be involved in the integration of task-based writing method with reading or speaking, which could make use of intensive intelligence to implement the writing task.

In summary, various tasks could be adopted in combination in the writing process. Therefore, task-based cooperative writing in this study could be designed in an interactive way in order to strengthen students' CT ability.

#### *F. Critical Thinking and Task-based Writing*

The CT ability in foreign language learning is usually demonstrated in the output activities such as speaking or writing and it seems that it is more easily reflected by cogitative writing production rather than impromptu spoken language. Researchers (Sun, Liang & Wen, et al., 2011) have claimed that the integral link between writing and CT should be taken seriously. Meanwhile, the studies on English writing and CT have gradually increased. Some look into the relationship between writing and CT cultivation. For example, Tusil (1999) studied the various types of courses and differing teaching methods on students' CT, which found that nine courses involving writing courses and foreign language courses present a significant positive correlation with CT. And his further case study proved that the writing and rewriting, classroom discussion play vital roles in developing students' CT skills. Zhang Xinling (2009) suggested that an interface between CT and reading-to-writing instruction could produce desirable results in English writing classroom.

Ma Rong & Qin Xiaoqing (2016) implied that the CTD for English majors was holistically positive, in which 4 dimensions including the open-mindedness, analyticity, inquisitiveness, maturity show positive traits, while the other 3 dimensions involving the truth seeking, systematicity and self-confidence show negative traits. And the CTD was testified to be irrelevant to the score of academic reading and academic writing. However, in their research, the relationship between CT sub-dispositions and reading or writing is not investigated.

Some studies mainly concentrate on the cultivation of CT in English writing. Han Shaojie & Yi Yan (2009) illustrated the importance of CT cultivation in English major students' writing teaching and put forward some efficacious strategies to foster CT ability in writing course. Besides, Li Wenting (2012) proposed to teach writing with the help of networking platform and apply debating into writing teaching thus to develop students' CT ability.

According to the increasing gap between language skills and CT skills development, Yu Jiying (2014) yielded a tentative framework of an integrating teaching approach to English writing and CT skills development which entails integrated teaching objectives, teaching materials and teaching methods. But he just explored from the theoretical foundations.

Besides, there are also more empirical studies concerning how to improve CT ability in writing instruction. Tian Dan (2012) suggested that foreign language learners' CT abilities in inference, analysis, evaluation etc. have got greatly improved while no obvious effect was produced on self-regulation skill by conducting a three-round action.

As mentioned in the literature above, researches have pinpointed the integral link between the overall CT and English writing. However, the correlations between CT sub-skills or CT sub-dispositions and English writing quality were scarcely investigated except in Ma & Qin's research. And they didn't consider both CT sub-dispositions and sub-skills from both objective and subjective perspective. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct a study to explore the effect of task-based cooperative writing on critical thinking cultivation.

#### *G. Cooperative Writing and Cultivation of Critical Thinking*

Writing is a significant feature of teaching and learning in EFL settings and the classroom structures in higher education has increasingly shifted from individual work to group or team work. Thus, a wide variety collaborative work could be applied in EFL writing classroom to develop learners' self-expressing and writing skills. According to Lowry et al. (2004), collaborative writing was an iterative process that enables a team to participate in negotiating, communicating and coordinating with a particular shared target in the process of creating written output. And its' potential scope not merely lies in the basic art of joint composition but involves the pre-task and post-task activities, team formation and planning. Furthermore, it includes the likelihood of various writing strategies, activities, team roles and work modes. Following Lowry et al.'s understanding, the task-based cooperative writing in this study mainly refers to the collaborative form for task-based writing.

The value and potential pedagogical benefits of cooperative writing has been examined and discovered from various perspectives. For instance, Hodges (2002) stated that collaborative writing could enhance students' initiative, creativity and critical thinking. Wang et al. (2009) investigated critical thinking and knowledge construction in an interactive learning environment. The findings showed that writing reflections had potential to promote critical thinking but, not all students thought critically. Although their research was not thoroughly based on the cooperative writing, they designed

interaction forms such as class discussions that was consistent to this study to some extent.

Ji Shourong (2008) put forward that the cooperative writing based on the metacognitive strategy was an effective way to enhance students' critical thinking ability. However, his research just explored the theoretical framework of cooperative writing to enhance CT.

Karama et al. (2012) suggested collaborative learning providing a suitable context for students' critical thinking dispositions could be applied in the education system. However, their research mainly focused on critical thinking dispositions while the critical thinking skills were neglected.

To sum up, responding to these researches, the cooperative writing could potentially contribute to enhancing critical thinking ability and there is persuasive evidence that cooperative team study achieves at higher levels of thought and secure information longer than students studying silently as individuals. Therefore, the task-based cooperative writing will be beneficial to students' CT ability.

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN

#### A. Research Questions

To investigate the effect of cooperative task-based writing on critical thinking ability, the study mainly addressed the following research questions:

1. Will the task-based cooperative writing cultivate college students' critical thinking ability?
2. Are there any improvement differences in terms of sub-critical thinking skills and sub-critical thinking dispositions? If so, are they significant?
3. Is there any correlation between students' writing quality and their overall critical thinking ability as well as critical thinking sub-categories?

#### B. Participants

Fifty second-year undergraduate non-English majors from two intact classes (n=50) are chosen: Chemistry (class 1) and Mechanics majors (class 2) at Hunan Institute of Science and Technology. The average English achievement scores of two classes achieved in previous semester were approximately the same, and all subjects' writing quality and CT consisting of CTD and CTS had no significant discrepancy at the beginning of the experiment. Meanwhile, none of them have received formal CT training before according to the questionnaire of CTDI-CV. Class1 (Chemistry majors) is chosen randomly as the experimental group to complete the task-based cooperative writing and class2 (Mechanics majors) as the control group to complete the topic writing task.

#### C. Instruments

Instruments used in this study consisted of CTDI-CV, UF/QCTS and the readability analyzer 1.0 and the SPSS 22.0. The CTDI-CV assessing students' CT dispositions were used in both pretest and posttest. And instrument adopted in pretest and posttest to measure subjects' CT skills in writing was based on UF/QCTS. And assessing of writing was based on CET-6.

#### D. Materials

The study was conducted in the integrated college English class. The coursebook used in college English teaching was New Horizon College English (1-4) published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. The teaching and testing materials which were used in this study consisted of 1) the New Horizon College English Book 3: Reading and Writing (Third Edition); 2) three reading passages cited from the newspaper; 3) the questionnaire of CTDI-CV in pretest and posttest;

Three reading passages for their writing tasks were related with the reading topics in unit 3 and Unit 4 and Unit 5 of New Horizon College English book 3. Each passage would contain about 400 words. The Readability\_Analyzer\_1.0 would be used to ensure the difficulty level of the reading texts. The difficult level of the reading materials for this study was appropriate for the subjects.

TABLE I  
READABILITY STATISTICS OF THREE READING TEXTS AND A TEXT ROM BOOK

Text	Text1	Text2	Text3	S-Text
Reading Ease	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Text Difficulty	99.00	99.00	99.00	99.00
Grade Level	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Sentences	1	1	1	1
ASL	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
AWL	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Tokens	388	386	396	350
Word Types	205	186	222	191
Lemma Types	191	166	202	176
Lemma/Word Ratio	0.9317	0.8925	0.9099	0.9215
Word TTR	0.5284	0.4819	0.5606	0.5457
Word STTR	0.5284	0.4819	0.5606	0.5457



As for testing materials, the CTDI-CV (Peng et al., 2004) investigating students' CTD was distributed to subjects in both pretest and posttest. The CTDI-CV is a 6-Likert scaled questionnaire with seventy testing items demonstrating seven scales of CTD, and each scale includes ten items. 20 minutes are needed to complete it. Generally, there are eight kinds of scores which are respectively the total score and seven sub-scales score.

The scoring of the writing test was finished by two teachers from Hunan Institute of Science and Technology. The grading standard in pretest and posttest would mainly depend on two parts, one is the evaluation rubrics of CET-6, primarily concentrating on accuracy of grammar, rationality of structure and expression, and the other is the grading criteria of the Qualitative Florida Scale for CT Skills (UF/QCTS) test. And the full score of each sub-scale is marked with 5 and the lowest score will be 0 and the total points are 30.

*E. Procedures*

The experiment started at the beginning fall semester in 2016, which totally lasted for 8 weeks. In the pretest, all subjects were required to finish the questionnaire independently in 20 minutes which is to investigate students' CTD. And students were asked to finish an essay My Views on Club Activities within 30 minutes in class which is to investigate students' CTS and their current writing proficiency.

In the 6 weeks' experiment, the study designed task-based cooperative writing in the experimental class and topic writing in the control class. And the setting and course arrangement between the experimental and the control group are synchronous. For the control group, the teacher directly gives students the writing topic and requires them finish the writing in class within 30 minutes. Meanwhile, Class 1 was implemented the task-based cooperative writing following the Willis' framework of task-based writing. It is divided into five steps in this study: reading, group discussing, verbal report and final writing and evaluation.

TABLE II.  
TEACHING PROCEDURES FOR PREPARING INGREDIENTS

Time allocation	Teaching plan
Lesson 1	Reading (3 min)
	Group discussion (6 min)
	Verbal report (6 min)
	Final writing & collecting (30 min)
	Grading
After class	Evaluation
Lesson 2	

After the intervention, the subjects were required to write an essay cited from CET-6 in November, 2016. Meanwhile, the CTDI-CV was also distributed to them. All subjects have taken the tests and their scales of CTDI-CV and writings were collected altogether at the same time.

*F. Data Collection and Data Analysis*

All the 50 subjects have attended the pretest and posttest. The results of the CTDI-CV and writing tests in pretest and posttest were all collected to measure subjects' CT abilities and writing quality. Data from the questionnaires and writings in both pretest and posttest were collected and demonstrated. While using SPSS 22.0, the Descriptive Statistics, Independent Samples T-test, Paired Samples T-Test, Pearson Correlation Analysis would be fully processed.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

*A. Improvement of Students' Critical Thinking Ability*

In order to discuss whether the task-based cooperative writing is beneficial to the cultivation of college English students' CT ability, the analysis started with demonstrating the general level of students' CTD and CTS in pretest and posttest. And then the differences of subjects' CT as a whole could be reflected through the inner group comparison based on the paired samples t- test.

1. Critical Thinking Disposition

In order to investigate subjects' development of CTD, both independent samples t-test and Paired samples t- Test were presented as shown in table 3, and table 4.

TABLE III  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF TWO CLASSES' CTD IN PRETEST AND POSTTEST

Group Statistics							Independent Samples Test		
	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	F	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	1	25	229.040	24.1824	171	274	.290	-.436	.664
	2	25	232.200	26.9351	173	278		-.436	.664
Posttest	1	25	241.520	26.3788	187	304	.017	.710	.481
	2	25	236.360	24.9598	180	294		.710	.481

The P values are 0.664 and 0.481 respectively, much higher than 0.05, proving that no significant difference exists in their CTD. However, the experimental group (M=229.04) scores lower than the control group (M=232.20) in pretest, although not significantly lower.

Then, after implementing different writing tasks, the mean score of experiment group (mean=241.52) is noticeably higher than that of control group in posttest (mean=229.04). Although their scores were both increased, the performance of experiment class in CTDI-CV varied more comparing to the control class. So, it can be discovered that the whole level of students' CTD in experiment class has been improved to some extent after embedding the task-based cooperative writing.

And after the intervention, the inner group comparison of students' CTD on the whole level should also be conducted to measure the differences of the two classes' CTD.

TABLE IV  
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST OF TWO CLASSES' CTD IN PRETEST AND POSTTEST

		Paired Samples Statistics				Paired Samples Test			
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Sig.(2-tailed)
						Lower	Upper		
Class 2	Pre_2	232.20	25	26.935	5.387	-14.081	5.761	-.865	.395
	Post_2	236.36	25	24.960	4.992				
Class 1	Pre_1	229.04	25	24.182	4.836	-24.582	-.378	-2.128	.044
	Post_1	241.52	25	25.894	5.179				

As it can be seen that the P value is 0.395 ( $P > 0.05$ ), which implicates that no significant discrepancy exists on the control group's overall CTD in pretest and posttest. Meanwhile, in the experiment class, it can be seen that the P value is 0.044 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which points out that the differences of experiment group's overall CTD reach the significant level after the intervention.

What's more, the frequency analysis of two classes' CTD in pretest and posttest is also presented to demonstrate their improvements as the figure 1.

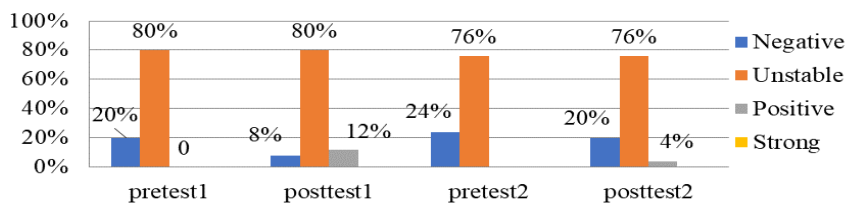


Figure 1. Frequency Analysis of Two Classes' Overall CTD

As described in figure 1, 80% of subjects' overall CTD tends to be unstable and 20% of the students show negative dispositions of CT in the pretest of the experiment group. However, after the instruction of task-based cooperative writing, only 8% of the students have negative CTD and 12% of the students are considered as positive in the CTD. In general, the number of subjects with a negative mind toward CT has entirely decreased by 12%. However, for the control group in posttest, there are still 20% of the students show negative disposition and only one student is positive in the overall CTD. It is noteworthy that neither group of students achieved the score of 350 that is considered the threshold for strong disposition for critical thinking. According to Facione et al. (1998) stated that the CT dispositions were positively correlated with the conventional personality trait and the consistent internal motivation to think. And Han Shaojie (2009) believed that the CT dispositions need to be cultivated in the long process of thinking activities. Therefore, it is difficult for learners to improve their CT dispositions in such a short training especially when learners' initial CT dispositions were relative unstable and weak.

Although the CTD of both groups is in the unstable stage, the difference in the critical thinking disposition is found statistically significant in favor of the group that implements the task-based cooperative writing. Therefore, it can be concluded that the task-based cooperative writing facilitates students' CTD.

## 2. Critical Thinking Skill

Despite exploring students' CTD, CTS is also integral to measuring students' CT abilities. First, the overall situation of two groups' CTS in the pretest and posttest is demonstrated based on the independent samples test through table 5.

TABLE V.  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF TWO CLASSES' CTS IN PRETEST AND POSTTEST

	Class	N	Group Statistics				Independent Samples Test		
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Max	Min	F	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	1	25	9.380	2.5136	14	6	1.039	-0.728	.470
	2	25	9.980	3.2675	14	6.5		-0.728	.471
Posttest	1	25	16.620	4.5809	24	7.5	1.532	3.888	.000
	2	25	12.060	3.6609	18	6.5		3.888	.000

As is shown in table 5, the mean scores and the maximum score show that both groups' CTS has been enhanced to some extent. The P value in pretest and posttest is respectively 0.470 (P>0.05) and 0.000 (P<0.05), showing that subjects' CTS in pretest has no significant difference but after the experiment, subjects' CTS has reached to a significant degree.

Furthermore, the inner group comparison for students' overall CTS is also conducted based on the paired samples test.

TABLE VI.  
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST OF TWO CLASSES' CTS IN PRETEST AND POSTTEST

		Paired Samples Statistics				Paired Samples Test			
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Sig.(2-tailed)
						Lower	Upper		
Class 2	Pre_2	9.980	25	3.2675	.6535	-3.9064	-2.536	-2.351	.027
	Post_2	12.060	25	3.6609	.7322				
Class 1	Pre_1	9.380	25	2.5136	.5027	-9.3432	-5.1368	-7.105	.000
	Post_1	16.620	25	4.5809	.9162				

As is shown in table 6, the P values of 0.027 and 0.000 (P< 0.05) suggest a statistically significant difference after the experiment. Although both two groups have made a progress in CTS, the experiment group' CTS is enhanced into a more significant level. Because its' mean score has increased from 9.38 to 16.62. Therefore, students' CT skills in experiment group have been extremely strengthened.

In conclusion, it can be noted that the channel of task-based cooperative writing produced significantly better achievement on cultivating students' CTD and CTS from the whole picture. The results could demonstrate the theoretical framework in which cooperative writing task could be an effective way for CT cultivation and it was an effective way to enhance students' critical thinking ability (Yu Jiying, 2014).

*B. Improvement Differences of Critical Thinking Sub-categories*

The second research question is to explore whether any improvement differences exist according to CT sub-categories. To determine the basis of difference, experimental subjects' CT scores on each sub-scale have been interpreted based on Paired Samples T-Test analysis and frequency analysis.

*1. Critical Thinking Sub-dispositions*

The characteristics of subjects' CTD are implied in the specific scaled scores. Therefore, the following table 7 presents the paired samples test of each sub-dispositions in experiment group.

TABLE VII.  
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST OF EXPERIMENTAL CLASS'S CT SUB-DISPOSITIONS

CT Sub-dispositions		Paired Samples Statistics		Paired Samples Test			
		Mean	N	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper		
CT-confidence	Pre_1	31.76	25	-3.907	1.507	-0.915	.369
	Post_1	32.96	25				
Truth-seeking	Pre_1	34.40	25	-5.283	.163	-1.941	.064
	Post_1	36.96	25				
Open-mindedness	Pre_1	32.76	25	-3.233	.593	-1.424	.167
	Post_1	34.08	25				
Analiticity	Pre_1	29.68	25	-7.378	-2.302	-3.936	.001
	Post_1	34.52	25				
Systematicity	Pre_1	33.40	25	-3.386	1.706	-0.681	.503
	Post_1	34.24	25				
Inquisitiveness	Pre_1	31.92	25	-3.107	1.347	-0.816	.423
	Post_1	32.80	25				
Maturity	Pre_1	35.12	25	-3.116	1.436	-0.762	.454
	Post_1	35.96	25				

Table 7 shows that the mean CTDI-CV score of each scale has moved on to a higher level. Notice that the P value of CT-confidence (P=0.369), Systematicity (P=0.503), Inquisitiveness (P=0.423) and Maturity (P=0.454) are all much higher than 0.05, which indicates subjects' dispositions in these elements showed little changes. However, it is worth mentioning that the P value of Analyticity is 0.001(P<0.05), proving that subjects' analyticity has reached the significant level.

After analyzing the paired sample test results, the frequency analysis of E-group's CT sub-dispositions in Figure 2 is presented as a supplement to examine the improvement differences.

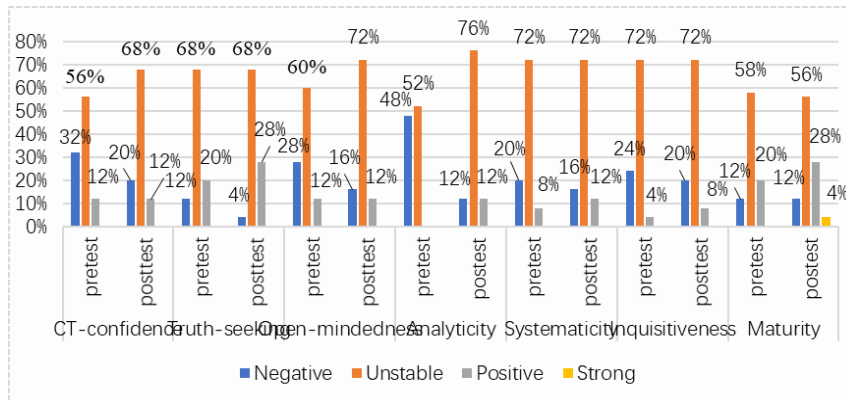


Figure 2. Frequency Analysis of E-Group'S Ct-Sub-Dispositions

As described in above figure 2, the number of subjects who show positive on truth-seeking, analyticity, systematicity, inquisitiveness and maturity scale is more or less on the increase. And for each sub-disposition, the number of students who show negative or unstable tendency toward CT is on the decrease. More specifically, for the analyticity scale, the percentage of students who score below 29 has decreased from 48% to 12%, and meanwhile students who show positive dispositions on this scale have increased by 12%. So, students' improvement inside the analyticity scale is more substantial than the others.

To sum up, the improvement differences of CT lies in the performance of CT sub-dispositions especially for the analyticity scale. The analyticity sub-scale measures the disposition to notice the potential problems and put forward effective solutions with reasons and evidences. It is believed that the significant difference in this element may be due to the emphasis in the task-based cooperative writing on developing learners' insight into given materials, encouraging learners to incorporate their thoughts and prior knowledge or experiences with these reading materials and communicating with peers to demonstrate their own ideas by applying reasons and using evidences.

2. Critical Thinking Sub-skills

Although the task-based cooperative writing provides significantly higher achievements for students' CTS integrally, the distributions and their related characteristics on each sub-scale can also mirror the development of students' CTS.

TABLE VIII. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST OF EXPERIMENT CLASS'S CT-SUB-SKILLS

Paired Samples Statistics				Paired Samples Test			
CT Sub-skills		Mean	N	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Sig.(2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper		
Interpretation	Pre_1	1.740	25	-2.019	-1.261	-8.925	.000
	Post_1	3.380	25				
Analysis	Pre_1	1.700	25	-1.884	-.916	-5.970	.000
	Post_1	3.100	25				
Evaluation	Pre_1	1.460	25	-2.019	-1.101	-7.016	.000
	Post_1	3.020	25				
Inference	Pre_1	1.420	25	-1.756	-.924	-6.650	.000
	Post_1	2.760	25				
Explanation	Pre_1	1.600	25	-1.617	-.743	-5.569	.000
	Post_1	2.780	25				
Self-evaluation	Pre_1	1.460	25	-.4981	.2581	-.655	.519
	Post_1	1.580	25				

It can be seen that the mean value of each skill in pretest is around 2, indicating that a minimal level of using the CT skills is demonstrated in subjects' writing before the experiment. After intervention, the mean scores for CT sub-skills in pretest and posttest have more or less increased. And the P value for interpretation (P=0.000), analysis (P=0.000), explanation (P=0.000), inference (P=0.000) and evaluation (P=0.000) is all less than 0.05. That is to say, students' performance on these CT sub-skills in prior writing has significantly differed from that in final writing. Nevertheless, it

has been observed that the P value for self- regulation skill is 0.519 ( $P>0.05$ ) and the mean value in pretest and posttest is respectively 1.46 and 1.58.

After exploring the results of paired samples test, figure 3 presents the frequency analysis of experiment group’s CT sub-skills to examine the improvement differences.

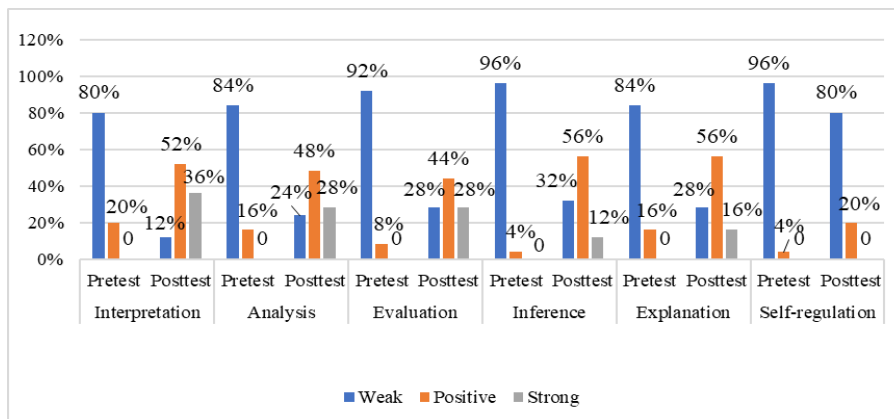


Figure 3. Frequency Analysis of E-Group’S Ct-Sub-Skills

When the frequency analysis is considered, students who show weakness in CT skills are sharply on decrease. The number of students, whose purpose of developing their CT skills in writing is achieved, has increased especially in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation, explanation and inference skills. And still no one after the experiment is thought to be strong in self-regulation skill. So, this skill is scarcely or rarely demonstrated in their writing, thus conforming the suggestions in other research (Tian Dan, 2012). On the one hand, 96% students were rather weak in the self-regulation scale before the intervention of task-based cooperative writing and no one obtained the strong level before and after the experiment. The data trend illustrates students’ self-regulation skill is depressing. On the other hand, although the task-based cooperative writing emphasized the evaluation of both students’ logic and the linguistic features, students were not required to review and revise their writing after feedback. So, there is a gap between students’ cognitive thinking and their actual writing. Tian (2012) mentioned that self-regulation may not be a concrete thinking method. Therefore, students’ self-regulation is not easily demonstrated in their actual writing.

C. Correlation between Writing Quality and Critical Thinking Ability

After determining the effect of task-based cooperative writing and the improvement difference, the major focus of the current study has shifted to investigate whether students’ writing quality could be improved along with the improvement of students’ CT abilities and further the correlations between CT competency and writing quality.

1. Improvement of Writing Quality

Before discussing the associations between CT abilities and writing proficiency, it is significant to pin down participants’ progress on writing quality. So, the independent samples test and paired samples test of two groups’ writing scores are presented in following table 9 and table 10.

TABLE IX  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF TWO CLASSES’ WRITING SCORES

	Group Statistics						Independent Samples Test		
	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Max	Min	F	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	1	25	4.660	2.2160	9	2	.617	-.305	.762
	2	25	4.860	2.4132	10	2			
Posttest	1	25	8.740	3.0418	13	4	.148	3.537	.001
	2	25	5.840	2.7489	11	3			

It can be noticed that the P value in pretest is 0.762 ( $p>0.05$ ), which reveals that subjects before attending different writing tasks do not achieve significantly different writing scores. And the mean scores for two classes are 4.86 and 4.66 respectively. Thus, the control group outperforms the experiment group in the writing proficiency at the beginning of the experiment. However, the P value in posttest is 0.001 ( $P<0.05$ ), proving that two groups’ writing quality significantly varies from each other after receiving the treatment. Likewise, the mean score of the experiment group has increased to 8.74. And the maximum in experiment class varies from 9 to 13, while that in control class varies from 10 to 11. To sum up, subjects’ writing quality has been enhanced after implementing the task-based cooperative writing.

Additionally, the inner comparison of subjects’ writing is performed based on the paired samples test to examine whether the significant improvement exists on their composition quality.

TABLE X.  
 PAIRED SAMPLES TEST OF TWO CLASSES' WRITING SCORES

		Paired Samples Statistics				Paired Samples Test			
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Sig. (2-tailed)
						Lower	Upper		
Class 2	Pre_2	4.860	25	2.4132	.4826	-2.4005	.4405	-1.424	.167
	Post_2	5.840	25	2.7489	.5498				
Class 1	Pre_1	4.660	25	2.2160	.4432	-5.4819	-2.6781	-6.006	.000
	Post_1	8.740	25	3.0418	.6084				

Although the mean score in control class has increased from 4.86 to 5.84., the P value is .167 ( $P > 0.05$ ), revealing that subjects' writing in pretest and posttest has not reached the significant level. The experiment group's mean of writing score has mounted from 4.66 to 8.74. And the P value is .000, which indicates that the experiment group's writing quality has been improved a lot after implementing the task-based cooperative writing instruction. Although both two groups make a progress in their writings, the results are more advantageous to conclude that the task-based cooperative writing instruction could also promote students' writing proficiency to a large extent.

### 2. Correlations Between Critical Thinking Dispositions and Writing Quality

On the basis of the former analysis, it can be noticed that both subjects' CT abilities and writing quality are both improved. So, is there any significant relationship between subjects' writing quality and their overall CT ability as well as the CT sub-dispositions and sub-skills?

In order to uncover the association, first, the Pearson correlation analysis between CTD in general and in categories and writing proficiency is all presented in the following table 11.

TABLE XI  
 CORRELATION ANALYSIS OF E-GROUP'S CTD AND WRITING QUALITY  
 Correlations(N=25)

			WQ
Overall CTD		Pearson Correlation	.491*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.013
CT Sub-dispositions	CT-confidence	Pearson Correlation	.359
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.078
	Truth-seeking	Pearson Correlation	.450*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.024
	Open-mindedness	Pearson Correlation	.341
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.095
	Analyticity	Pearson Correlation	.395
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.051
	Systematicity	Pearson Correlation	.299
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.147
	Inquisitiveness	Pearson Correlation	.343
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.094
	Maturity	Pearson Correlation	.409*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.042

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

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

As demonstrated in above table, there is a positive correlation between students' holistic CTD and writing proficiency ( $r=0.491$ ;  $P=0.013 < 0.05$ ). Meanwhile, it can be found that there is a positive correlation between writing proficiency and truth-seeking ( $r=0.450$ ;  $P=0.024 < 0.05$ ) as well as maturity ( $r=0.409$ ;  $P=0.042 < 0.05$ ). However, as for the CT-confidence, systematicity, analyticity, open-mindedness, and inquisitiveness, no significant correlation exists between them and writing proficiency.

### 3. Correlations Between Critical Thinking Skills and Writing Quality

This study mainly addresses to subjects' CTS in their writing. Below table 12 shows the Pearson Correlation Analysis of E-group's overall CTS and CT sub-categories and writing quality.

TABLE XII.  
CORRELATION ANALYSIS OF E-GROUP'S CTS AND WRITING QUALITY

Correlations(N=25)			
Overall CTS		Pearson Correlation	WQ
			.969**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
CT Sub-skills	Interpretation	Pearson Correlation	867**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	Analysis	Pearson Correlation	.918**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	Evaluation	Pearson Correlation	.941**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	Inference	Pearson Correlation	.853**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	Explanation	Pearson Correlation	.875**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	.482*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.015

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).  
\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results indicate that the writing quality is significantly correlated with the holistic CTS ( $r=0.969$ ;  $P=0<0.01$ ). As for the correspondent CT sub-skills, results indicate that writing quality has significant associations with evaluation ( $r=0.941$ ;  $P=0.000<0.01$ ), analysis ( $r=0.918$ ;  $P=0=0.000<0.01$ ), explanation ( $r=0.875$ ;  $P=0.000<0.01$ ), interpretation ( $r=0.867$ ;  $P=0.000<0.01$ ), inference ( $r=0.853$ ;  $P=0.000<0.01$ ) and a positive correlation with self-regulation ( $r=0.482$ ;  $P=0.015<0.05$ ).

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, some major findings concerning the three research questions can be obtained, and some pedagogical implications can be suggested.

A. Major Findings

First of all, students' CT dispositions and CT skills have been both improved to a significant extent after a few week's intervention on writing instruction, through implementing the task-based cooperative writing.

Secondly, as for CT sub-dispositions and sub-skills, the affective analyticity dimension is improved most, while for CT sub-skills, all the sub-skills except the self-regulation scale are enhanced significantly.

Moreover, on the relationship between students' writing quality and CT abilities, there is a positive correlation between each other. As for the correlations between CT sub-categories and writing quality, the CT sub-dispositions of 2 scales ("truth-seeking" and "maturity") are positively correlated with students' writing and the CT sub-skills all have positive or strong associations with writing proficiency.

B. Pedagogical Implications

Firstly, college English teachers should recognize the necessity of implementing the CT in their teaching from more consultation and training. It can be discovered that college English teaching in the Chinese context seems to be the severe target for lack of cultivation of CT based on the literature review. Thus, college English practitioners' perception of embedding CT in the writing teaching can be considered as a powerful motivator for improving students' CT and writing quality.

Secondly, the writing teaching should emphasize the importance of task-based writing approach and various writing tasks and interaction patterns could be designed to stimulate students' CT awareness and application.

Meanwhile, college English students should strengthen their perceptions of being an active thinker and autonomous learner, and learn to focus on their writing process and evaluate, monitor and pinpoint their weaknesses on CT especially for inference, explanation and self-regulation skills.

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# The Effects of the PORPE Method on Students' Reading Comprehension and Metacognitive Awareness

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**Abstract**—This research was conducted to ascertain: (1) whether or not the application of the PORPE method improves the students' reading comprehension and (2) whether or not the application of PORPE method improves the students' metacognitive awareness. The research method employed a quasi-experimental design. The population of this study was the second semester students at Makassar Muhammadiyah University in the 2015/2016 academic year. The population consisted of two group design and Each group consisted of 32 to 33 students. The sample was chosen by applying total sampling technique. The researcher had the students answer an essay test and take a metacognitive awareness inventory questionnaire. The research result showed that: (1) the application of the PORPE method improved the students' reading comprehension and (2) there is no effect of PORPE in regarding the students' metacognitive awareness.

**Index Terms**—PORPE, metacognitive awareness, reading comprehension

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the need for literacy growing on a global scale, reading has taken on more importance across the planet. Literacy increases people's self-esteem and creates opportunities to escape poverty (Victoria, 2012). Literacy programs promote equity when targeting populations with a history of marginalization (Victoria, 2012). The late news has been spread out by the institute of Unesco (2015) report that rates for adults and youth literacy are continuing to rise. However, it has been reported that 775 million adults still cannot read and write, and there are many countries were unable to meet the *Education for All* goal of improving adult literacy to 97% by 2015-2016 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015).

Reading is not only about decoding words, but is also about constructing meaning and understanding in order to elaborate and replace dated knowledge with newer ideas (Weaver, 2002). The goal of reading is to acquire knowledge; however, it is frequently difficult to achieve, especially for students. That is why educators and researchers now endeavor to find good strategies for reading. Hirsh and Koehler (2011), for example, state that most students in the U.S. only read at the basic level, "not at the target level" (p.34).

Lower levels of English reading also occur in Indonesia. Most students at all levels of education have difficulty reading English texts (Kachru, 2011). Hamra (2013) indicated that the Indonesian students when reading English text got poor score. In fact, many students from fresh graduate in the University cannot comprehend the reading text given. (Hamra, 2013). For students, reading is the key to improve learning outcomes in nearly all fields of study. Books or other sources such as the internet, journals, and articles are prepared in English, so the students find it difficult to acquire this knowledge (Reitz, 2014).

Many efforts have been carried out by the Indonesian government to improve the quality of English reading, such as creating Province libraries, mini libraries, and car libraries in cities around Indonesia (Ambarwati, 2015). Although these efforts are coming from an earnest need and desire to make a difference, since all of the sources are in English, the general populace is unable to benefit from them as much as they could if their English were to be better.

Based on an unpublished study by this manuscript's author, the university students surveyed in his classes demonstrated a very low English reading comprehension. In fact, their final exams for the academic year 2014/2015 showed only a 50% average in Reading. Generally, the students demonstrated several comprehension problems: 1) they could not understand the text well, 2) they misread the text by changing its meaning, 3) they misread the text by taking words and phrases out of context or 4) they did not understand the text due to lack of schematic knowledge of the reading. By experiencing these problems, the students became frustrated and disoriented.

Another factor for low English levels of students is that some students are simply not interested in learning how to read English. This problem is because they have limited proficiency in English to begin with; they come from homes where the parents' reading levels and practices are low, and/or their parents do not show reading habits to their children (Lyon, 2010). Lyon states that reading failure is a high risk for students who have disabilities in speech and language. However, Lyon (2010) adds that reading difficulty is not just a dilemma for students with disabilities, but that normally functioning students with diverse language experiences also can have problems when learning to read.

Vocabulary also influences students' reading comprehension because they often lack successful reading strategies (Glende, 2013). Typically, the only strategy students apply in their reading is the translation method, using a dictionary to translate unknown words. Consequently, the results of the students are still unsatisfactory. Many students simply do not have vocabulary and background knowledge to understand what they are reading (Baker, Et. Al, 2016). Their reading achievement can be seen from their class activities, their study evaluations, or from their final semester (Baker, Et. Al, 2016).

The problem of weak reading skills in general and weak English reading skills in particular being so serious, researchers have been proposing several solutions to help remediate this issue. According to Simpson (1996) one medium to facilitate the classroom activities that may involve students more actively in reading comprehension is by using PORPE (Predict, Organize, Rehearse, Practice, Evaluate). PORPE is one of the teaching technique that can be used for test that apply multiple choice test or even essay test which is elaborating learning outcomes, cognitive thinking, and synthesis evaluation learning.

According to Stahl (2014), PORPE is a method in studying workbook or any reading format in which the students obligate to answer the questions. The use of PORPE method maybe need longer time, but even so, it was believed one of the best strategy and method to encourage the students to read. Stahl adds PORPE is a great way which activate the students metacognitive that effective readers will be challenged to know and learn the core of reading passage. This method prepares the students to predict questions, organize or summarize key ideas, rehearse or recite aloud in front of the class, practice by answering their predicted questions and evaluate the task by themselves before collected by the lecturer (Simpson & Stahl, 1996).

The PORPE method is a medium that may improve the students' achievement in learning English, especially in reading. The PORPE method may be new for some students, but when students have the opportunity to interact with different kinds of reading methods a good thing happens such as the students will easily explore the content of reading passage (Simpson, 1996). Most importantly they have a better chance of becoming life-long learners. This method prepares for the implementation of metacognitive understanding when reading (Brown, 2007).

Metacognition of students' occurs when life presents situations that cannot be solved by learner's responses, metacognitive behavior is brought into play, in this case the students will activate the skill of planning and monitoring. Metacognition has been found to have a highly positive effect on improving learning results in different academic domains, including reading (Roebbers, Krebs & Roderer, 2014). Metcognitive skills are needed when result and achievement are not successful in reading test, therefore by applying metcognitive skill will help students successfully solve the problems of reading (Brown, 2007).

Therefore this author asked the following questions to guide this research study:

1. Does the application of the PORPE method have any significant effect on improving university students' literal, interpretative, and critical comprehension?
2. Does the application of the PORPE method have any significant effect on improving university students' metacognitive awareness?

#### A. *What Is Reading Comprehension?*

People sometimes do not understand what reading is because of the terminology describing reading as well as the theoretical underpinnings applied to reading. For example, some experts focus on phonemic awareness and decoding skills (Suggate, 2016) without much attention paid to comprehension; whereas, others place more attention on transacting with the text and making meaning from the text from the beginning of the reading process (Weaver, 2002; P Suggate, 2016; Rosenblatt, 1978).

Reading is not just a passive and receptive process, but an active and interactive process between the reader and the writer through the medium of a text (Ashton, 2010). This means that reading cannot stand apart from both the reader and what is written (Ashton, 2010). The definition tells us that in reading comprehension the success of a reader depends not only on the reader's skills of comprehending, but also on his/her experience and prior knowledge related to what is being read. Further, reading comprehension is a communication process (Cui, 2010). It involves reconstructing an author's message by using one's prior knowledge, especially the knowledge of the language (Cui, 2010).

Moreover, it is said that comprehending the reading is the dialogue that created between the reader to understand the message of the author where the reading text is the medium for them to communicate. (Grabe, 2009). Grabe adds that comprehension is an interaction process in which the information read by the reader give the meaning, and the reader should construct the meaning by themselves in order to get information.

With the development of second language reading research; however, the issues are forced to study the concepts of world literacy including its variety of aspects such as term of oral communication, aural, and digital communication. Hence, it can be concluded that reading is ultimately "making meaning" (Weaver, 2002).

There are various levels of comprehension that would include higher level of thinking. According to Burn (2011), "The terms of literal reading, interpretive reading, critical reading, and creative reading refer to the types of critical thinking that are related with reading comprehension. "(p.8). Burn (2011) divides the comprehension into four levels of skills. They are literal reading, interpretive reading, critical reading, and creative reading. Each of these skills could be explained as follows:

- a. Literal reading. Literal reading refers to the ideas and facts that are directly stated on the printed pages.
- b. Interpretative reading. Interpretative reading involves reading between the lines or making inferences.
- c. Critical reading. evaluation of the material, compare ideas which is found in the printed material with known standards conclusions about their appropriateness, and timeliness.
- d. Creative reading. the way of the author to test the reader which exclude to answer based on the text given and based on their understanding, imagination, and comprehension;

#### B. What Is PORPE?

According to Simpson (1996), one medium to facilitate the classroom activities that may involve students more actively in reading comprehension is by using PORPE (predict, organize, rehearse, practice, evaluate). In the first step of PORPE, predict, students try to grouping the kinds of the question that can be occurred in the passage and try to give positive responses. The second step of PORPE, organize, engage students in getting the information that will be answered from the text given. The third step of PORPE, rehearse, get the students in the active intercation such as to recite and self-test of the key answer written in their sticky notes. The fourth step of PORPE, practice, is the way of the learners to test their self wheather or not the answer they predicted can be recalled and to help their self practice answering the predicted questions before facing the real questions.. The last step of PORPE, evaluate, the students' ask train their selves by testing them aome predicted questions such as Do my example already enough for the whole passage? Is my answer correct, trustable, and resposible? Should we study before preparing for, plan for, monitor, and evaluate the content area text.

This method prepares students to predict some questions, organize or summarize the key ideas, rehearse or recite aloud in front of the class, practice by answering their predicted questions and evaluate their task by themselves before their work is collected by the lecturer (Simpson, 1996).

PORPE is a medium that may improve students' achievement in learning English, especially in reading, eventhough the PORPE method may be new for some students. PORPE is synergistic in buildingstudents' thinking through the processes necessary to read, study, and learn content area material (Stahl, 2014). Stahl demonstrated that PORPE can be a powerful and durable strategy in facilitating student learning. The PORPE procedure benefited developmental college students to the concepts that were not cooveratively and need time to be accepted in the long term memory (Stahl, 2014).

In another study, Stahl (2014) stated the advantages of PORPE. Specifically, PORPE helps students remember concepts over time and stimulates students to synthesize, analyze, and think about key concepts (Stahl, 2014). In both studies students who used PORPE remember significantly more concepts. PORPE is a learning strategy that can be totally teacher directed or totally student initiated. PORPE also can help high risk students increase their cognitive and metacognitive processing.

Another study conducted by Kurniawan (2011) found that therewas a significant effect using PORPE method on the reading comprehension of the second year students at SMPN 1 Bantan, Bengkalis, Indonesia. The research shows significant improvment of the t-Test result because T-table at 5% grade of significance refers to 2.04. While, in the level of significance 1% is 2.76. Therefore, it can be analyzed that Ho is higher than t table in either at 5% or 1% grade of significance. It can be concluded that  $(2.04 < -7058 > 2.76)$ . It means that there is significant efect of using PORPE Method to improve students' reading comprehension at the second year SMPN 1 Bantan, Bengkalis Regency.

Budiyanto (2011) also reported that the use of PORPE can improve the learning process of the students reading comprehension. Specifically, Budiyanto (2011) found that the students he worked with 1) had moreenthusiasm towards and were more motivated to learn English, 2) enjoyed the dynamic nature of the classroom, and 3) were more likely to express their mind freely. It can be concluded that PORPE is a systematic approach of decoding passage and one of the self assisted process which makes the learners learn their own way, classroom activity, class interaction, and can impact the result of the students outcomes significantly (Stahl, 2014).

#### C. Metacognition

Metacognition is the knowledge which refer to the cognitive processes or any factors related to it, (Flavell,1976). PORPE develops the metacognitive of the students because when students face difficulties in learning and cannot be solved by a learners therefore metacognitive action is involves to help. Metacognitive skill is needed by the learners when aptitude or attitude responses are not successful to help them when comprehending the reading passage. It was believed that in applying metacognitive skills can help the students successfully solve problems that they face when studying in the context area classroom and A metacognitive environment also encourages many things namely; 1) awareness of thinking, 2) share planning between lecturers and students, 3) discuss thinking strategies, and 4) and also reflecting the evaluation (Flavell, 1976). In creating the metacognitive environment, lecturers as facilitator should monitor and apply their knowledge in teaching and learning process, the lecturer also should deliberate metacognitive behavior to assist students becoming more careful about their own mind in reading English passage. (Flavell, 1976).

Flavell adds that metacognitive strategies are already in lecturers' repertoires and they obviously model them for learners, Problem-solving and learning strategies in all subjects provide many chances for developing the learners' metacognition.

Researchers, although diverse in their approaches, agree that these strategies embodied the essential metacognitive process necessary for college students to make meaning or sense of the world of academia (Mayer, 1996). In addition, Nist and Simpson (1996) taught students the metacognitive process of planning and evaluating. They found that students' metacognition gradually improved over time (Nist and Simpson, 1996). In this research the researcher would like to observe and study the students' metacognitive awareness by using metacognitive awareness inventory (Schraw & Dennison, 2011).

Lecturers need to trainee the students' focus on how practices can completely becoming the goals of studying, in addition to content goals, must be rediscovered and be evaluated with students in many times, so they discover that comprehending and the process of transferring knowledge improves students' learning (Shang, 2015). Shang adds in the globalization era, the obligation of teaching is to help students encourage skills which will not become stuck but continuity. Metacognition is an elegant knowledge for the globalization era, it will make the learners becoming more and more successful with new situations.

Lecturers should enlarge on their talents and their abilities as well as they can access a wealth of sources that should make a metacognitive environment that covers the improvement of good learners who are dealing with brilliant decision makers in solve the problems. Throughout their environment and social life's, student's need to be able to read many sources of knowledge that record their thinking and that will be appealed to their aptitude and metacognitive awareness.

Having analyzed the literature, I am defining reading comprehension as a complex process where the ultimate responsibility of the reader is to make meaning. Giving response to the statement above in literature review, PORPE and metacognitive awareness have a positive impact on each other. Hence, this study aims to explore the benefits of PORPE method toward reading comprehension and metacognitive awareness, seeking to observe how PORPE helps students to understand reading material more deeply (Stahl, 2014).

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

In this research, the researcher applied a quasi-experimental design with nonequivalent group design (William, 2006). Utilizing quasi-experimental with nonequivalent group designs took much less effort to study because the assignment to groups was not random. In other words, the researcher does not control assignments to groups through the mechanism of random assignment (William, 2006).

The experiment involved two groups, an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received the treatment using the PORPE method, and the researcher conducted eight meetings while the control groups received conventional teaching methods and also conducted 8 meetings where students were asked to read certain texts and then answer the questions directly. The control group is needed for comparison purposes to see whether the application of PORPE method is improving the students' reading comprehension or not in improving students' reading comprehension (Gay et al., 2006).

The participants in this research study were second semester students at Makassar Muhammadiyah University, Makassar, Indonesia during the 2015/2016 academic year. There were two classes consisting of 32 and 33 students, with a total number of participants at 65 students. The classes were selected randomly by the researcher as an experimental and control group. The researcher gave both groups a pretest and post-test.

The pretest administered prior to treatment assessed their competence of reading comprehension. The post-test measured treatment effects. The aim of this test is to find out the effectiveness of the PORPE method on the students reading comprehension and metacognitive awareness.

The researcher's main purpose of using the questionnaire was to get a deeper understanding of the students' metacognitive awareness. The questionnaire given to measure the students' metacognitive awareness is named Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) (Schraw and Denninson, 2011). The inventory consist of 52 items with 3 scores in each item where the participant answers "yes", "unclear", and "no".

## III. FINDINGS

### A. *The Development of the Students' Reading Comprehension and Metacognitive Awareness Before and After the Treatment*

The findings of the research presented below are the pretests and posttests representing the various levels of literacy comprehension: literal, interpretative, and critical. Also below are the students' reading comprehension achievement in general through the score of pretest and posttest of both groups, the experimental and the control group.

#### 1. Distribution score on literal level of comprehension

In Table 1 below are the pretest scores of the literal level of comprehension and percentage for experimental and control groups.

TABLE I.  
THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS' PRETEST SCORE ON LITERAL LEVEL

Classification	Range of Score	Experimental		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	80-100	0	0	0	0
Good	66-79	1	3	1	3
Fairly Good	56-65	9	27	9	28
Fair	46-55	11	33	5	16
Poor	0-45	12	37	17	53
Total		32	100	32	100

Most of the students in the experiment class were in variance category or their range score spread from 0 score up to 79.00 range score and there only 1 student (3%) was in good category, 9 students (27%) in fairly good category, 11 students (33%) in fair category, and the rest or 12 students (37%) were in the poor category. In the control group indicated by a shade of difference and also variance where the students' score spread in 0 up to 79.00 range score, only 1 student (3%) in good category, 9 students (28%) in fairly good category, 5 students (16%) in fair category and the rest or 17 students (53%) were in poor category. By analyzing the results above it can be concluded that students reading comprehension in terms of literal are categorized as poor.

Table 2 presents the posttest score on literal comprehension and rate percentage of the students' score for the experimental and the control groups.

TABLE II.  
THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS' POSTTEST SCORE ON LITERAL LEVEL

Classification	Range of Score	Experimental		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	80-100	5	15	0	0
Good	66-79	13	39	6	19
Fairly Good	56-65	11	33	7	22
Fair	46-55	4	12	11	34
Poor	0-45	0	0	8	25
Total		33	100	32	100

Table 2 illustrates the frequency and rate percentage of the students' scores on their literal level of reading comprehension in the posttest. From this table, it can be seen that the students' achievement in the experimental group was improving. The score of the students' tend to spread from poor to fair, fairly good to good, and good to excellent. There were 5 students (15%) in the excellent category, 13 students (39%) in the good category, 11 students (33%) in the fairly good category, 4 students (12%) in the fair category, and none of the students in the poor category.

Unlike for the control group, the students' scores were spread dominantly in poor and fair, and the fairly good and good categories. There were 6 students (19%) in the good category, 7 students (22%) in the fairly good category, 11 students (34%) in the fair category, and 8 students (25%) in poor category.

The score distribution for the experimental group and control group on the literal level in posttest showed the difference from the pretest. After the treatment conducted to both of the groups, both of them showed an improvement, but in the experimental group the application of PORPE method gave higher achievement than the conventional teaching. It also can be concluded that the application of PORPE method gave greater contribution to the students literal reading.

2. Distribution score on interpretative level of comprehension

In Table 3 are the pretest score of the interpretative level of comprehension and rate percentage of the students' score for the experimental group and the control group.

TABLE III.  
THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS' PRETEST SCORE ON INTERPRETATIVE LEVEL

Classification	Range of Score	Experimental		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	80-100	0	0	0	0
Good	66-79	4	12	3	9
Fairly Good	56-65	16	48	15	47
Fair	46-55	6	18	7	22
Poor	0-45	7	21	7	22
Total		33	100	32	100

Table 3 indicated that the students' scores in the experimental and control groups were spread in variance 0 up to 79 range score. The students' reading comprehension achievement of the experimental group on interpretative level of comprehension in posttest showed a high improvement after conducting the treatment rather than in the control group. It can be seen in table 4 below:

TABLE IV.  
THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS' POSTTEST SCORE ON INTERPRETATIVE LEVEL

Classification	Range of Score	Experimental		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	80-100	4	12	0	0
Good	66-79	11	33	5	16
Fairly Good	56-65	9	27	18	56
Fair	46-55	6	18	4	12
Poor	0-45	3	9	5	16
Total		33	100	32	100

Table 4 above indicated that there is an improvement of the students' score in the posttest, especially in the experimental group. After the treatment conducted by using the PORPE method, there were 3 students (9%) in the poor category, 6 students (18%) in fair category, 9 students (27%) in fairly good category, 11 students (33%) in good category and 4 students (12%) in excellent category. For the control group, there were 5 students (16%) in poor category, 4 students (12%) in fair category, 18 students (56%) in fairly good category, 5 students (16%) in good category and none of the students were in excellent category. The data above showed that there were different variances of the result even though the control group has also an improvement, but the experimental class has a higher improvement than control group.

### 3. Distribution score on critical level of comprehension

Table 5 presents the pretest score on critical level of comprehension and the percentage for the experimental group and the control group.

TABLE V.  
THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS' PRETEST SCORE ON CRITICAL LEVEL

Classification	Range of Score	Experimental		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	80-100	0	0	1	3
Good	66-79	2	6	7	21
Fairly Good	56-65	15	45	14	44
Fair	46-55	10	30	4	13
Poor	0-45	6	18	6	19
Total		33	100	32	100

Table 5 indicates that the students' scores in the experimental and the control groups were spread from 0 up to 100 range score, which is categorized as a variance category, the same with the students' score on literal and interpretative level.

The score distribution of the students in the experimental and the control groups in pretest students' score were varied. This means that there is no significant difference between them. The rate percentage of the students' pretest score in experimental group was not so much different than the control group.

For the students' achievement score on critical level comprehension after giving the treatment to both groups, the experimental group showed an improvement meanwhile in the control group there was not a big difference of achievement on the posttest scores.

TABLE VI.  
THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS' POSTTEST SCORE ON CRITICAL LEVEL

Classification	Range of Score	Experimental		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	80-100	2	6	2	6
Good	66-79	10	30	13	41
Fairly Good	56-65	14	42	7	21
Fair	46-55	5	15	5	16
Poor	0-45	2	6	5	16
Total		33	100	32	100

Table 6 shows that the students' posttest results for the experimental group on the critical level comprehension were improving. Two students (6%) were in excellent category, 10 students (30%) in good category, 14 students (42%) in fairly good category, 10 students (30%) in good category. This proved that some students improved their comprehension on the critical level after giving the treatment using the PORPE method.

In the control group, the data showed that the students' scores after giving the treatment were improved. Although their scores improved in the posttest, it did not show a big difference or improvement from the pretest result. The achievement of the students on the critical level of comprehension is slightly better in the experimental group by using the PORPE method rather than in the control group by using a non-PORPE method.

4. Scoring classification of students' pretest and posttest results of the experimental and the control groups

The researcher found the pretest results of the students' score in frequency and percentage for experimental group and control group as shown below.

TABLE VII  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF PRETEST SCORE

Classification	Range of Score	Experimental		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	80-100	0	0	0	0
Good	66-79	0	0	3	9
Fairly Good	56-65	12	36	12	38
Fair	46-55	17	51	12	38
Poor	0-45	4	12	5	15
Total		33	100	32	100

Table 7 showed that the students for experimental group were in variance category, 4 students (12%) in poor category, 17 students (51%) in fair category, 12 students (36%) in fairly good category and none of the students in the good category or in the excellent category.

For the control group, the data indicated that most of the students were dominantly in fair and fairly good category, 5 students (15%) in poor category, 12 students (38%) in fairly good category, 3 students (9%) in good category and none of the students in excellent category, with the results mostly the same with the experimental group. While in the experimental group, none of the students belong to the top two categories; good to the excellent categories and unlike the control group three of the students were in the good category. It can be concluded that both of the groups were dominantly in the fair and fairly good categories.

Table 8 describes the frequency and rate percentage of the students' posttest score in reading comprehension by applying PORPE method, there were different result from those who taught by using conventional way in teaching reading.

TABLE VIII.  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF POSTTEST SCORE

Classification	Range of Score	Experimental		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	80-100	3	9	0	0
Good	66-79	10	30	5	16
Fairly Good	56-65	16	48	20	62
Fair	46-55	4	12	3	9
Poor	0-45	0	0	4	12
Total		33	100	32	100

Table 8 describes the students' achievement in the experimental and the control group after the treatment and indicates a good improvement. It can be seen in the students' pretest, many of them were in poor, fair and fairly good category, none (0%) in good to excellent scores. Out of 33 students in the experimental group, there were 4 students (12%) in fair category, 16 students (48%) in fairly good category, 10 students (30%) in good category and there were 3 students (9%) in excellent category. The students' scores ranged from fair to excellent classification. The students' score in posttest increased and spread in fair to fairly good, and good to excellent categories.

In the control group, there were many changes between the pretest and posttest results on the classification and the range of the scores because most of the students in the pretest results were dominantly fair and fairly good. On the posttest, the results showed that 4 students (12%) were in the poor category, 3 students (9%) in the fair category, 20 students (62%) in the fairly good category and 5 students (16%) in the good category.

Based on the description above in the posttest results, it is clear that the students' achievement on their reading level of comprehension after conducting the treatment improved for experimental group by using PORPE method with less improvement with conventional teaching methodology for the control group.

### B. The Mean Score of The Students' Pretest and Posttest

1. The tabulation data for the students' achievement in their reading comprehension can be seen as follows:

TABLE IX.  
THE MEAN SCORE AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE STUDENTS' PRETEST AND POSTTEST.

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Pretest Experimental	53.3848	33	7.42046
	Posttest Experimental	65.5727	33	8.82271
Pair 2	Pretest Control	53.2719	32	11.02098
	Posttest Control	59.0594	32	9.48778

Table 9 showed that the total number for each group with the experimental group being 33 students and the control group 32 students. The mean score and standard deviation were shown significantly different in the pretest and posttest to both of the groups. The data was based on the computation using SPSS volume 18.0. From the data showed in Table 9, the mean score of the experimental group and the control group was mostly the same before giving the treatment. After giving the treatment, the posttest score for both groups demonstrated significant improvement.

Before the treatment was conducted, both of the experimental class and control class were given a pretest in order to know the students' achievement on their reading comprehension. The purpose of conducting the test was to find out whether both the experimental group and control group got the same level or not. The standard deviation conducted and was meant to learn how close the scores to the mean score. In table 10 above showed that the mean score of the students' pretest of the experimental group was 53.38 and the control group was 53.27, with the standard deviation 7.42 and 11.02 respectively. Table 10 above also showed that the mean score of both groups were different after the treatment. The mean score after the treatment was 65.57 for the experimental group and 59.05 for the control group. This means that the mean score of the experimental group is higher than the control group ( $65.57 > 59.05$ ) and the standard deviation for the experimental group was 8.82 and 9.48 for the control group.

2. The mean score and standard deviation of the students on the literal level of comprehension

Table 10 below shows the mean score and standard deviation on literal level between pretest and posttest for both groups, the experimental and the control group.

TABLE X.  
THE MEAN SCORE OF THE STUDENTS' PRETEST AND POSTTEST OF LITERAL COMPREHENSION

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Pretest Literal Experimental	20.1818	33	4.45644
	Posttest Literal Experimental	27.1212	33	2.94167
Pair 2	Pretest Literal Control	18.5625	32	5.66220
	Posttest Literal Control	21.6250	32	5.32644

Table 10 above indicated that there is an improvement on the literal level in each group. It can be seen on the mean score of the pretest (20.18) to posttest (27.12) for experimental group and also for the pretest (18.56) to posttest (21.62) for the control group. In fact, the mean score of experimental posttest was higher than the control group.

3. The mean score and standard deviation of the students' on interpretative level

Table 11 below shows the mean score and standard deviation on interpretative level between pretest and posttest for both groups.

TABLE XI.  
THE MEAN SCORE OF THE STUDENTS' PRETEST AND POSTTEST ON INTERPRETATIVE LEVEL

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Pretest Interpretative Experimental	27.5152	33	5.63539
	Posttest Interpretative Experimental	32.0606	33	6.54761
Pair 2	Pretest Interpretative Control	26.9375	32	5.83614
	Posttest Interpretative Control	29.1562	32	5.05524

Table 11 shows that there is also an improvement on the interpretative level in each group. It can be seen on the mean score of the pretest (27.51) to posttest (32.06) for experimental group and also for the pretest (26.93) to posttest (29.15) for the control group. It means that the mean score of the posttest was higher than for the control group. However, the control group shows a few improvements than the experimental one.

4. The mean score and standard deviation of the students on critical level

Table 12 below shows the mean score and standard deviation on critical level between pretest and posttest for both groups, experimental and control groups.



TABLE XII  
THE MEAN SCORE OF THE STUDENTS' PRETEST AND POSTTEST ON CRITICAL LEVEL

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Pretest Critical Experimental	32.3939	33	5.70054
	Posttest Critical Experimental	39.1818	33	5.02154
Pair 2	Pretest Critical Control	34.4375	32	8.28110
	Posttest Critical Control	37.8125	32	7.60491

Table 12 shows that the mean score of the pretest (32.39) to posttest (39.18) for experimental group and also for the pretest (34.43) to posttest (37.81) for the control group. It means that the improvement of posttest was higher than the control group.

5. The mean score and standard deviation of the students' metacognitive awareness

Table 13 below shows the mean score and standard deviation of the students' metacognitive awareness between pretest and posttest for both groups, experimental and control groups.

TABLE XIII.  
THE MEAN SCORE OF THE STUDENTS' PRETEST AND POSTTEST IN METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Pretest metacognitive awareness Experimental	81.3133	33	9.37233
	Posttest metacognitive awareness Experimental	82.3427	33	8.33797
Pair 2	Pretest metacognitive awareness control	34.4375	32	8.28110
	Posttest metacognitive awareness Control	3.4828E2	32	1503.95538

Table 13 shows that the mean score of the pretest (81.31) to posttest (82.34) for experimental group and also for the pretest (34.43) to posttest (3.4828) for the control group. It means that the improvement of posttest in control group was higher than the improvement of the students' in experimental group.

C. Analisis Covarian (Ancova)

The hypotheses were tested by using inferential analysis. In this case, the researcher used Ancova (analysis covariance) The data analysis technique used to determine the effect of independent variable to the dependent variable in this study is an analysis of covariance (Ancova) and the pretest score as a covariate. Before testing Ancova, first tested assumptions is including normality test using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and homogeneity of variance test data using Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances.

1. The Effect of PORPE Towards Reading Comprehension

The analisis statistic result Ancova of the students reading comprehension described clearly in the table 14 below:

TABLE XIV.  
THE EFFECT OF PORPE TOWARDS READING COMPREHENSION

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	4182.849 <sup>a</sup>	2	2091.425	72.529	.000
Intercept	748.732	1	748.732	25.965	.000
XScore	3493.626	1	3493.626	121.156	.000
PORPE	670.321	1	670.321	23.246	.000
Error	1787.816	62	28.836		
Total	258790.580	65			
Corrected Total	5970.666	64			

According to the Ancova statistic result the effect of PORPE to the students' reading comprehension can be assumed that the source of learning strategies derived p-level smaller than 0:05 alpha ( $p < 0.05$ ), with sig. 0,000. It means that  $H_0$  is stated that "There is no effect of PORPE on reading comprehension" is not accepted and the research hypothesis which stated "There is an effect of PORPE on reading comprehension" is received. So there is a significant effect of PORPE to the students' reading comprehension.

2. The effect of PORPE towards metacognitive awareness

The analisis statistic result Ancova of the students metacognitive awareness described clearly in the table 19 below:

TABLE XV.  
THE EFFECT OF PORPE TOWARDS METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1.149E6 <sup>a</sup>	2	574565.526	.508	.604
Intercept	30096.908	1	30096.908	.027	.871
XMeta	117.071	1	117.071	.000	.992
Metode	1119550.190	1	1119550.190	.990	.324
Error	7.012E7	62	1130974.889		
Total	7.423E7	65			
Corrected Total	7.127E7	64			

Based on table source above obtained p-alpha levels greater than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ) with sig. 0324. It means that  $H_0$  is stated that "There is no effect of PORPE to the students' metacognitive awareness" is accepted and the research hypothesis which stated that "There is the influence and effect of PORPE to the students' metacognitive awareness" is not accepted. So there is no significant effect on metacognitive awareness by applying PORPE method.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The description of the data collected through some tests as explained in the previous section shows that the students' reading comprehension was improved considerably. This is also empowered by the rate of the students' mean score in pretest and posttest of experimental group. The result of the mean score of pretest and posttest in experimental group was 53.38 to 65.57 while the result mean score of pretest and posttest in control group was 53.27 to 59.05.

The data in the previous section showed that the use of the PORPE method gives better effect in learning reading than the conventional way. It also can be seen from the mean score in which the mean score of the posttest of the experimental and the control group are quite different (See Table 10). The mean score of the experimental group 65.57 was higher than the control group that was 59.05 and the mean score difference was 06.52.

Although both the PORPE and the conventional method can also be used in teaching reading, and they both can increase the students' achievement, the PORPE method improves the students' reading comprehension more meaningfully and more significantly than the group conventional one. These strategies were able to change the students' reading comprehension to be better than before. So it can be inferred statistically based analysis of covariance (ancova) that the PORPE method is more effective in developing students' reading comprehension.

Based on the study above, the result of the students' answers either in the control or the experimental group before and after treatment, can be noticed that students usually do not understand the questions given of the text. They just copy one meaning from the text, and sometimes they totally missing what is the core of the question. The researcher point of view that students' reading comprehension were found some difficulties especially the meaning, the researcher summarized that they had misunderstanding also less of linguistic competence in English that affected their comprehension in reading the text. Some of my conclusions were the students has limited of vocabulary knowledge that led to not recognizing the ideas of the reading text given, even when the question was literal and factual in the text. They also were found difficulties when they interpreting the text given, which made them difficult to read critically.

This study proves that the problem that the researcher has discussed in the background section (i.e. issues with reading comprehension, etc.) still occurs however, the use of the PORPE successfully minimized the difficulties the students had with reading comprehension. The students were encouraged with the use of the mentioned strategies in their reading. Because there were so many strategies offered, the students felt free to choose which strategies will be applied for their reading activities.

Furthermore, the experimental group students gained greater autonomy in the development of their reading than the control group students. Yet, during and after the treatment period, the experimental group students were more concerned with their own activities. Through the systematic practice of PORPE is the strategy that can help the students to answer the questions in the text. Simpson (1984) stated the role of creating the questions is not all about the comprehension. Instead, learners passed the process of acquiring and generating information from the text then they take the conclusion as the answer of the passage given. In fact, students had progressively acquired the ability to monitor and control their reading comprehension and progress.

From the data showed in the pretest and posttest, the achievement of the students on their literal comprehension was increased and the data posttest also improved significantly from the distribution frequency. The mean score of the experimental group on the literal level was 20.18 in pretest to 27.12 in posttest with the differences of the mean score was 6.94 while the control group on the literal level was 18.56 to 21.62 with the differences of mean score was 3.06

The result of the students' achievement on the literal level of comprehension above indicates that the students improved their ability to recognize the literal statements in the text. The students can explicitly or directly state the information given in the text (for ex, main ideas, details, cause and effect and sequences written in the text).

On the interpretative level, the mean score of the experimental group on the posttest also increased from the pretest compared to the control group. The difference of the mean score was 4.55 with 27.51 for the pretest to 32.06 for the posttest. Similar to the control group, it also shows a little improvement with the difference of the mean score being 2.22. Unfortunately, the control group did not show a significant improvement it can be seen from the mean score of the pretests' result was 26.93 to 29.15 for the posttest.

On the interpretative level, the students gave better responses to the text given by using the instruction or guided questions of the PORPE method, especially the use of organizing and predicting the possible questions and answers. In this case, they are able to know the ideas that are not directly stated in the text. So, it will help the students in getting meanings from the text with minimally reading the text repeatedly. As Smith (2010) states that in interpretation the readers read between the lines, make connections among individuals stated ideas, make inferences, draw conclusions, read between the lines to get inferences, or implied meanings from the text.

On the critical level of comprehension through the application of the PORPE method, students are guided to read critically. They were guided to compare ideas in the text, think about the text's big idea and messages that are implied in the written text. By relating those ideas to their own experiences in their real life, it makes them find certain facts so they will be involved in logical thinking and reasoning as a part of reading critically. It can be seen from the improvement of the experimental group on critical level of comprehension where the mean score before the treatment given was 32.39 to 39.18 after the treatment, while the control group was 34.43 to 37.81.

From the result and the discussion above, it can be stated that an active reading is still needed to improve the students' reading on their level of comprehension. Based on the research result, the students have already made significant progress in reading after they are given the treatment. In addition, based on the research findings, the students' achievement taught by using the PORPE method is better than the use of a conventional way or the traditional one.

Based on the results of the covariance analysis suggest that the PORPE method can affect metacognitive awareness of students. The research findings result of the mean score of the students' metacognitive awareness in pretest and posttest of experimental group was 81.31 to 82.39 while the mean score of pretest and posttest of control group was 34.43 to 3.482. In general, metacognitive awareness of the students increased from the pretest to the posttest, but the findings in this study showed a decrease in metacognitive awareness at the individual level as measured by a questionnaire of metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) which is equal to 82 % of the 33 students in experimental group. The data also shows that the students increased around 1 % from pretest to posttest, different with the students in control group which mean score shows a high improvement.

The findings in this study is the same with the results findings of the study by Jahidin (2009) which states that there is a decrease in score of metacognitive skills of students who also measured using a questionnaire MAI a decrease of 26.85% on high academic ability students and metacognitive skills scores decreased by 28.24% the low academic ability students from 144 students. Similar research, Danial (2010) who showed a decrease in student metacognitive awareness score after treatment was given, where a decrease in the amount of 31.18% of the 93 students.

Based on the explanation above, it is known that the results of measurements of metacognitive awareness of students as measured by using the MAI inventory unrealistic when compared to measurements using a rubric. It is also caused by unrealistic metacognitive awareness measured using the MAI inventory. This finding is reinforced by Suratno (2009) who states that the measurement of metacognitive awareness by using a rubric is the best alternative.

The general view of the results of covariance analysis showed that there was no significant effect of PORPE on the student's metacognitive awareness. Results of this study were supported by research of Miranda (2008) who also showed that the interaction of learning strategies and academic ability had no effect on student metacognitive awareness. This is in contrast with the results of the study by Warouw (2009) who showed that the interaction of learning strategies and academic ability of students influenced the metacognitive abilities of students. One finding in this study was a decrease in the score of metacognitive awareness at an individual level. This is due to a lack of awareness of students in responding to the metacognitive awareness inventory using the MAI to internalize their learning strategies such as planning, monitoring, evaluating and revising learning processes. This is confirmed by the experts that the students who apply learning strategies to process information or knowledge will become independent learners (self-regulated learners). Lack of awareness of students in response to metacognitive awareness inventory was also seen with a decrease in the level of metacognitive awareness score of 44 individual samples.

The above findings suggest that the measurement of metacognitive awareness by using questionnaires metacognitive awareness inventory (MAI) cannot properly record student metacognitive awareness. This is evident from the results of the study showed that the interaction of academic ability and learning strategies and academic ability PORPE did not significantly affect student metacognitive awareness. The same argument was made by Corebima (2009) who states that during the use of MAI instrument to measure students' metacognitive awareness in about 40 classes (in elementary, junior high, high school and university in Java and outside Java) at the beginning and end of the study showed that between 30-85% of students score decreased. This fact proves that the questionnaire instrument is not appropriate for the population in the country which resulted in the recording of metacognitive awareness score of students cannot be trusted.

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous section, the researcher put forward the following conclusions:

1. The application of the PORPE method develops the students' reading comprehension more significantly with the second semester students of Muhammadiyah University of Makassar than non-PORPE method.
2. There is no significant influence on metacognitive awareness by using PORPE method. No significant differences in the average score in experimental group students. This is not in line with many reference stating that there is a tendency of the students have metacognitive awareness levels after applying the PORPE method and have a higher potential to enhance metacognitive awareness than students who are not given the PORPE or conventional method.

Nowadays, teaching is directed to the students-needs, so lecturers should be creative to manage the material and the classroom for teaching reading such as by using the PORPE method. This is meant to avoid monotonous teaching technique. The teaching of reading comprehension in terms of literal, interpretative and critical level of comprehension should be continually implemented to the students. Further researcher needs to be conducted on the effectiveness of the PORPE method, particularly for high level semester of the students. It is also strongly recommended that further research be conducted on a model of teaching PORPE and designing PORPE material or developing PORPE material.

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# L1 Language Experience and English Phonological Awareness of Chinese College Students\*

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**Abstract**—This study investigates the roles of two kinds of L1 language experience—early spoken language acquired before literacy and used as home language as well as Pinyin alphabetic knowledge—in Chinese college students’ phonological awareness (PA) in English. PA is critical to the improvement of language skills in either L1 or L2. Research on contributing factors for PA performance can provide language teachers with guidance on enhancing their students’ PA. A questionnaire was conducted to examine 408 adult participants’ home language. A Mandarin PA test, which included syllable differentiation, onset oddity, rhyme oddity and tone identification, was used to assess their Pinyin alphabetic knowledge. An English PA test was carried out to assess three levels of PA (syllable, onset-rhyme and phoneme) across four tasks (oddity, segmentation, blending and substitution). Results show that 1) these two kinds of L1 language experience exerted significant effects on adult learners’ PA in English; 2) the effects were modified by both level of PA and difficulty of task; and 3) the effects appeared weak due possibly to adult learners’ higher English proficiency. These results underscore the necessity to consider the impact of L1 language experience in both researching and training Chinese learners’ PA in English.

**Index Terms**—phonological awareness, early spoken language, pinyin, alphabetic knowledge, EFL

## I. INTRODUCTION

Phonological awareness (PA) is “an individual’s awareness of the sound structure, or phonological structure, of a spoken word” (Gillon, 2004, p. 2) and specifically denotes the ability to not only detect but analyze internal segments of words (Lieberman, Shankweiler, Fisher & Carter, 1974; Morais, Alegria, & Content 1987; Morais, Cary, Alegria & Bertelson, 1979). Based on the linguistic status hypothesis (Treiman & Zukowsik, 1996), PA is a three-level ability which includes the higher level of syllable awareness, middle level of onset-rhyme awareness and lower level of phoneme awareness. Research evidence has established PA as a potent facilitator for reading in either L1 or L2 (e.g., Lieberman, Shankweiler & Lieberman, 1989; Stanovich, 1992).

In terms of EFL learners in Mainland China, the development of PA in English fosters their English skills. Learners’ lack of PA training at various stages of English learning is a prevailing phenomenon because Chinese English teachers know little about PA’s critical role in English learning (Ding & Peng, 1998). Although recent years have witnessed considerable studies on PA in English of Chinese learners, most of these (e.g., Ding & Peng, 1998; Wang, 2010) explored the predictive role of PA in spelling and reading instead of factors facilitating PA development. It is the latter line of research that can provide Chinese English teachers with guiding principles for their design of PA teaching. This line of research (e.g., Holm & Dodd, 1996), however, was primarily conducted in an ESL learning environment and thus the findings cannot be applied to an EFL learning context. As for those few studies (e.g., Pan, 2012; Zhang & Lin, 2002; Zhu, 2014) on factors affecting Chinese EFL learners’ PA, three limitations attract attention: 1) ignoring adult learners, 2) mainly examining nonlinguistic factors and 3) investigating only one factor in a single study.

Accordingly, this study aims to investigate mixed contributing factors for all levels of PA in English to provide implications on promoting Chinese EFL learners’ PA in English. By centering on college learners, this study also intends to enhance the inclusiveness of literature on Chinese learners’ PA in English.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research on factors that may affect PA in various languages has demonstrated that language experience is a stronger factor than intelligence, age, tasks and so on. Two kinds of language experience have been found to play a major role in L1 PA improvement: early spoken language acquired prior to alphabetic literacy and alphabetic knowledge gained from reading instruction or training on alphabetic principles. PA skills in L1 developing as a result of the above language experience can then transfer to improve PA in L2.

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### A. *Early Spoken Language*

Caravolas and Bruck (1993) suggest that before literacy education, children's PA development is influenced by phonological features of their L1. Echoing them, Goswami (1999, p. 139) posits that "differences in the phonological input provided by different languages should affect the development of children's awareness of the different phonological levels". Anthony and Francis (2005, p. 256) specify these differences as a "number of determinants of the linguistic complexity of a spoken language—e.g., saliency and complexity of word structures, phoneme position, and articulatory factors". Consequently, these differences cause language-specific patterns to emerge in PA development of preliterate children speaking different languages. Evidence emanates from studies which compared English-speaking children with those speaking other languages.

Children who spoke Italian, Turkish and Greek were found to acquire better syllable awareness and phoneme awareness than children who spoke English (Cossu, Shankweiler, Liberman, Katz & Tola, 1988; Demont & Gombert, 1996; Durgunoglu & Oney, 1999). The results were attributed to the simpler syllable structure and fewer vowels in the three languages as opposed to English. On the other hand, Cheung, Chen, Lai, Wong and Hills (2001) found that English-speaking children performed significantly better on PA tasks than Cantonese-speaking ones and reasoned that the complexity of spoken English contributed to English-speaking children's better overall PA. As shown by the Caravolas & Bruck (1993) study, Czech-speaking children scored significantly higher on repetition of CC-V words, corresponding to saliency of double onsets in Czech while English-speaking children scored significantly higher on repetition of C-VCs, corresponding to saliency of C-VC structures in English. Bruck, Genesee and Caravolas (1997) reported that French-speaking children attained syllable awareness earlier but phoneme awareness later than their English counterparts, a result which is likely explained by saliency of a specific phonological unit in respective languages. These findings point to the effects of the linguistic complexity of oral language input on PA patterns of preliterate children.

Insufficient as it is, a growing body of research has been conducted exploring how early spoken language influences Chinese speakers' PA development in Mandarin due to their unique language environment. There are eight varieties of spoken Chinese, each of which consists of various dialects, with Northern Speech most spoken. Upon entry into elementary school, children are taught Mandarin, a language standard used as lingua franca in China with phonological and grammatical influence from Mandarin dialects (Sun, 2006). Chinese students usually speak their local dialects at home and Mandarin at school. With the Chinese government's "Speak Mandarin Nationwide" campaign, however, an increasing number of Chinese parents would rather choose Mandarin over their dialect as home language for fear that speaking the dialect would negatively affect their children's acquisition of Mandarin (Liu, 2011). Some Chinese researchers have shown their concerns by seeking to verify a positive effect of dialect on PA in Mandarin.

Such research has yielded mixed results. In the Chen et al. (2004) study, Cantonese-Mandarin bilingual children at grade two acquired significantly better PA in Mandarin than their Mandarin monolingual peers, but the dialect's facilitating effect did not occur to grade-four children. R. B. Li, Chen, Wang and Li (2011), on the contrary, reported that several groups of children who spoke different dialects of Min (a Chinese variety) all failed to score significantly higher than Mandarin monolinguals, but the study also found that the dialect's negative effect declined with reading instruction. Both Wang (2004) and Lin, Wang, Qian and Qiu (2011) reported a positive effect of dialect on PA in Mandarin for children of all ages who spoke Chinese varieties of Min or Hu. These conflicting findings demonstrate that the facilitating effect of dialect is not universal but selective (Bruck & Genesee, 1995), depending on possible factors such as the phonological complexity of a dialect, children's literacy level or frequency of dialect use.

Given that a dialect is the early spoken language for many Chinese students, it is of particular interest to examine how this language experience would impact their PA in English. To date, there are only two relevant studies. Zhu (2014) reported that Hu-Mandarin bilingual preschoolers performed significantly worse on differentiation tasks but better on manipulation tasks than their Mandarin monolingual peers. Xu (2015) found no correlation between Chinese college students' PA in English and their Mandarin-dialect bilingualism. Therefore, more studies are called for.

### B. *Alphabetic Knowledge*

Developmental research has provided evidence for the trajectory of different levels of PA. As Goswami and Bryant (1990) suggest, awareness of larger phonological units (syllables and rhymes) develops earlier than that of smaller phonological units (onsets and phonemes). English-speaking children have developed syllable awareness by age three (Bryant, MacLean, Bradley & Crossland, 1990) and rhyme awareness before age four (Maclean, Bryant, & Bradley, 1987), but their onset awareness develops around 5 years old (Barton, Miller & Macken, 1980) and phoneme awareness will not develop until age seven (Bruce, 1964). That is, awareness of syllables and rhymes develops independently of alphabetic literacy while awareness of onsets and phonemes develops in connection with alphabetic literacy (Liberman et al., 1974; Maclean, Bryant & Bradley, 1987; Stanovich, Cunningham & Cramer, 1984; Yopp, 1988). The reason, as theorized by Morais et al. (1987), is that reading instruction highlights the grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) of an alphabetic orthography and enhances learners' perceptions of the phonological structure at the phonemic level. Mann (1991, p. 61) extends "knowledge of an alphabetic orthography" to "experience in manipulating the internal structure of words".



The literature has seen converging evidence from studies that compared preschoolers with beginning readers (Bowey & Francis, 1991), children learning to read with different types of instruction (whole-word vs. phonics) (Bentin, Hammer & Cahan, 1991) and children with and without training on phonemic manipulation (Alegria, Pignot & Morais, 1982; Kartal, Babür & Erçetin, 2016) as well as from studies comparing adults with and without literacy problems (Morais et al., 1979; Morais, Bertelson Cary & Alegria., 1986). The results confirmed that onset and phoneme awareness, as opposed to syllable and rhyme awareness, do not develop naturally with cognitive growth, but are associated with alphabetic knowledge gained from either reading an alphabetic orthography or special training.

Alphabetic knowledge also facilitates Chinese speakers' PA in Mandarin. One written Chinese, which is Mandarin-based in phonology and logographic in orthography, is used by speakers of different Chinese varieties. Elementary children in Mainland China and Taiwan are taught to read Chinese characters using different phonetic systems, *Pinyin* or *Zhuyin fuhao*, respectively (Huang & Hanley, 1997). Cantonese-speaking children in Hong Kong are taught the sounds of Cantonese through a *look and say* method rather than an alphabetic script like *Pinyin* (Cheung, 2003; Ho & Bryant, 1997; Holm & Dodd, 1996; McBride-Chang, Bialystok, Chong & Li, 2004). Therefore, they are less sensitive to intraword phonological structures than children in Mainland China and Taiwan.

A large body of research has been conducted to explore the effects of the alphabetic knowledge based on *Pinyin* or *Zhuyin fuhao* on Chinese speakers' PA in Mandarin by comparing preliterate and beginning students (Huang & Hanley, 1997; Ren, Xu, & Zhang, 2005), children with and without alphabetic training (McBride-Chang et al., 2004) and adults with and without alphabetic knowledge (Read, Zhang, Nie & Ding, 1986). These studies have revealed no or little, if any, effect of *Pinyin* or *Zhuyin fuhao* learning on syllable and rhyme awareness, but a definitive positive effect on phoneme awareness, consistent with the conclusion of Morais et al. (1987) that the development of phoneme awareness results not from literacy in general, but from alphabetic literacy in specific.

In the research field of PA in L2 English, there is growing interest in exploring the effect of L1 alphabetic knowledge on PA in English. The rationale is Cummins' (1980, p. 179) theory of "linguistic interdependence", which postulates that the developments of L1 and L2 proficiency are interdependent, with the former accounting partially for the latter. L1 and L2 manifest the same underlying processing system, so previous learning experience in L1 will predict future learning of L2 (if there is sufficient exposure to L2). For L2 learners, PA in their L2 can be affected by the phonology and orthography of their L1 through cross-language transfer. Evidence has accumulated from studies on L2 learners of English speaking other alphabetic languages, such as Spanish (Durgunoglu, Nagy & Hancin-Bhatt, 1993), French (Comeau, Cormier, Grandmaison & Lacroix, 1999), Punjabi (Chiappe & Siegel, 1999) and Portuguese (DaFontoura & Siegel, 1995). Cross-language transfer has also been found between languages different in orthography.

In terms of Chinese English learners, some studies have established a significant correlation between PA in Mandarin and PA in English for either younger participants or adults outside Mainland China (Chien, Kao & Wei, 2008; Gottardo, Chiappe, Yan, Siegel & Gu, 2006; Luo, Chen & Geva, 2014; Nguyen-hoan & Taft, 2010). Other studies have investigated whether PA in Mandarin facilitates or hinders PA in L2 English. One line of evidence emerges from comparative studies in which Mandarin-speaking children or adults attained significantly better performances on English PA tasks than Cantonese-speaking ones because the latter group, as discussed above, lacked *Pinyin* alphabetic literacy (Holm & Dodd, 1996; Leong, Cheng & Tan, 2005; McBride-Chang et al., 2004). Another line of evidence comes from the developmental research which focused on PA development in English of L2 child learners in Mainland China. The results indicated that learners' PA in Mandarin facilitated all three levels of PA in English, suggesting a strong facilitative role of *Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge in PA in L2 English (Ren, Xu, & Zhang, 2005; Xu & Dong, 2005).

Compared with Chinese children, Chinese college students in Mainland China are under-researched. Among insufficient studies on college English learners (Pan, 2012; Pan & Gai, 2013; Tang, 2009; Wu, 2012), none explored the impact of mixed language experience on college students' PA in English. Given the gap in previous research, this study focuses on the aforesaid two kinds of language experience relevant to Chinese college learners—early spoken language and *Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge—to investigate their roles in Chinese adult learners' PA in English.

### III. METHOD

#### A. Participants

The participants were 408 non-English majors from a key university in Mainland China (average age = 20.4), all in the second semester of their second year and voluntarily participating in this study. They were all Chinese speakers; they had learned English for at least seven years since middle school and were assigned to intermediate classes by an English placement test administered upon their entry into university. They were coded in accordance with the two kinds of language experience:

1) Their early spoken language was operationalized by the participants' home language gathered from a questionnaire (see Appendix 1 for the translated English version). Those who spoke Mandarin or Mandarin dialects were included in the Mandarin group; those who spoke other dialects were in the dialect group.

2) Their *Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge was operationalized by the participants' scores on the Mandarin PA test.

#### B. Design and Materials

Two audio tests were created based on previous research (Hu, 2012; Stahl & Murray, 1994; Yopp, 1988): The Mandarin PA test was designed to assess the participants' *Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge and the English PA test their PA in English. To control for the word frequency, all items in both tests were non-words constructed based on the phonological rules of either Mandarin or English. Test items were recorded respectively by one native speaker of Mandarin and that of British English with the Cool Edit Pro software and then converted to mp3 files. The participants were given five seconds to respond to each item.

*Mandarin PA test.* We employed four tasks based on the unique phonological characteristics of Mandarin, one for a specific phonological unit. Syllable differentiation (20 items) asked the participants to determine whether two syllables in a pair of bi-syllabic words with the first tone were the same or different. For example, /bāsūi/ and /bālōu/ has the same first syllable /bā/. Onset oddity (20 items) asked the participants to detect the one with a different onset from three monosyllabic words with the same tone. For example, among /nōu/, /niāo/ and /biū/, /biū/ is the odd one. Rhyme oddity (20 items) asked the participants to judge which word had a different rhyme from three monosyllabic words with the same tone. For example, among /qōu/, /rō/ and /qō/, the odd one is /qōu/. Tone identification (24 items) asked the participants to identify the tone of a monosyllabic word. For example, /dǎ/ has the second tone.

*English PA test.* We constructed 12 subtests (see Table I) of ten items each to examine PA in English across three levels of phonological units (syllable, onset-rhyme and phoneme) and four processing skills or tasks (oddy, segmentation, blending and substitution). The four tasks assessing the same level of PA adopted items with identical syllabic structures. The items included linguistically different sounds such as sibilants, palatals or labiodentals. To distinguish between the onset and first phoneme, we only used words with double-phoneme onsets (e.g., /plid/) to assess phoneme awareness.

TABLE I.  
THE ENGLISH PA TEST AND ITS ITEM COMPOSITION BY LEVEL OF PA AND TASK (C=CONSONANT, V=VOWEL)

Level of PA	Task			
	Oddity	Segmentation	Blending	Substitution
Syllable	/bi'kɔk/—/tə'saɪk/—/tæ'met/ CV/CVC	/fə'len/—/fə'+/len/ CV/CVC	/gi'+/sæl/—/gi'sæl/ CV/CVC	/mə'pɪl/—/nə'pɪl/ CV/CVC
Onset-rhyme	/zɪk/—/tæl/—/zɛd/ (onset) /θed/—/yed/—/gen/ (rhyme) CVC	/baim/—/b'+aim/ CVC	/g'+/æk/—/gæk/ CVC	/faɪg/—/gaɪg/ (onset) /ðɜ:t/—/ðəʊg/ (rhyme) CVC
Phoneme	/plaid/—/pli:m/—/brauθ/ CCVC	/smeɪd/—/s'+/m+/ei+/d/ CCVC	/b+/l+/e+/p/—/blep/ CCVC	/snɔɪg/—/brɔɪg/ CCVC

### C. Procedure

The participants were divided into three groups at random with approximately 130 students in each guided by a different experimenter. For the Mandarin PA test, all three groups were tested simultaneously in separate computerized classrooms. The experimenter first handed out an answer sheet with a questionnaire in Chinese (see Appendix 1 for the English version) and asked the participants to answer the questionnaire regarding their demographic information and home language. Prior to each task, the experimenter provided brief instructions, two demonstration items and three practice items with correct answers. Then the experimenter played the mp3 files with test items over two loudspeakers, using the Windows Media Player on the classroom computer. The participants wrote down their answers on the answer sheet after listening to each item. The entire testing session lasted approximately 40 minutes.

The English PA test, starting one week later, required oral production and thus was administered on a one-on-one basis. The experimenter of each group tested one participant at a time in a quiet office. Prior to each subtest, the experimenter provided brief instructions, two demonstration items and three practice items with correct answers. Then the experimenter played the mp3 files with test items using the Window Media Player on the office desktop and required the participant to provide a verbal answer to each item. The answers were recorded with a Philips VTR5000 voice recorder. Each testing session lasted for 40 minutes or so and the whole data collection for approximately one month.

## IV. RESULTS

The data consisted of each participant's scores on both the Mandarin and English PA tests. For the Mandarin test, a participant's scores of all four tasks were summed up for his/her *Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge. For the English test, scores were calculated by four sets as four dependent variables: 1) a composite of scores on all 12 subtests as overall PA, 2) scores across three levels of PA, 3) scores across four tasks and 4) scores of 12 subtests. One-way ANOVAs were carried out to analyze the main effects of early spoken language on the above four dependent variables; correlation tests were performed to assess the relationship between Mandarin PA test scores and the four sets of English PA test scores and one-way linear regressions the predictive effects of the former on the latter.

### A. Early Spoken Language

As Table II shows, early spoken language had a significant effect on overall PA ( $F = 7.868; p = .005$ ): The dialect group ( $M = 73.30$ ) outscored the Mandarin group ( $M = 70.66$ ). On the level of PA, the dialect group outperformed the Mandarin group, but the two groups did not differ significantly from each other in syllable awareness ( $p = .091$ ). On the four tasks (processing skills), the dialect group performed better than the Mandarin group, but a significant effect held merely for blending and substitution. On the 12 subtests (shown in Table III), a significant effect was found for three ones: onset-rhyme oddity ( $p = .007$ ), phoneme blending ( $p = .000$ ) and syllable substitution ( $p = .008$ ).

TABLE II.  
MEANS AND STANDARD ERRORS BY OVERALL PA, LEVEL OF PA AND TASK

Subjects	Overall PA	Level of PA			Task			
		Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Phoneme	Oddity	Segmentation	Blending	Substitution
Total $n = 408$	71.76 (0.47)	26.33 (0.19)	24.31 (0.22)	21.11 (0.16)	25.90 (0.11)	22.14 (0.18)	9.90 (0.18)	13.83 (0.19)
Mandarin group $n = 239$	70.66 (0.62)	26.05 (0.26)	23.88 (0.28)	20.72 (0.21)	25.72 (0.15)	21.98 (0.25)	9.53 (0.22)	13.46 (0.25)
Dialect group $n = 169$	73.30 (0.69)	26.72 (0.28)	24.91 (0.34)	21.67 (0.25)	26.16 (0.15)	22.37 (0.25)	10.42 (0.30)	14.34 (0.29)
	$F=7.868$ $p=.005$	$F=3.873$ $p=.091$	$F=5.487$ $p=.02$	$F=8.178$ $p=.004$	$F=4.134$ $p=.043$	$F=1.137$ $p=.287$	$F=5.894$ $p=.016$	$F=5.308$ $p=.022$

TABLE III.  
MEANS AND STANDARD ERRORS BY SUBTEST

Subjects	Oddity			Segmentation			Blending			Substitution		
	Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Phoneme	Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Phoneme	Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Phoneme	Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Phoneme
Total $n = 408$	9.53 (0.43)	9.11 (0.05)	7.26 (0.07)	7.13 (0.09)	8.36 (0.10)	6.65 (0.07)	4.05 (0.08)	2.98 (0.08)	2.88 (0.07)	5.65 (0.09)	3.86 (0.10)	4.32 (0.07)
Mandarin group $n = 239$	9.51 (0.06)	9.00 (0.07)	7.22 (0.09)	7.11 (0.13)	8.27 (0.14)	6.59 (0.10)	4.03 (0.11)	2.87 (0.10)	2.64 (0.09)	5.44 (0.12)	3.74 (0.12)	4.27 (0.09)
Dialect group $n = 169$	9.56 (0.06)	9.27 (0.07)	7.33 (0.10)	7.14 (0.14)	8.49 (0.15)	6.73 (0.09)	4.07 (0.12)	3.13 (0.14)	3.23 (0.13)	5.95 (0.14)	4.03 (0.15)	4.38 (0.11)
	$F=0.351$ $p=.554$	$F=7.251$ $p=.007$	$F=0.741$ $p=.390$	$F=0.023$ $p=.879$	$F=1.055$ $p=.305$	$F=0.846$ $p=.358$	$F=0.061$ $p=.805$	$F=2.316$ $p=.129$	$F=14.741$ $p=.000$	$F=7.091$ $p=.008$	$F=2.185$ $p=.140$	$F=0.586$ $p=.444$

B. Pinyin Alphabetic Knowledge

A full correlation matrix for all of the variables is given in Tables IV and V. It is clear from Table 4 that *Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge was significantly correlated with overall PA ( $r = .25, p < .01$ ). There were significant correlations between *Pinyin* and all three levels of PA ( $r = .23$  for syllable,  $.19$  for onset-rhyme and  $.20$  for phoneme). In terms of task, *Pinyin* had the strongest correlation with substitution ( $r = .23, p < .01$ ), similar correlations with oddity ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ) and blending ( $r = .16, p < .01$ ) and the weakest one with segmentation ( $r = .12, p < .05$ ). Among 12 subtests (see Table 5), no significant correlations existed between *Pinyin* and phoneme oddity ( $r = .04$ ), onset-rhyme segmentation ( $r = .09$ ) and phoneme segmentation ( $r = .03$ ). A weak correlation existed between *Pinyin* and syllable segmentation ( $r = .11$ ), syllable blending ( $r = .10$ ) and onset-rhyme blending ( $r = .11$ ). A comparatively stronger correlation held for syllable oddity ( $r = .16$ ), onset-rhyme oddity ( $r = .13$ ), phoneme blending ( $r = .14$ ), syllable substitution ( $r = .13$ ), onset-rhyme substitution ( $r = .17$ ) and phoneme substitution ( $r = .24$ ). Taken together, the correlations between PA in Mandarin and four sets of scores on English PA were weak.

TABLE IV.  
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PINYIN SCORES AND ENGLISH PA TEST SCORES BY OVERALL PA, LEVEL OF PA AND TASK

	Overall PA	Level of PA			Task			
		syllable	Onset-rhyme	Phoneme	Oddity	Segmentation	Blending	Substitution
<i>Pinyin</i>	.25**	.23**	.19**	.20**	.15**	.12*	.16**	.23**

\*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$

TABLE V.  
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PINYIN SCORES AND ENGLISH PA TEST SCORES BY SUBTEST

	Oddity			Segmentation			Blending			Substitution		
	Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Pho- -neme	Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Pho- -neme	Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Pho- -neme	Syllable	Onset-rhyme	Pho- -neme
<i>Pinyin</i>	.16**	.13**	.04	.11*	.09	.03	.10*	.11*	.14**	.13**	.17**	.24**

\*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$

The results from regression analyses are shown in Table VI. *Pinyin* significantly predicted overall PA ( $p = .000$ ) but accounted for merely 6% of the variance. *Pinyin* also significantly predicted all three levels of PA (all  $p = .000$ ), but only accounted for 5.1% of the variance for syllable, 3.5% for onset-rhyme and 3.7% for phoneme. Among the four tasks, *Pinyin* predicted substitution the most ( $R^2 = 0.052$ ,  $p = .000$ ), approximately 2% for both blending ( $R^2 = 0.024$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and oddity ( $R^2 = 0.019$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and segmentation ( $R^2 = 0.014$ ,  $p = .018$ ) the least. Among the 12 subtests, *Pinyin* failed to significantly predict phoneme oddity ( $R^2 = 0.002$ ,  $p = .391$ ) for oddity; so did *Pinyin* two of the three segmentation subtests: onset-rhyme segmentation ( $R^2 = 0.008$ ,  $p = .076$ ) and phoneme segmentation ( $R^2 = 0.001$ ,  $p = .494$ ). *Pinyin* significantly predicted all blending and substitution subtests, but explained more variance for substitution (ranging from 1.8% to 5.7%) than for blending (ranging from 1.1% to 2%). Echoing the results of correlation analyses, *Pinyin* was a significant but weak predictor of PA in English.

TABLE VI  
SUMMARY OF REGRESSIONS FOR PREDICTING PA IN ENGLISH FROM PINYIN ALPHABETIC KNOWLEDGE BY OVERALL PA, LEVEL OF PA, TASK AND SUBTEST

		<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	$R^2$	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	
Overall PA		.317	.250	5.192	.060	26.961	.000***	
Level o PA	Syllable	.118	.226	4.671	.051	21.818	.000***	
	Onset-rhyme	.110	.186	3.820	.035	14.591	.000***	
	Phoneme	.088	.197	4.058	.037	16.471	.000***	
Task	Oddity	.043	.148	3.010	.019	9.060	.003**	
	Segmentation	.057	.117	2.383	.014	5.680	.018*	
	Blending	.077	.155	3.159	.024	9.982	.002**	
	Substitution	.120	.233	4.817	.052	23.201	.000***	
Subtest	Oddity	Syllable	.019	.160	3.263	.026	10.645	.001**
		Onset-rhyme	.017	.128	2.598	.016	6.749	.010*
		Phoneme	.008	.043	.860	.002	.739	.391
	Segmentation	Syllable	.027	.107	2.171	.011	4.713	.031*
		Onset-rhyme	.025	.088	1.777	.008	3.158	.076
		Phoneme	.007	.034	.685	.001	.469	.494
	Blending	Syllable	.023	.103	2.085	.011	4.346	.038*
		Onset-rhyme	.025	.110	2.235	.012	4.994	.026*
		Phoneme	.029	.141	2.861	.020	8.183	.004**
	Substitution	Syllable	.034	.134	2.725	.018	7.426	.007**
		Onset-rhyme	.043	.166	3.391	.028	11.499	.001**
		Phoneme	.045	.239	4.953	.057	24.528	.000***

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. Early Spoken Language and English PA Performance

The dialect group performed better on all measures than the Mandarin group, suggesting an advantage of dialect. This result replicates the finding with speakers of different languages (e.g., Caravolas & Bruck, 1993; Cheung et al., 2001; Cossu et al., 1988), confirming an influence of early spoken language on PA performance. This result, along with previous research on PA in Mandarin (Lin et al., 2009; Wang, 2006), indicates that speaking a dialect does not hinder Chinese speakers' PA in either Mandarin or English. The ability to speak more than one variety of language enhances PA because multi-language experience offers children "contrastive linguistic instruction" which enables them to compare and segment phonological structures of a language better than monolingual children (Bruck & Genesee, 1995, p. 307). The current study reveals that the positive impact of dialect also holds for adult participants.

It is worth noticing that early spoken language failed to significantly affect oddity and segmentation which outscored blending and substitution as well as syllable awareness which scored higher than onset-rhyme and phoneme awareness (see Table II). Zhu (2014) found that bi-dialectal children outperformed Mandarin monolinguals on the difficult task, but not on the easy one. The findings of the current study extend the Zhu (2014) study by demonstrating that the effect of dialect hinges on both task and level of PA. Tasks with higher difficulty or awareness of smaller phonological units (e.g., phoneme) require more explicit perceptive and analytic skills, thus entailing more aid from facilitative factors such as dialect.

The above findings may explain why dialect significantly affected phoneme blending among 12 subtests where both level of PA and task interplay. Phoneme is the smallest phonological unit and blending scored the lowest among four tasks. However, it does not explain why dialect also significantly affected the other two subtests: syllable substitution

and onset-rhyme oddity which scored comparatively higher than other tests. Therefore, the findings may be random and more research is needed on how level of PA and task (processing skill) interact with each other to affect the role of dialect in English PA.

### B. Pinyin Alphabetic Knowledge and English PA Performance

*Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge was shown to be a significant predictor of PA in English, thus lending more support to Cummin's (1980) theory of L1-L2 interdependence. The result replicates the finding of previous research on both children (Chien et al., 2008; Ren et al., 2005; Xu & Dong, 2005) and adults (Holm & Dodd, 1996), suggesting transferability of decoding skills from L1 to L2 regardless of difference in orthography. The phonological structure of *Pinyin* is simpler than that of English. There are four syllable structures in Mandarin: V, CV, VC and CVC (Li & Thompson, 1981). The two final consonants, /n/ and /ng/, always go with vowels (e.g., /en/, /eng/, /in/, /ing/). The VC structure (say, /in/) is taught as one unit instead of a combination of one vowel /i/ and one consonant /n/. Mandarin has perfect grapheme-phoneme correspondence whereas English has a deep orthography (Chen, Xu, Nguyen, Hong & Wang, 2010, p. 713). Despite these differences, consonants and rhymes in *Pinyin* are similar to those of English, syllable structures can find equivalents in English and tones may be deemed as equivalent to stress in English (Zhang & Lin, 2002). These similarities may explain why phonological processing skills acquired in Mandarin can transfer to boost PA in English. Another plausible explanation could be the notion of Durgunoglu, Nagy and Hancin-Bhatt (1993, p. 462) that since similar underlying processing mechanisms are employed for PA in different languages, such "metalinguistic awareness need not be language specific".

The above finding complements previous studies on Chinese children (Chien et al., 2008; Ren et al., 2005; Xu & Dong, 2005) by indicating that the transfer effect from PA in Mandarin to PA in English also holds for adult learners. Previous research on English L1 learners (e.g., Liberman et al., 1974; Yopp, 1988) has established that syllable awareness and rhyme awareness develop out of the impact of alphabetic knowledge. The current study, contrarily, yields the finding that the predictive effect of *Pinyin* occurred to all levels of PA, thus corroborating an impact of L1 alphabetic knowledge on L2 English PA. However, it cannot be ignored that either the correlations between *Pinyin* and English PA performance or the predictive effects of the former on the latter are rather weak compared with previous studies on Chinese child learners of English (Chien et al., 2008; Ren et al., 2005; Xu & Dong, 2005). Could it be that the effect of L1 transfer declines with the improvement of English proficiency? The participants in the current study were adults in a key university who had been learning English for at least 7 years. As Corder (1979) maintains, L2 learners could use their L1 knowledge as a learner strategy to make up for their insufficient L2 knowledge. When they have difficulty communicating their ideas, they would borrow from their L1. Hence, L2 learners resort more to their L1 at the earlier learning stage than later.

In addition, the measures which *Pinyin* failed to significantly predict include one oddity subtest, two segmentation subtests and none of blending and substitution subtests. This result confirms Lewkowicz's (1980) proposal that a precise assessment of PA should be conducted across both level of PA and task (processing skill). Most of previous studies (e.g., Chien et al., 2008; Pan, 2012), nonetheless, tested three levels of PA using dissimilar tasks, thus ignoring differential effects of the same task on different levels of PA. Our study, on the contrary, designed the same four tasks for each level of PA; therefore, the aforesaid result points to the interplay of language experience with difficulty of task. Further analyses indicated that these four tasks (see Table 2) were ranked, according to the difficulty level measured by mean scores, as oddity (25.90) < segmentation (22.14) < substitution (13.83) < blending (9.90). It follows that the predictive effect of *Pinyin* might vary with the difficulty of these tasks. This finding can explain why *Pinyin* scores did significantly predict all subtests for the most two difficult tasks (substitution and blending), but not all for the two easier tasks (oddity and substitution).

An interesting finding is that *Pinyin* had the closest relationship with syllable awareness, but previous research (e.g., Bryant et al., 1990) showed almost no relationship between PA and syllable awareness of native speakers. In terms of Chinese speakers, research (e.g., Gottardo et al., 2006; Xu & Dong, 2005) revealed mixed results. A possible explanation, as Bialystok, McBride-Chang and Luk (2005) argue, is that what and how much transfers from L1 to L2 depend on the L1/L2 pair. Based on this theory, the phonological structure of *Pinyin* is typical of syllable combinations; this language-specific pattern in Mandarin may cause Chinese speakers to develop a strong syllable awareness which can be transferred to boost the same PA skill in their L2 English.

With both kinds of language experience considered, the results manifest that PA in English was facilitated by both dialect and *Pinyin* Alphabetic knowledge. Learning *Pinyin* shapes decoding skills PA requires whereas speaking more dialects enhances such skills. PA in English is directly related to a command of intraword structures acquired through alphabetic literacy or special training specific to English. Its shortage can be offset by higher English proficiency which promotes such a command, though. If English proficiency is insufficient, L1 alphabetic knowledge entrenched in Chinese students will transfer to help L2 learners' PA performance. If English proficiency is sufficient, conversely, this transfer effect from L1 will atrophy as happened in our study. Taken together, these two variables are conducive but not essential to Chinese college students' PA in English.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The current study has found that two kinds of language experience played an important part in Chinese college students' PA in English and that their effects were mediated by level of PA and difficulty of task. Theoretically, these findings add to our understanding in two aspects. For one thing, PA performance in L2 results from mixed factors involving either L2 or L1 learning experience, which should not be separately examined. For another, effects of a factor vary with both the processing skill of a task and the phonological level the task measures. This study thus suggests the necessity for researchers to assess all levels of PA across various tasks to gain a complete and more accurate understanding of PA skills.

This study has also demonstrated that L1 language experience, be it dialect or *Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge, boosted Chinese learners' English PA even in adulthood. Pedagogically, the finding provides insights for Chinese English teachers at different stages, esp. at college level, to develop PA teaching programs, which highlight the GPC rule in English and meanwhile take Chinese experience into consideration by clarifying the similarities in phonology between these two languages to trigger a positive transfer. Such programs also need to consider level of PA and difficulty of task to develop learners' PA across phonological unit and processing skill.

This study, nonetheless, has found weak transfer effects from *Pinyin* alphabetic knowledge which might be accounted for by the comparatively higher English proficiency of the adult participants. Therefore, future studies are called for to investigate how English proficiency would interact with L1 language experience to impact PA in English of Chinese English learners.

#### APPENDIX

Questionnaire in English—Please answer the following questions before the test:

1. Your age\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Your home town \_\_\_\_\_ and home language \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Other Chinese languages you can speak fluently\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Years of learning English\_\_\_\_\_.

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# Pre-service EFL Teachers' Expectations, Needs, and Challenges in a Language Learning and Technology Course

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**Abstract**—This study contributes to and expands the existing body of knowledge on the subject by examining the needs, expectations, and challenges by pre-service English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in a language learning and technology (LL&T) course. This study was conducted in a Bachelor of Arts program at a Saudi university. Research results are based on a qualitative survey utilizing open-ended questions. The purposes of the questionnaire were to explore instructor: Expectations, needs, experiences, preferred technology, challenges, and suggestions. The survey sample size was 79 pre-service EFL teachers, and the survey period spanned two consecutive semesters. The results of the research indicate that each of the foregoing are important factors in the quality of technology-based pre-service EFL teachers training courses. See *supra*. The study also suggests that several important issues might easily be overlooked in course syllabus development and material usage.

**Index Terms**—language learning and technology, pre-service teacher perspectives, EFL teacher education, educational technology course, language teaching with technology

## I. INTRODUCTION

The subject of this paper is language learning and technology (LL&T) as it is related to EFL pre-service teachers in a Saudi university. This course introduces the pre-service teachers to educating EFL students using various forms of technology. Although many articles have been published in the field of LL&T, most of the studies involve language learning survey participants that are currently enrolled in traditional English language classes. That is the students are in a traditional classroom with a live teacher or instructor. These studies can be classified into three types: 1. Effectiveness (The effects of technologies on language learner linguistic achievement), 2. Attitude (Language student attitudes toward technologies), and 3. Functions (How technologies can assist the teaching processes) (Alhamami, 2018).

As shown above, the number of categories in relevant studies is quite limited. There are a plethora of technologically based language learning courses for language students. However, there is a dearth of courses that use modern technologies designed for the express purpose of training pre-service teachers in LL&T. The empirical evidence indicates that most EFL teacher training in this discipline is either *ad hoc* or self-taught.

Unsurprisingly, there is a limited supply of academic research available on the subject. It is unclear whether the lack of studies is a primary cause of the dearth of research material available or vice versa. Perhaps it is a matter of mixed causation; we can only speculate at this point. Irrespective of the correlation/causation dichotomy, one issue remains patent and manifest – EFL pre-service teachers who are taking the LL&T course generally need guidance and assistance in developing course materials and conducting successful classes and training sessions for their future students. In determining how to best serve these needs, the authors herein have solicited information and feedback from 79 pre-service EFL teachers. This feedback was in the form of an open-ended questionnaire that was solicited over the course of two semesters.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

We have already established that special courses about LL&T should be included in the training and development of pre-service EFL teachers-in-training. The fundamental purposes of such courses are to raise awareness about the necessity of integrating modern technologies in language classrooms and assisting pre-service teachers in becoming proficient with said technologies. Koçoğlu (2009) examined the technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPCK) in pre-service EFL teachers enrolled in the computer-assisted LL&T course in Turkey. The author also found that participants developed TPCK in various areas. They included the degrees to which

teachers understood the technologies and their applications to language learners, knowledge of instructional strategies, knowledge of student learning methods, and technology and materials integration into coursework.

In an empirical study from China, Dong, Chai, Sang, Koh, and Tsai (2015) used TPCK as a theoretical framework to survey 390 pre-service teachers and 394 in-service teachers including the seven factors of TPCK. Based on the study, they found that there is a statistically significant difference between pre-service and in-service teachers in their levels of knowledge and confidence in the subject matter. The in-service teachers are generally more competent and confident than the pre-service teachers.

The development of an effective pre-service teacher course first requires a careful and competent analysis of learner needs. Courses that do not adequately meet learner needs and expectations unsurprisingly fail to produce favourable outcomes (Long, 2005). Learner needs and expectations should always be issues that are at the top of the mental awareness of course curriculum designers and syllabus writers. The limited research available does at least show a correlation between good pre-service training programs and in-service educational success. Satar and Akcan (2018) investigated the participation, interaction patterns, and social presence levels of pre-service EFL teachers in online communication. They found that online course tutoring skills and social presence improve pre-service EFL teacher online participation skills. In addition, the pre-service coursework correlated with continuous improvement and increased participation in EFL learning.

As with any developing technology, learner/user attitude towards that technology has a big impact on its acceptance. Oftentimes, potential users of new instructional technologies are sceptical and/or fearful of new teaching tools and methods. Understanding the prevailing pre-service teacher attitudes toward technologies can help manage expectations, alleviate anxieties, and promote an active learning environment. Baföz (2016) explored pre-service EFL teacher attitudes toward language learning through social media. The researcher distributed a questionnaire among 120 pre-service EFL teachers in a Turkish university. The study concluded that social media could be an effective means for language learning. Presumably, pre-service teachers are accepting of using social media as a teaching tool because most are already users of social media platforms and are comfortable with the technology.

Yüksel and Kavanoz (2011) investigated the attitudes of 200 pre-service EFL teachers toward technology. They utilised a twelve-item, five-point Likert scale questionnaire in a Turkish university. The survey explored attitudes toward instructional technologies based on two independent variables – academic background and gender. The study concluded that male participants have a more positive attitude toward using technology than their female counterparts. Also, the study did not show a statistically significant difference in results based on university type and subject matter.

Currently, there is no uniformity between pre-service teacher training programs and the actual technologies implemented among many different language schools. Merc (2015) distributed a questionnaire among 86 pre-service EFL teachers in Turkey and conducted 12 interviews with selected participants. The researcher found that many schools were not sufficiently prepared for a technologically based pre-service EFL teacher curriculum. Some schools simply did not have access to technology. Also in many cases, pre-service EFL teaching training was deficient. Ziad (2016) echoed Merc's findings. Ziad found that many middle and secondary school educators in Morocco have limited access to the technologies in the classroom. In addition, the researcher found that implementation of the use of education technologies was inconsistent in scope and purpose.

Another important factor in implementing technology-based education is user experience with instructional technologies. Firat and Serpil (2017) investigated the Internet use of 789 distance and on-campus pre-service teachers of language and other disciplines. The study concluded that pre-service foreign language teachers exhibit a moderate level of information and communication technology usage in comparison to other similarly situated teaching groups not in language-related fields.

### III. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

#### A. *Issues*

A review of the existing research indicates that previous studies cannot be considered as conclusive because they do not address the underlying pre-service EFL teacher beliefs about technology integration into LL&T coursework. See Literature Review Section, *supra*. This conclusion is well-founded notwithstanding the limited availability of published research on the subject. See *Id.*, Introduction Section, *supra*. Of note, a survey of a wide variety of existing Bachelor of Arts programs shows that there is a minimal number of LL&T course offered to pre-service EFL instructors.

Most of the existing research, by and large, is from China and Turkey. These issues have not been explored by and within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – until now. Of course, competent research on the subject will be both relevant and valuable to educational institutions within the Kingdom. In addition, the international community will greatly benefit from perspectives in Saudi Arabia.

Again the amount of research material currently available is limited. See, Introduction Section, *supra*. It is also worth noting that most of the existing studies are quantitative in nature. While helpful, it would be most valuable to

analyse qualitative results. As such, this study will employ and focus on open-ended questions allowing for detailed, expressive responses.

A penultimate issue is the current applicability of the scant existing research. Technology, especially in relation to computer-assisted language learning, develops at a breakneck pace. The speed of development has far exceeded the academic community's research and understanding of the issues concerning technology learning. Also, pre-service EFL instructor attitudes and beliefs towards technology have likely evolved over time. This is especially significant given the rise of social media as a means of communication and learning over the last several years. As such, much of the data is stale and of unknown value in the current environment. That being said, one of the purposes of this study is to explore the issues given the technological developments occurring since the publication of the existing materials.

#### *B. Research Questions*

- Q1. What are the expectations of pre-service EFL teachers in the LL&T course?
- Q2. What are the needs of pre-service EFL teachers in the LL&T course?
- Q3. What are the experiences of pre-service teachers in learning languages using technology?
- Q4. What technologies do pre-service teachers prefer to use?
- Q5. What are the challenges that pre-service EFL teachers in the LL&T course?
- Q6. What do pre-service EFL teachers suggest to improve LL&T courses?

### IV. METHODOLOGY

#### *A. Context*

The study was conducted in a Bachelor of Arts in English program at a public university in Saudi Arabia. The medium of instruction was English. The program was designed to teach students English language skills in the first two years. They include: EFL Reading I, II, and III; EFL Writing I, II, and III; EFL Listening and Speaking I, II, and III; EFL Grammar I, II, and III; EFL Vocabulary Building I and II; and Study Skills. During the next two years, students take courses in four disciplines: Theoretical Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Literature, and Arabic-English Translation. Students study a variety of subjects including: Syntax, Morphology, Phonetics, Phonology, Applied Linguistics I and II, LL&T, Drama, Novel, Short Story, Poetry, and Translation I, II, and III. All of the courses in the plan are core courses, and no optional paths or tracks are available. The instructors are from different countries and have various academic backgrounds. The instructors range in rank from teaching assistant to full professor based on qualifications and experience.

#### *B. Instruments*

Data collection involved an open-ended questionnaire in order to glean qualitative survey results to expand upon prior research that was more quantitative in nature. The questionnaire consisted of six questions, each of which focused on a particular research subject. The first question concerned each participant expectations about the LL&T course. The second question addressed each respondent's needs in an LL&T course. The third question asked each respondent to detail their experiences in technology and language learning. The fourth question asked respondents to state their preferred technologies to learn and teach in the classroom. The fifth question asked participants to elucidate as to specific challenges they have faced and might face in LL&T courses. The final question asked the respondents for suggestions on ways to improve the LL&T course for EFL learners and expectations for EFL teachers. Appendix A shows the questions in Arabic and the English translation.

#### *C. Procedural History*

The researchers designed the questionnaire in Arabic because it is the native language of the participants. This allowed the participants to fully express their opinions without the added complication of utilizing a non-native language. The researchers distributed the questionnaire to all students enrolled in LL&T during the summer semester. The researchers analyzed the participant responses and concluded that the questionnaire could be improved.

Subsequently, the researchers modified the questionnaire based on the initial responses and re-distributed the modified survey in the fall of that same year. The modifications were not substantive; some of the question language was clarified to elicit as detailed responses as possible.

It is worth noting that the authors took great care to ensure that standard ethical procedures were followed at all times. On numerous occasions, the participants were reminded that their involvement was strictly voluntary and that they would suffer no adverse consequences for failing to participate. They were also repeatedly advised that they could withdraw from the study at any time with or without cause. Participants were also guaranteed anonymity so that they could express their views and opinions freely.

#### *D. Participant Overview*

The study plan mandates that students take the LL&T course in their sixth semester out of eight total semesters. Therefore, these students are well on their way towards earning their degrees in English. All of the subject students are native Arabic speakers, and the group is comprised mainly of Saudi nationals. At this level in the course of study, students are expected to be near fluent in the target language.

In the LL&T course, there were separate sections averaging 32 students per class. The questionnaire was distributed to every student in each sections. The response rate to the survey was high. However, some students did not complete the questionnaire due to absence or the student voluntary dropping the class. A total of 79 pre-service EFL teacher-students successfully completed the questionnaire over the course of two semesters.

## V. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The research was compiled and rigorously analysed. Participant responses were reviewed several times for clarity and internal consistency. Each line was then assigned a discreet code. Individual codes were then grouped into research focus areas. The code groups and individual data points were then correlated into major factors affecting pre-service EFL teacher training. This analysis procedure enabled the researchers to label and connect concepts, and from this, identify the major factors reviewed in detail later in this study. The following section presents the results that are classified into six major categories.

### A. First Category: Expectations of Pre-service EFL Instructors in the LL&T Course

After the coded factors in the first question were analyzed, two major themes emerged. The first theme is referred to as 'expected to know'. This relates to certain expectations related to subject knowledge. These include: Vocabulary words and terms related to technology, the advantages and disadvantages of technology and language learning, the importance of technology and education, the history of instructional technology, and the appropriate and effective use of technology. The participants overwhelmingly responded that each of the foregoing is important to know in the LL&T environment.

The second theme is referred to as 'application'. This concerns a variety of expectations including: Using different online and other technologies in learning management systems, knowing different teaching methods using technologies, understanding and utilizing effective communication techniques in online language education, strategies for procuring additional instructional technologies that can be used in the classroom, and simplifying the use of technologies for language learners and teachers. Figure 1 shows that this respondent anticipated that the course would be more theoretical in nature and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of using technology in EFL classrooms.

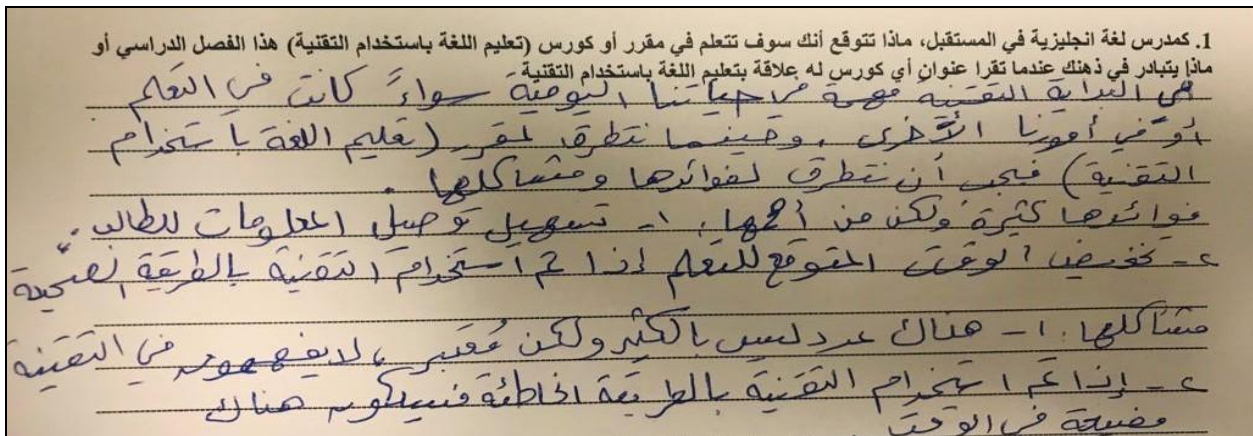


Figure 1

### B. Second Category: Needs of Pre-service EFL Instructors in the LL&T Course

The second category deals with the needs of the language teachers in EFL courses that use technology. These needs can be organized into three distinct classes: Knowledge, motivation, and application. Each of these classifications involves several factors that are discussed in detail below.

"Knowledge" refers to the pre-service EFL teachers' proficiency in the target language and accompanied technologies. These can be further described using four discreet factors. First, is the need for the instructor to be well-versed in all aspects of the target language including listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The second factor is the need for the teacher to thoroughly understand the advantages, disadvantages, capabilities, and limitations of the various instructional technologies. The third factor is the requirement for the instructor to have a working knowledge of the history of technological developments in education. This will have predictive value as the technology changes and evolves. The final factor is the teacher's ability to stay current with technological developments and the latest teaching methods.

“Motivation”, as referred to in this paper, involves the pre-service EFL teachers’ enthusiasm for teaching and further professional development using technology. Again, there are several related factors. The first of which is that a teacher must have a genuine passion for the target language. Students can always tell whether a teacher is earnestly excited about the material. Zeal for the language will ensure a more productive learning environment. Next, a teacher must be competent and confident with respect to the use of the technologies employed in the classroom. Inability to use the technology seamlessly leads to confusion and frustration for both the teacher and student.

“Application” refers to the teachers’ ability to marry prowess in the language with the ability to work the technology so that the students actually benefit from the teacher’s efforts. First, instructors must become efficient in the use of technologies available in the classroom. For instance, if iPads are used in the class, the instructor should be very comfortable navigating through the different functions, programs, and applications. See Figure 2 showing one participant’s comments regarding this issue, *infra*. Another factor involves problem-solving. That is, teachers must have a practical as well as theoretical knowledge about the workings of the various instructional technologies. This will permit smooth instruction and also enable teachers to help any students struggling with the technologies. As such, another important factor is encouraging teachers to participate in selecting the appropriate technologies for use in the classroom. Finally, teachers should know how to avoid the most common mistakes of using technology and be able to rectify most other technology-related issues without further assistance.

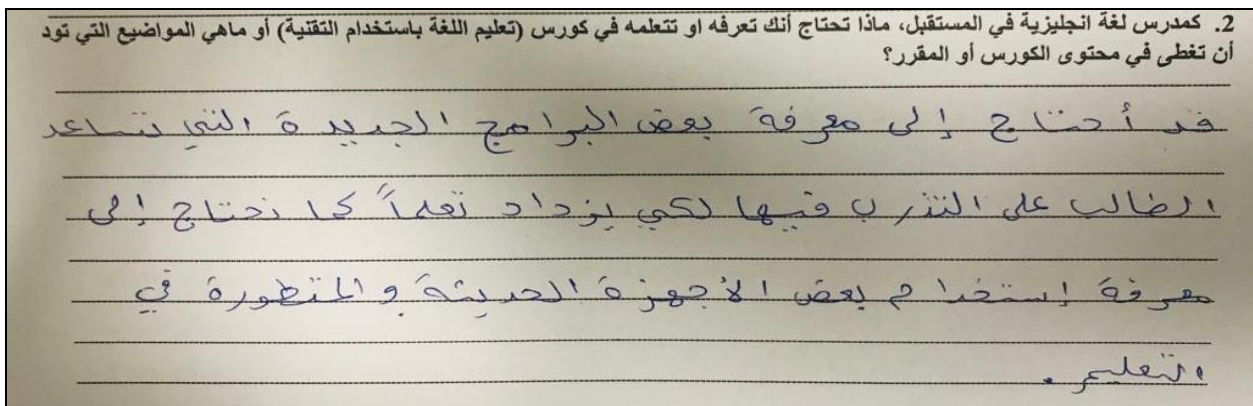


Figure 2

### C. Third Category: Experiences of Pre-service EFL Instructors Before Joining the LL&T Course

The third category focuses on the pre-service EFL teacher language learning experiences prior to enrolling in an LL&T course. Their experience in using technology in learning can be broken down into three main classifications: Common software/applications, social media, and translation software. Almost every pre-service EFL teacher has extensive experience using smartphone application and or common software on tablet/laptop/desktop computer such as Microsoft Office. Also, most of the pre-service EFL teachers have at least some experience using software based on social media platforms, email, and programs for language translation such as Google Translate. Apart from these main categories, pre-service EFL teachers also generally use a variety of electronic media such as websites, YouTube, chat programs, and electronic books, respectively. Figure 3 shows that this respondent indicates that most of his language learning experiences using technology are via mobile phones. The respondent maintains that he was able to improve his speaking and pronunciation skills using a mobile phone. It is worth noting that, in addition to software/applications, hardware is also a factor. Devices vary significantly in form and function. The pre-service EFL teachers experience with various types of devices is part of their experience and therefore influences teaching with technology.

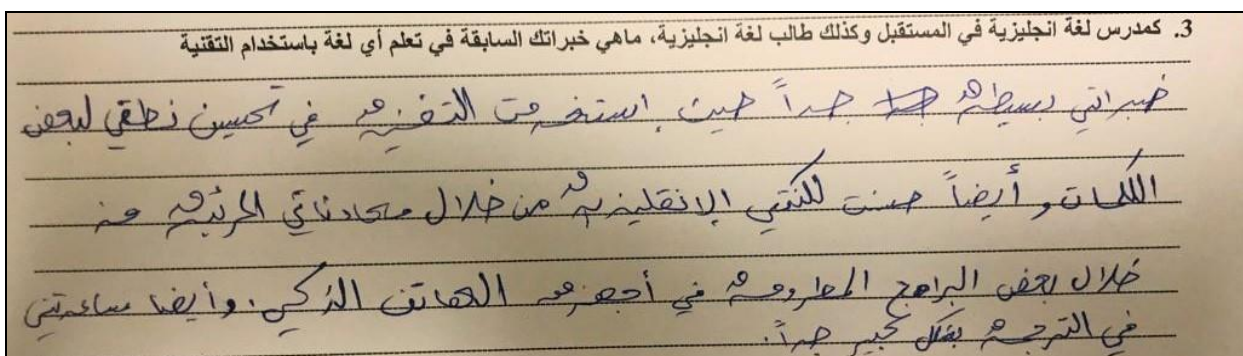


Figure 3

#### D. Fourth Category: Preferred Technologies by Pre-service EFL Instructors in the LL&T Course

The subject of the fourth category is the preferred technologies used in the LL&T course. The data evaluation indicates distinct preferences for certain technologies as more fully set forth below. The participants overwhelmingly favour recording classes. The respondents also show a distinct preference for using computers (laptops/iPads/tablets) to facilitate learning. A significant number of participants utilise educational websites and social media platforms as part of the teaching process. Note that more traditional technologies and methods are still preferred to varying degrees. Many participants favour older technologies such as projectors used in conjunction with traditional face-to-face instruction. This is illustrated as per Figure 4 in which the participant stressed he preferred overhead projectors. He postulated that this older technology saves time and encourages students to pay attention.

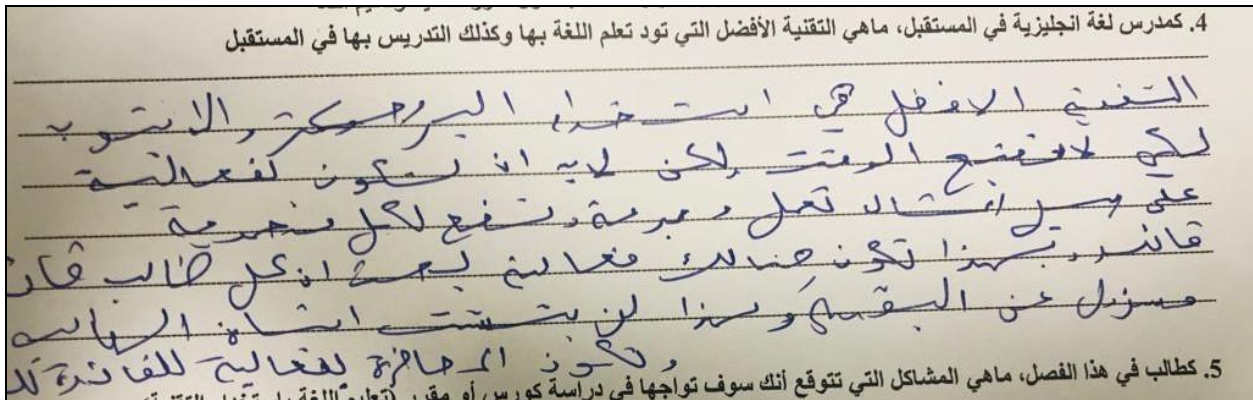


Figure 4

#### E. Fifth Category: Challenges of Pre-service EFL Instructors in the LL&T Course

There are numerous inherent obstacles and challenges the Pre-service EFL teachers must conquer in order to succeed. Of course, as English is the non-native language, a high degree of proficiency in the target language is challenging to maintain. A second major obstacle is being unfamiliar with the instructional technologies used in the classroom. Pre-service EFL teachers oftentimes have little or no control of the technology being used. A related issue is that a particular school may not have the resources to adopt specific technologies. As shown in Figure 5 *infra.*, this respondent expresses concern about using and training on certain devices. He acknowledges that, due to cost considerations, certain tools may not be readily available in the classrooms. Also, teacher/student resistance to the utilization of newer technologies can be a factor. Class motivation may be impacted when the technologies are not embraced by all stakeholders.

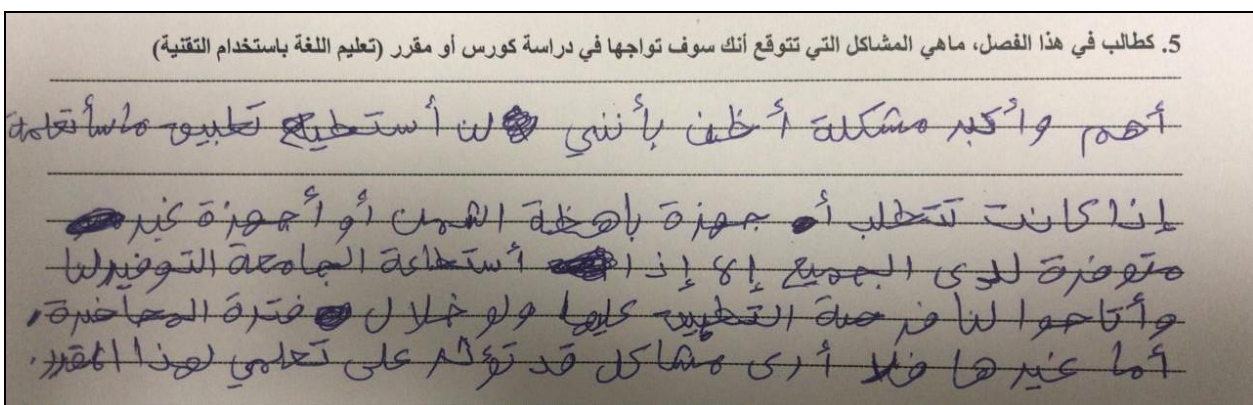


Figure 5

#### F. Sixth Category: Suggestions of Pre-service EFL Instructors in the LL&T Course

The participants in this study were both thorough and thoughtful in their response. They offered many suggestions that are well-reasoned and worth consideration. While the researchers cannot review all of them in this paper, some of the more prevalent recommendations are worth noting. First, many participants advocated for continually updating the course content and recurring training in technologies as they evolve. The second recommendation being that technology usage begin at the lowest levels of instruction so that both students and teachers are comfortable using technologies throughout the coursework. Also, many pre-service EFL teachers suggested that teachers strive to use technology in a way that is enjoyable and that helps motivate the students to

learn. Another issue raised by pre-service EFL teachers is the degree to which the LL&T course focuses on the theoretical rather than the practical aspects of using technology. They suggest that the LL&T course utilize state-of-the-art labs complete with functioning technologies that will also be used in actual classes when they begin teaching. The final recommendation from the participants concerns the technology itself. Many of them noted that specialized hardware and esoteric software would likely be a problem based on cost and availability. In order to alleviate this potential problem, many of the participants advocated for using commonly available or 'off the shelf' hardware and software. As shown in Figure 6 *infra.*, they expressed enthusiasm for using common devices such as iPads and inexpensive applications available commercially or for free from other educational institutions.

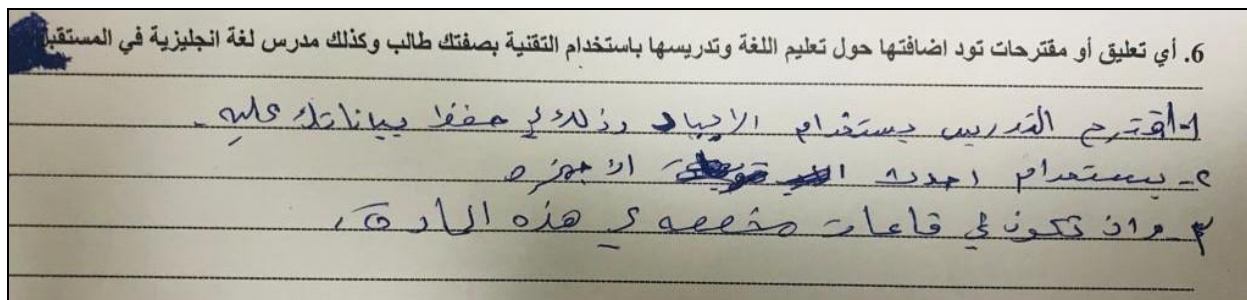


Figure 6

## VI. RESULTS DISCUSSION

### A. What Are the Needs and Expectations of Pre-service EFL Instructors in an LL&T Course?

The results of the first category of inquiry concerning the needs and expectations of pre-service EFL teachers were instructive. One widespread opinion gleaned from the survey is that the participants believed that the course would be more effective if the material were taught while actually utilising the various technologies in a mock EFL setting. Another common area of concern was training. Many participants were either concerned about, or even actually experienced, learning technology(ies) being implemented without adequate teacher training. Furthermore, the data suggests that many teachers are aware that, to teach using technology, one must be highly proficient in the target language as well as have a thorough understanding of the limitations of the technology being used for teaching purposes. Participants also alluded to other factors in learning effectiveness such as motivation and confidence in utilising technology. Naturally, one would expect those who are well-versed and adequately trained in technology would approach their teaching duties with a higher degree of confidence and competence than those not adequately trained on the technology. However, due to the qualitative nature of this study, this common-sense conclusion cannot be quantitatively proven in this study.

### B. Are There Common Preferences for Students and Pre-service Teachers with Respect to Hardware Platforms and Software Applications for Teaching and Learning Processes?

The results of this study also explore the ways in which prior experiences of both teachers and learners affect the delivery and acquisition of the target language. The evidence suggests that both teachers and students are most comfortable with the types of hardware they have been accustomed to using for non-teaching purposes. For example, many participants reported their preference for using laptop computers, tablet computers, and smartphones. The participants also reported a strong preference for user-friendly software, such as programs easily accessed via internet-based applications that work well across the various hardware platforms. Notwithstanding the apparent enthusiasm for more advanced technologies, the classic tools of education remain popular. Live lectures and simple projectors are all deemed highly effective. It seems that the participants desire a finely balanced combination of classical teaching methods and advanced technology to deliver an effective learning experience.

## VII. CHALLENGES & SUGGESTIONS

The challenges and obstacles both teachers and learners face can be both numerous and daunting. Difficulties range from insufficient knowledge of the relevant vocabulary to a lack of understanding as to the function and operation of the various devices and software packages. It is noteworthy that a statistically significant number of study participants expressed a firm dislike of using technologically advanced devices and programs. Important and valid concerns include the speed with which technologies change, and the cost and logistical requirements for continually updating the educational technologies. This study also attempted to address other effectiveness factors of the technology such as user satisfaction experience value and attractiveness of the technology resources. These are of course difficult to analyze given the qualitative nature of the study, and the subjective nature for factors such as 'enjoyment' and 'attractiveness'. An overriding theme evident in the study is the participant emphasis on training. Clearly, a lack of adequate training is a critical area of concern for many of the study participants.

### A. Themes

Despite the relatively small sample size of the study, the research indicates three themes or common issues of interest to the majority of the survey participants as more particularly set forth below:

#### 1. Knowledge Base of Pre-Service Teachers

The research indicates that pre-service teachers are very concerned about the preparation and training of aspects of integrating advanced and rapidly evolving technology into teaching programs and individual courses. Incorporating advanced technologies into learning programs can make courses both engaging and highly effective. Conversely, poorly integrated technologies can lead to confusion, frustration, and inefficiency. In sum, the study participants are generally receptive to using technology, so long as they are prepared to use the equipment and systems effectively.

#### 2. Needs of Both Instructors and Students

The 'needs' of both the students and teachers are critical in utilizing technology. Students learn in different ways and are often best served by using different teaching methods. In addition, sometimes technology is a great teaching tool that is effective when used properly. Other times, old-fashioned teaching methods and resources are the most efficient and effective ways of imparting language lessons. Also, there are those all too frequent instances when technology lets teachers down (i.e., the computer screen freezes, or the software crashes). A good teacher must be prepared to overcome such pitfalls of the modern world. In sum, teachers must be flexible to accommodate the students and to succeed in teaching even when the technology fails.

#### 3. Motivation

One of the most critical elements of second language teaching and acquisition is 'motivation'. The interplay between technology-based learning and motivation is a relatively new phenomenon in education. Having both the teacher and the students engaged in the coursework using technology has enormous potential benefits. Prior research shows that this may lead to optimal learning outcomes (Chatel, 2002; de Jong & Harper, 2005). Technology can be useful in many learning scenarios from grasping abstract theoretical concepts to something as mundane as learning to use a new device or software package. *Id.* The study also shows that motivation is closely linked to the other two themes in this section. See section i and section ii, *supra*.

### B. Recommendations

Technology in learning is now part of the educational zeitgeist. Today's teachers are now expected to deliver lessons using the latest in electronic tools and multi-media spread among many different platforms. Some argue that demonstrable technological prowess should be a prerequisite for most all teaching assignments. Even further, some may argue that technology will ultimately render traditional teaching methods and those who utilize them obsolete.

Teachers should keep several issues in mind in the utilization of technologies including:

- a) Whether the technology to be used provides an actual benefit over traditional methods;
- b) Whether the technology is the most effective and efficient means of delivery;
- c) Whether the technology is being used for a constructive purpose or just 'coolness factor';
- d) Whether rapidly evolving technology is worth the cost of staying 'current'.

These issues are prevalent in education today and are often difficult to address. The answers to the above are contingent upon a high number of variables, many of which are highly subjective. Teacher attitude and training, as well as student motivation, certainly affect the use of technology. Also, the immutable realities of budgets and resource priorities also are major factors in incorporating technology into education. Pre-service EFL teachers must address these issues along with the many other challenges that are inherent in the teaching profession.

Achieving a balance in technology-based learning can be difficult. Some teachers argue that modern technology is simply unnecessary. Traditional methods have been around for centuries, and have been effective. Those teachers argue that implementing technology is just wasting time and money. This is classic 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it' thinking. Such wisdom is oftentimes the basis for good advice. On the other hand, there are those who embrace technology and want to incorporate same into every aspect of education. They believe that change is inevitable and that teachers must change with the times or become irrelevant. This is the basic 'evolve or perish' theory of existence for which there are clear precedents for following its tenets. Whether the answer is to shun or embrace technology is debatable. Many more argue that the answer lies somewhere between those two extremes. These are issues which educators will be studying and debating for many years to come.

Assuming *arguendo* that educators continue to use technology at an increasing rate, assessing the technology will be increasingly difficult. There are so many different platforms (i.e., smartphones, tablet computers, laptop computers) spanning many types of programs (i.e., internet-based, commercial software packages, etc.) that keeping up with the range of technologies is daunting. Moreover, each platform and program evolves and changes at astonishing rates. Some platforms/programs will suddenly cease to exist and be replaced by new ones. One might reasonably doubt teachers' abilities to research, analyze and evaluate teaching technologies and methods in such a rapidly changing environment. Yet one cannot reasonably just ignore the issue. Technology can help motivate students. Incorporating technology into LL&T courses can support language learning. One could not reasonably turn a blind eye to such potential improvements to education. It seems that the most reasonable course of action to



make an effort, whether at an individual or collaborative level (i.e., interscholastic cooperatives) to continually evaluate technologies in education.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

This article presents and discusses six major issues concerning technologies in LL&T courses for pre-service EFL teachers. The results raise the legitimate concerns and issues which pre-service EFL teachers face about technology in the LL&T course. Their collective concerns and recommendations can help policy-makers design more effective course objectives and program learning outcomes. LL&T course materials will focus on technologies that instructors need and expect to use in classrooms, rather than technologies that policy-makers and training program designers think are useful. Including pre-service EFL instructor expectations and needs in course design will help motivate instructors and ultimately benefit the students. Understanding the previous instructor experiences about using technology will help trainers and policy-makers introduce technologies that are useful and appropriate. Implementing the preferred technologies by pre-service EFL instructors will reduce their anxiety in classes and encourage them to use these technologies in their classrooms in the future. The results of this paper also demonstrate the necessity for careful evaluation and training that should precede any LL&T course. This initiative will help policy-makers and program designers prevent difficulties in the course thus leading to more favourable outcomes. Much valuable information is available directly from the end users. As evidenced by the response to this survey and research results, the LL&T instructors have an 'in the trenches' view of the educational environment and have good advice for evaluating and implementing technology.

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### APPENDIX. QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS TRANSLATION

1. كمدرس لغة انجليزية في المستقبل، ماذا تتوقع أنك سوف تتعلم في مقرره أو كورس (تعليم اللغة باستخدام التقنية) هذا الفصل الدراسي أو ماذا يتبادر في ذهنك عندما تقرا عنوان أي كورس له علاقة بتعليم اللغة باستخدام التقنية
1. As an English language teacher in the future, what will you expect to learn in language learning and technology course this semester? Alternatively, what comes to your mind when you read a course his title is related to language learning using technology?
2. كمدرس لغة انجليزية في المستقبل، ماذا تحتاج أنك تعرفه او تتعلمه في كورس (تعليم اللغة باستخدام التقنية) أو ماهي المواضيع التي تود أن تغطي في محتوى الكورس أو المقرر؟
2. As an English language teacher in the future, what do you need to know and learn in language learning and technology course? Alternatively, what topics that you would like to be covered in the content of the course
3. كمدرس لغة انجليزية في المستقبل وكذلك طالب لغة انجليزية، ماهي خبراتك السابقة في تعلم أي لغة باستخدام التقنية
3. As an English language teacher in the future and also English language learner, what are your previous experiences in learning languages using technologies?
4. كمدرس لغة انجليزية في المستقبل، ماهي التقنية الأفضل التي تود تعلم اللغة بها وكذلك التدريس بها في المستقبل

4. As an English language teacher in the future, what are the best technologies that you would like to learn technology with and to teach language with in the future?
5. كطالب في هذا الفصل، ماهي المشاكل التي تتوقع أنك سوف تواجهها في دراسة كورس أو مقرر (تعليم اللغة باستخدام التقنية)
5. As a student this semester, what challenges that you might face while studying in language learning and technology course?
6. أي تعليق أو مقترحات تود اضافتها حول تعليم اللغة وتدريبها باستخدام التقنية بصفتك طالب وكذلك مدرس لغة انجليزية في المستقبل،
6. Any comments and suggestions that you would like to add regarding learning and teaching languages using technologies as a current English instructor and future English language instructor.

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# A Review of Negative Language Transfer Regarding the Errors in English Writing in Chinese Colleges

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**Abstract**—It is generally recognized that English as a Second Language is popular with language learners in China. As a major section of language learning, English writing often takes on an important role in English language learning for Chinese students. Many learners would be easily impeded by their mother tongue, Chinese and would therefore make some mistakes from time to time when it comes to writing in English. This is a pervasive phenomenon in the field of Second Language Acquisition research. Based on the relevant theories of Language Transfer, Negative Language Transfer, and Error Analysis, in terms of global research, especially in China, the current review focuses on the errors caused by the negative language transfer, and chiefly tries to probe into the suggestions to avoid such negative transfer influences in English writing among Chinese learners.

**Index Terms**—language transfer, negative language transfer, errors analysis, English writing

## I. INTRODUCTION

As is known to all researchers of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), broadly speaking, language transfer is a hot topic in this domain (Odlin, 1989). All over the world, as well as in China, extensive studies have been carried out on Cross-linguistic transfer by prior researchers in history. With the aim of exploring the extent of writing errors of negative language transfer studies to date, relevant research in the literature concerning transfer, negative transfer (from 1945 until now), have been reviewed in the current paper in a chronological order. In the article, the writer makes an attempt to provide the answers to the research question: what kinds of writing errors of negative language transfer have occurred in today's Chinese English learners' writing and what has been done to solve these problems? It could be anticipated that common errors in English usage have been found and, accordingly, many solutions have been given, but the field is still under research. Hence, this issue is worth more attention in depth.

The review includes five sections. The first section is the present introduction section in question. The second section gives a historical account of the role of transfer in general, or rather; identify the key themes in the field, which consists of the Notion of Transfer, the general Research Purpose, the Dimension of Transfer Research, the Positive and Negative Transfer and key terms in relation to Negative Transfer. The third section introduces the relevant theories such as Error Analysis and Interlanguage; as the main body of the article, the fourth section begins with the current situation of English writing in China and provides a growing body of literature review on negative transfer in English writing among Chinese learners. Finally, a conclusion is given to identify the gaps in the current knowledge, and the possible future investigation is shown to address the gaps in English education of China.

## II. LANGUAGE TRANSFER

### Notions of Transfer and Its Development in History

In the field of SLA, the notion of Cross-linguistic transfer has been discussed by various researchers for a long time. Since the term 'transfer' varies among researchers, to clarify the definition of the term is of paramount importance. Historically, Lado (1957) maintains that the phenomenon of transfer was that "Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture" (p.2). For Selinker (1966), language transfer means "a process occurring from the native language to the foreign language if frequency analysis shows that a statistically significant trend in the speaker's native language" (p. 103). Later, in 1989, Odlin popularizes the term by identifying that "transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (p.27). Therefore, acquired language not only refers to first language (L1); perhaps a second language (L2) or other languages are involved as well. However, for the most part, acquired language often refers to L1 and target language chiefly refers to L2 in most language transfer studies. In addition, Odlin (1989) emphasizes "the performances of speakers of at least two different native languages" (p. 32), which focuses on the comparisons between interlanguage-interlanguage (IL-IL) (Javis, 2000). Afterwards, in the light of what Selinker's idea (1992), transfer is "operationally defined as a process which occurs whenever a statistically significant... [pattern in the L1] reappears in

IL behaviour” (p.201). Selinker highlights the “L1-IL comparisons” (Javis, 2000, p. 251). Furthermore, transfer is defined by Mayer and Wittrock (1996) as “the effect of knowledge that was learned in a previous situation (task A) on learning or performance in a new situation (task B)” (p. 48).

Nonetheless, even though only some definitions are introduced above, multiple definitions of transfer reveal a general situation, which is that, as discussed by Dechert and Raupach, more than ten different definitions of transfer occurred in literature (Javis, 2000). But first language (L1) influence remains a “you-know-it-when-you-see-it phenomenon” (Javis, 2000, p.246). Though numerous studies had discussed its effect, there was no accepted agreement of the definition of L1 influence (Javis, 2000). Based on the differences of what Odlin (1989) and Selinker (1992) said, from a methodological heuristic perspective, Javis (2000) also proposes that “L1 influence refers to any instance of learner data where a statistically significant correlation (or probability-based relation) is shown to exist between some feature of learner’s IL performance and their L1 background” (p. 252), which developed the concept of transfer as well. In regard to L1 influence, Javis also summarised three aspects of effects including “intra-L1-group homogeneity in learners’ IL performance”, which refers to “learners who speak the same L1 behave in a uniform manner when using the L2” (p.254), “inter-L1-group heterogeneity in learners’ IL performance”, which “is found when comparable learners of a common L2 who speak different L1s diverge in their IL performance” (p.254), and “intra-L1-group congruity between learners’ L1 and IL performance” that means “where learners’ use of some L2 feature can be shown to parallel their use of a corresponding L1 feature”(p.255). These effects should be combined with any of others to substantiate the existing of transfer (Javis, 2000).

The above-mentioned conceptions later gave rise to new ones. Apart from the emphasis of first language influence on second language study, there is yet another definition focusing on the interactions between two languages. For example, Chen (2006) claims that, “the term transfer implies more than simply the effects of the L1 on the L2; the L2 also influences the L1” (Brown 2000, Su 2001, Cook 2003, cited in Chen, 2006, p.148), which correspondingly, expanded the definitions of transfer as well. It could be observed that the notion of transfer is still updated by researchers in the field of SLA to date. As the current topic would pay attention to the negative influence of L1 transfer, the effects of L2 on L1 would not be discussed in detail.

#### **General Purpose of Transfer Research**

From 1950 to 1960, theories about language transfer are the main topic in Second Language Acquisition (Yu, 2010). According to Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008), “the ultimate goal of transfer research is the explanation of how the languages a person knows interact in the mind” (p.111, cited in Jarvis& Crossley, 2012, p. 10). In addition, Javis and Crossley (2012) indicate four types of transfer research, concerning: “the pursuit of empirical discoveries”, “theoretical advances”, “the development of methodological tools”, “the development of an argumentation framework” (p.10), which could be interacted with each other in numerous research. Much research that concentrated on the exploration of evidence would be presented in the following.

#### **Dimensions of Transfer Research in the Globalized World**

For one thing, the phenomenon of transfer could be found from many aspects in language acquisition, such as syntax transfer, lexical studies, phonetics, conceptual ideas, spelling skill and so forth, for another, from learners with different proficiency. It could be attested to by many studies in the global arena. For instance, Helmspark (2003) carried out an investigation among Vietnamese ESL learners and found that, compared to Hindi-Urdu, a non-serializing language, Vietnamese-speaking participants were inclined to produce serial-type constructions that bear a resemblance to Vietnamese, which corroborated evidence of the syntactic transfer. Additionally, Chan (2004) found evidence in Hong Kong that Chinese ESL learners preferred adopting sentence structure in the light of their L1, Cantonese, and Chinese way of thinking. Chan also figured out that the transfer would be more complicated when the target language is more difficult in structure. Typically, the lower is learners’ level of proficiency, the more obvious their syntactic transfer is likely to be. Moreover, Ping and Rickard (2011) investigated whether morphophonemic Malay-knowledge influences English-processing by manipulated junctural phonetics or not. Their results provided strong empirical evidence that adults experience Malay L1 to English L2 morphophonemic transfer. Similarly, Bagherian (2012) scrutinized the concept of Persian and English and carried out an investigation on 100 Iranian learners. The data of Bagherian’s study corroborated the evidence that the learners went through a conceptual transfer from their L1 Persian to L2 English. More recently, Yeon, Bae and Joshi (2017) examined English spelling from 287 Korean children from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, and found that Korean metalinguistic awareness significantly controlled the English vocabulary. In particular, the Korean morphological awareness and phonological awareness, which were caused by metalinguistic awareness could explain the English spelling. The empirical study confirmed that metalinguistic awareness transfer had an impact on the development of second language spelling. It could be seen that the study of transfer provided significant evidence of transfer and the latter clearly demonstrated that the language transfer is everywhere in second language development, which reaches a large scale.

#### **Classification of Transfer and Negative Transfer**

Also, transfer has been classified into many aspects. In Dai and Wang (2002)’s research, they suggest that, based on those studies done by Wang (1990), Xu (1992), Ellis (1994), Odlin (2001), and others the similarities and differences of cross-linguistic would produce the following outcomes (p.5). The first is positive transfer, which could only be confirmed by learners with different background (Dai, & Wang, 2002). As to the specific concept of positive transfer,

Odlin (1989) contended that learner's L1 could improve the learning of L2, which could be generally regarded as Positive transfer. For instance, similar vocabularies would improve the reading ability in foreign language learning (Dai, & Wang, 2002). The second one is negative transfer, which is also classified into three categories, first, including "underproduction" (Odlin, 1989, p. 36; Dai, & Wang, 2002, p.5), which occurs when learners are not familiar with the target language, and therefore, they would choose structures that are less frequently used by native speakers instead; second, "overproduction" like using too much apology in American English (Odlin, 1989, p. 36; Dai, & Wang, 2002, p.5); and third, the "production errors", which consists of substitution, calque, the change of structure and so on (Odlin, 1989, p. 36; Dai, & Wang, 2002, p.5), and finally, "mis-interpretation", which causes the misunderstanding in that the structure of mother tongue has an impact on the understating of the target language (Odlin, 1989, p. 36; Dai, & Wang, 2002, pp 5-6). And the third one is the "different lengths of acquisition" (Odlin, 1989, p. 36; Dai, & Wang, 2002, p.6).

As already mentioned, not only positive transfer exists in the development of second language learning, but also negative transfer. The term negative transfer has been known as interference occurred in numerous research. There have been a number of studies in second language development touching upon the errors produced by the negative transfer (Wang, 2009). This can be illustrated briefly by Figueredo's paper, in terms of Spelling Skill, from the review done by Figueredo (2006), researchers proved that both positive and negative transfer influenced the spelling of ESL learners. Typically, negative transfer is one of the most important aspects relating to cross-linguistic evidence. According to the classification done by other researchers, it had already shown its complexity as well. In the light of what Odlin (1989) says, it could be predicted that when two languages show more differences, more negative transfers would occur. Brown rendered that negative transfer would hinder the performance of target tasks (Yang, Ma & Cao, 2013). In the following sections, information on negative language transfer would be gathered and synthesised in detail.

### III. ERROR ANALYSIS AND INTERLANGUAGE

#### **Errors and Mistakes or Lapses**

With respect to errors, of course, errors here refer to language error in the field of SLA. First and foremost, the distinction between errors and mistakes or lapses should be made (Corder, 1975). According to Corder (1975), errors, "typically produced by people who do not yet fully command some institutionalised language system" (p.204). From Corder's point of view, making errors is unavoidable and it is an essential part of learning (Yu, 2010). In contrast, mistakes or lapses refer to "failures to utilise a known system correctly" (Corder, 1971a, cited in Corder, 1975, p. 204). In this sense, what the current review focuses in question are errors instead of mistakes or lapses.

Generally speaking, errors in linguistic area include morphological, syntactic, lexical, semantic, pragmatic errors and so forth. Lado (1957), contended that the performance of erroneous language could be viewed as the mother tongue's transfer to the target language. In this case, errors were caused by the interference, or rather, negative transfer, and teaching could solve those problems (Lee, 1970). Such a concept facilitated the development of "Contrastive linguistics" (Corder, 1975).

Specifically speaking, errors could also be classified into inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors (Richards, 1974). Because of the interference of native language, Inter-lingual errors occurred (Richard, 1974). To be exact, it is inter-lingual errors which would be discussed in the following literature.

#### **Errors Analysis and Interlanguage**

Lado (1957) paves the way for the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) after it was developed by Fries (1945). According to Behaviourists, the obstacle to second language acquisition was the interference of the mother tongue. Thus, it was necessary to do the contrastive analysis to figure out the differences and then predicted the faults and corrected it during the process of learners' second language development. Consequently, later, Error Analysis, which referred to the systematic and analytical study about the errors made by second language learners, was born in the late 1960s and the early 1970s and first advocated by Pit Corder. For instance, Svartvik (1973) suggests that error analysis should be used for "the study of erroneous utterances produced by groups of learners at some stage of their learning career" (Corder, 1975, p. 205). In summary, Error Analysis served the functions of pedagogy and expanded the comprehension of the second language learning (Corder, 1975).

During the same period, the term of interlanguage, which stands for 'language between the native language and the target language', was introduced by Selinker (1972). The concept of interlanguage can be traced back to 1967, which was the year that Corder put forward the concept of "transitional competence" to describe a state that language learners have not yet reach the level of mastering that second language (Yu, 2010). Interlanguage focuses on the "intermediate status of the learner's language system", which admitted the "literature of error analysis" (Zydatiss, 1974 a; Strvens, 1969, cited in Corder, 1975, p.204). So, it directly relates to the current issue in question.

### IV. WRITING OF NEGATIVE TRANSFER AMONG CHINESE LEARNERS

#### **Chinglish Writing and English Writing Research in China**

It is generally known that English and Chinese are two different systematic languages. During the long period of English learning in China, there has been a phenomenon called Chinglish. Li (1993) defined that "Chinglish refers to

the Sinicized English usually found in pronunciation, lexicology and syntax, due to the linguistic transfer or 'the arbitrary translation' by the Chinese English learners, thus being regarded as an unaccepted form of English" (p. 18), which could be regarded as a generalisation of errors in English writing as well. People would come across it quite often in English writing from Chinese learners.

Chinese learners are encouraged to study English irrespective of their age and educational level. Regarding to English College Education, more and more attention has been paid to English proficiency by the Chinese government, Ministry of Education and even the whole country. There are four main skills to be checked in English assessment of college students. Writing is still one of the most important parts in the second language learning throughout China. Nonetheless, as described in Yu's paper in 2010, even though teachers and students paid much attention to it, the writing skill was hard to be improved (p.20). Hence, it appealed to researchers of English teaching in China, particularly the writing teaching experts and scholars, who have explored and discussed its improvement in depth (Yu, 2010, p.20).

Regarding those studies about English writing, since the 1980s, the research on English writing had been developed in China (Yu, 2010). Great changes happened on the contents, quantity, methodology etc. of writing studies (Yu, 2010). From a diachronic perspective, in Zhang, Yan and Liu's presentation in 2015, it was concluded that during the ten years from 2004 to 2014, though much research were expanded to the K-12 level in 2014, the majority of studies concerning EFL writing remains to pay attention to the college-level instruction or assessment as well. Many studies concerning teaching approaches in EFL writing have been conducted by researchers (Zhang, Yan & Liu, 2015).

#### **Writing Errors and Pedagogical Suggestions**

Kaplan (1972) indicates that Cross-cultural differences in rhetoric produced those problems in academic writing by English as a Second Language learners. Similarly, the situation of China is in agreement with those general phenomena of transfer research in the world. Firstly, myriad studies have been conducted by many researchers. Secondly, in most cases, English, is regarded as the target language in much of the research (Chan, 2004). Among those English as a Second Language learners, learners of Chinese as L1 accounted for the majority (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Dzau, 1990, cited in Chan, 2004). Evidence from Juffs (1996), Schachter (1974), and Schachter and Rutherford (1983), all demonstrated that, from L1 Chinese to L2 English, there are "negative transfer "existing at "phonological", "lexical", "syntactic", "semantic", and "discourse levels" (Chan, 2004, p. 57).

Much research provided evidence that demonstrates, the study of Chinese negative transfer proceeded from the 1980s in China (Li & Liu, 2010), particularly in writing. There are many typical errors from Chinese learners in producing English which could be found out in that researchers had contributed a lot on negative transfer and error analysis over the decades. Key findings offer the evidence that confirmed the writer's view and provides the counter argument. For example, Mohan and Lo in 1985 not only scrutinize that the academic writing by L2 learners were attributed to native language's negative transfer, but also discussed developmental factors for it. Their findings called for student's awareness of native literacy as well as educational experience as factors for writing.

During this decade, much research still struggled to probe into the development of avoiding negative transfer in English writing. These studies shared many similarities as follows:

In review of the existence of negative transfer in Chinese students, such as the Chinese interference of grammar, lexicons, Deng (2001) claimed that such a phenomenon was as a result of the inefficient input of target language. Accordingly, Deng emphasized the importance of recitation which could bring greater impact on English writing teaching. Qiu and Ling (2003) pointed out the negative transfer of Chinglish writing in college non-English major students' writing, and put forward some strategies to cope with it. From the perspective of teachers, Qiu and Ling emphasized that the language input should be strengthened by teachers and, similar to Deng (2001), they shared the same ideas that students should be exposed to more recitation as well. He (2005) made comparison on the thinking modes and discourse structure between China and West and discussed the reasons why English-majors made errors in their English writing. Li (2007) focused on the existence of Chinglish through analysing evidence of negative language transfer in the aspects of morphemic, lexical, syntactical and discourse level and additionally, provided some educational strategies, such as "Reinforce the Input of Language Knowledge", "Reinforce the Input of Culture Knowledge", "teach writing as a process" (pp.93-94). Dong and Han (2009) concentrated on negative transfer errors and analysed them from the lexical and syntactic aspects. Above all, it could be observed that previous papers written in different years in the past decades all paid attention to the evidence of negative transfer phenomena and some of them have tried to work out some ways to correct errors.

Finally, concerning recent years - from 2010 to now, there are still many studies regarding the negative language transfer in English writing as well. With more rigors in the studies, more and more researchers participated in the searching of negative language transfer and it has been expanded not only its evidence but also practical teaching suggestions on it, particularly in many colleges throughout China. Representative studies are presented in the following:

Yu (2010) prepared questionnaires for students and teachers to know the state of negative transfer. The students were English Education students from a Normal University in China. The result of Yu's survey showed that students went through the interference from negative transfer of their mother tongue, which was mostly in relation to L1 thinking. Most errors resulted from L1 thinking were as follows: inappropriate usage of article, words, sentence structure, Chinese discourse level, which made it harder for students to convey ideas in formal English.

Based on the comparison between Chinese and English in words, words phrases and sentences, Li (2011) also

confirmed that errors in writing were mainly caused by Chinese logical thinking. Consequently, Researchers argued that teachers should cultivate the awareness of cross-cultural communication, introduce relevant theories about English Language as well as develops the habits of thinking in English.

Wang and Feng (2012) investigated 60 sophomore non-English major students' College English Band 4(CET-4, a national test in China) composition at the syntactic level, which affirmed that Chinglish sentences are quite frequent. Wang and Feng suggested teachers should provide more input to the students like reading or writing more as well, which has already been emphasized in the past research.

In Yang, Cao and Ma (2013)'s research, they analysed the lexical negative transfer among Chinese in English as a foreign language writing and found three main errors type, including "errors in word choice, errors in derivation, and those in collocation" (p.669). In addition, Yang, Cao, and Ma, proposed some pedagogic suggestions to solve these problems, such as "Encouraging learners to think in Native ways", "Providing necessary language input for the students", "Making Contrastive Analysis of Chinese and English", "Building up a good knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar" (p.671).

Chen (2014) conducted a case study in Changchun Institute of Technology in China and selected 80 sophomores to write a composition. By concentrating on Chinese negative transfer in English writing, Errors analysis mainly paid attention to vocabulary. It was found that 58% of vocabulary errors were because of Chinese hindrances and what is more, meaning errors accounted for the most. In addition, questionnaires were done to study the reasons of errors production, which revealed that students were used to adopt inappropriate learning techniques. Chen also proposed some ideas to avoid the negative language transfer so as to provide pedagogical implications, such as "raising awareness of language transfer", "making Contrastive Analysis of English and Chinese", "Increasing Comprehensible Input and Culture Input", "Correcting Inter-lingual errors"(pp. 43-45).

Wang (2015) asked sixty-three second year language learners from Jiujiang University to write English compositions and mainly scrutinized the usage of attributive clauses, including five kinds of errors due to the negative influence, which was caused by the awareness or unawareness of influential Chinese mother tongue. Errors consist of "underused attributive clauses including avoidance strategy", "redundant pronoun or antecedent", "omission preposition", "underused", "misplaced or redundant relative words" (p.4). But how to improve the teaching method guidance for avoiding the influence of negative transfer was emphasized by the researcher.

Li (2016), chose 50 non-English major students in one university of Jiangxi, China. The data disclosed that firstly, students would be affected by the negative transfer more or less; secondly, non-English major learners depended on L1 strategy; thirdly, students were accustomed to employ the L1 strategy and the mode of Chinese logical thinking. As to teachers, researcher also pointed out that teachers should use teaching strategy to guide students to avoid such negative transfer. Simultaneously, teachers could create a real language learning atmosphere to facilitate the students to think in English and read more. Particularly, teachers should improve the vocabulary teaching in that non- English major were easily making errors in vocabularies and syntax. Finally, for one thing, error corrections and feedback should be given by teachers timely, for another, practices should be provided for self-correction and peer feedback so that avoiding the negative transfer in English writing.

To sum up, the above representative studies have described the common errors in English writing among Chinese learners from different language levels or aspects. It is common that language learners are used to thinking in a "Chinese way", or rather, thinking is modulated by L1 linguistic experience. Moreover, some researchers have contributed to provide pedagogical suggestions for teachers to avoid the bad influences of negative transfer in language writing in such a long period. However, the ability of these above studies to address negative transfer in China is limited. With so many studies conducted so far, the common problems are still discussed by researchers. It seems that writing errors from negative transfer is still a big problem that cannot be discounted in English writing and something new should be implemented to the current situation, which is of course, a long way to go in the future.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

From a neutral perspective, on the one hand, from the situation globally, compared to China, the current article has summarised the theories about language transfer, negative transfer and errors and, on the other hand, the evidence about the negative transfer from L1 to L2, more specifically, from Chinese to English, in a chronological order. Not only the errors about negative transfer could be found in the past research, but also many strategies are explored and put forward by many researchers in terms of how teachers could help language learners to avoid the influence of negative language transfer. What they have done has already brought a state of art in the field of negative transfer research.

Nevertheless, it is found that little research in the literature paid attention to the views of language learners on how to cope with negative transfer when they are writing their English articles. It should be stressed that learners are the most crucial protagonists who could determine if facilitating or retarding the development of their own writing ability. Therefore, how the students prefer to tackle their writing errors problems of negative language transfer and what the visions in their mind are, should be explored more detail in the future. Furthermore, learners with different proficiency levels are also another important factor that should be taken into consideration. The learners' proficiency level should be defined as a variable in new investigations. Research on these questions remains at a beginning stage throughout China. In short, adequate attention should be given in an attempt to provide more evidence in the domain of negative language

transfer. By standing on the shoulders of the giants, investigations on how high-level students think and react to negative transfer errors can provide interesting ideas in the field and definitely enhance the English teaching in China.

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# Students' Emotive Reaction and Confidence in Doing Language Tests: A Case of Test Takers in EFL Learning in Indonesia

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**Abstract**—It has long been argued that the tests administered to students influence the students' learning motivation. The study aims at investigating the students' emotive reactions and confidence in doing English language tests and its implications for EFL learning. Forty-two students of the Department of English Education, University of Tadulako, Palu, Indonesia participated in the research. The students were programming Speaking Class in the Academic Year 2016/2017. Questionnaire items and focused group discussions were employed to produce the data needed. From the data analysis, it reveals that the use of language tests motivates the students in learning English despite the stressful situations they experience while they are sitting on the tests. Interestingly, the research findings show that the students are delightful in doing the tests. The students are most confident in speaking tests, but they are least confident in writing tests. Reading tests are in second place in terms of the student confidence in doing tests and listening tests are in the third place. How language testing motivates EFL learners is discussed.

**Index Terms**—emotive reaction, confidence, language test, test takers, EFL learner

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language tests, nowadays, are used for different purposes such as teaching and learning packages, job recruitment, university admission, and screening for visa applications. In the case of teaching and learning packages, the application of information derived from tests affects the curriculum and syllabus design, as well as the development of teaching materials, which, in turn, affect the process of learning the language. Testing and evaluation are two terms that have long been used interchangeably to measure learners achievement in language learning. The former is commonly related to learners' attainment of the formulated instructional objectives while the latter is related to both learners' achievement and the results of the conduct of a language program. The results of testing and evaluation in language learning are used to categorize whether a learner is successful or fail in language learning and whether or not a language program needs improvement. In relation to the language program, the results of testing and evaluation are used to revitalized or develop the language curriculum.

The use of language tests in the classroom aims at assessing the students' progress after a certain period of teaching and learning. Tests are also administered to the students in order to make decisions as to whether they are qualified to progress to a higher level of the course. More importantly, the tests and the tests' results are used to get feedback on both the instructional materials and the instructional program. Due to the vital role of the tests and the tests' results, test designers must avoid "misconception about the development of and use of language tests, and unrealistic expectations about what the tests can do and what they should like" (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p.3). However, even though the language tests have been designed accordingly, it is frequently observed that most Indonesian EFL learners who sit the EFL tests seem stressful. This paper, therefore, is to ascertain whether or not the application of tests affects the Indonesia EFL learners, and if it does, how these effects are manifested.

Language testing is considered as one of the vital instruments that can describe whether or not a learner is successful or fail in language teaching and learning. Due to the vital role of the language testing, it is important to ensure that the development and the use of the language testing be familiar to language teachers. Bachman & Palmer (1996) highlighted that ability to identify characteristics of learners facilitates test takers' performance. The characteristics include language ability, topical knowledge, or knowledge schemata, and affective schemata (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p.12). Some researchers (Chastain, 1975; Ghasemali & Reza, 2013; Hughes, 2003; Javed, Juan, & Nazli, 2013; Lee, 2007; Scovell, 1978; Shohamy, 1985; Xiao & Carles, 2013) have investigated the effects of testing on teaching and learning and they reported that testing can be contributed either positive or negative effect on language learners performance.

Besides the effect of test on language learner performance, researchers also attempt to integrate language testing and the student perception. In order to attain the expected effect of the testing and the assessment on language teaching and

learning, EFL teachers implement and select appropriate method on the administration of the language testing and assessment (Birjandi & Tamjid, 2012; Cheng, Rogers, & Hu, 2004; Jabbarifar & Elhambakhsh, 2012; Zhao (2014). These researchers report that when testing is integrated to teaching and learning process the test underpins the attainment of the instructional objectives. More importantly, Birjandi & Tamjid (2012) and Zhao (2014) insist that EFL teachers support on assessment affects learners' perceptions. It is reported that learners' achievement in language testing is better when teachers know their students better (Bachman & Palmer (1996). In addition, Hughes (2003) and Jabbarifar & Elhambakhsh (2012) argued that the tests have positive effects on teaching and learning when they are administered based on needs analysis of the course level the students are taking and it is the role of the language teachers to do the needs analysis. This is in line with Waterworths (2016) argument that a good quality English language program assists learners to increase their knowledge.

Testing may affect students' perceptions of tests in terms of learning motivation, attitudes to tests and emotive reaction when doing tests. Students' emotive reactions refer to their feelings and emotion in doing language tests. Some researchers (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Cohen, 2001; Hughes, 2003; Jabbarifar & Elhambakhsh, 2012) have investigated the effect of the test on learners' emotive reaction. Bachman & Palmer (1996, p.31) view the effect of the test based on the testing procedure include "the experience of taking, and preparing for the test, the feedback they receive, and the decisions that may be made about them on the basis of their test scores". Cohen (2001) explains that teachers and students may feel uncomfortable when they hear the word 'testing'. The students consider tests will threaten their language proficiency as they are afraid of not doing well in the tests. In addition, Hughes (2003) and Jabbarifar & Elhambakhsh (2012) admit that tests may have positive effects on teaching and learning when they are administered based on an analysis of the English needs of the course level the students are taking. The tests should directly assess the skills needed and should be in accordance with the students' language proficiency levels. Tests may motivate students to study as they would like to be successful.

Since the language tests have proven their potential contribution and role on development and improvement of language teaching and learning, the language tests have also been implemented to measure language achievement and to improve language teaching and learning process in the four language skills. In order to achieve its purpose, the test must meet six test qualities include quality, reliability, construct validity, authenticity, interactiveness, impact, and practicality (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p.17). Most researchers have implemented the six test qualities in various language test types to measure the language skills, however, the reports were mostly on the performance or proficiency level in the four language skills. For example, Barekat & Nobakhti (2014), LaClare, Roger, & Rowberry (2014), and Leveridge & Yang (2013), reported results of language tests in listening skills; Grubor (2013), Haizhen & Fangqi (2015), and Manurung (2015) reported results of language tests in speaking skills; Katalayi, & Sivasubramaniam (2013), Kim, Petscher, & Foorman (2015), and Yaghoub, Farnia, & Geva (2012) reported results of language tests in reading skills; and Javed, Juan, & Nazli (2013) and Lovett, Lewandowski, & Gathje (2010) reported results of language tests in writing skills. The results of language tests have also been used in language learning in self-assessment and self-access center (Engelhardt and Pfingsthorn, 2012; Manurung, 2002; Manurung, 2005;). Quite a few if it is none researchers, at least in Indonesian research results, report test taker' emotive reaction and confidence in doing tests on the four language skills. The present study, therefore, aims at, first, investigating EFL learners' emotive reaction in doing a test, second, comparing students' confidence in doing tests on the four language skills.

## II. THE RESEARCH METHOD

The study was conducted at the English Education Department at Tadulako University, Palu, Indonesia. The setting for the research was chosen because it provides English course for foreign language learners, and the levels of courses vary from elementary to advance. Another reason for the selection of the research setting was that teaching materials were regularly evaluated and developed. Finally, the research was conducted at the English Education Department because it was easily accessible by the researcher.

Data were collected from 42 students attending speaking II class. In collecting the data, the researcher employed questionnaire and focus group discussions. The purpose was to obtain information about students' perceptions of the effect of testing on students' emotive reaction and confidence in doing English tests on language skills. The focus group discussions were conducted to obtain general information about the effects of testing on student learning activities and achievement. The question that was asked of students in the focus group discussion were largely unstructured, which gave respondents the opportunity to answer the questions freely but in relation to the topic being asked. The unstructured interview items can provide a width of interpretations and responses across the respondents (Wiersma and Jurs, 2005).

The target population of the research was the cohort of students who were taking speaking II. This course level was chosen because the students had done tests on a number of occasions, and it was reasonable to expect that their learning activities and achievements may have been affected by administration of tests. It was also reasonable that students studying at the second semester in the university would provide a variety of perceptions of the effects of testing on their emotive reactions and confidence in doing English tests.

Fifty copies of the questionnaire were distributed to students. The students may decide to join the survey or not. Of the fifty questionnaires distributed, forty-two copies were returned. For practical reasons, the forty-two students who

responded to the questionnaires were regarded as a working sample of the population. The sample size was regarded as being a minimum from which trends and generalizations could be identified. The number of students enrolled in English Education Study Program in 2015 was 127. This suggests that a cohort of forty-two students willing to give time to this study would be a realistic sample size.

### **Instruments**

#### ***Questionnaire***

The copies of the questionnaire were distributed to students after class time in order not to interfere with the teaching and learning process and took approximately ten minutes for the students to answer. The students completed the questionnaires in the classroom or outside the classroom at the campus and returned the completed questionnaire to a box provided in the office of the English Education Department. This way of completing questionnaire was considered as anonymous because the participants did not need to identify themselves to the researcher. The students were assured that their responses would remain confidential and that only the researcher would have access to them.

The questionnaire consists of twelve questions employed to obtain information about whether the language tests done by the students had any effect on their learning activities and their English proficiency. The twelve questions administered to the research participants were viewed as a minimum to obtain consistent and valid information on the topic, while not over-extending students' concentration and thus introducing the extraneous variable of test fatigue. The questions were also produced in English, which was a foreign language for the respondents so the test could not be too long, otherwise the respondents may have difficulty understanding or translating the questions and this could become a variable. The questions were developed by the researcher and had been pilot-tested with a small group of the target population. Seven students participated in the pilot-testing of the questionnaire. The purpose of the pilot-test was to review the questionnaire items in order to identify misunderstandings or inadequate items. Wiersma and Jurs (2005) explain that a pilot-run of the items is intended to obtain information about confusion and ambiguous language, and can also be useful in obtaining preliminary information about possible patterns of result from the research. The result of the pilot-testing showed that students could do question 1 through 11. However 4 students did not do question 12 in the pilot study because the question required the students to describe the effects of test on their use of language in the written context. As this required a degree of introspection and meta-cognition, some students clearly found it to be difficult. Thus it was modified for the final version of the questionnaire in order that the students easily understood it and gave short answers.

In completing questions 1 to 11 of the questionnaire, the respondents had six options to choose from, and the questionnaire items were scored on a six-point Likert scale: strongly agree-5, agree-4, tend to agree-3, tend to disagree-2, disagree-1, and strongly disagree-0. There was no neutral option on the questionnaire because all of the participants were directly involved in the process of second language learning and it could reasonably be assumed that the process was central to their daily lives. Consequently, a neutral response might be functional. In question 5, the respondents gave information about their emotive reaction by selecting six options indicating the notion of happiness in doing tests; very happy - 5, happy - 4, tend to be happy - 3, tend to be unhappy - 2, unhappy - 1 and strongly unhappy - 0.

#### ***Focus Group Discussion***

Consent forms for the group discussion were distributed along with the questionnaires to students, but only ten students completed and returned the form. The ten students who consented to participate in a focus group discussion were questioned to gain their general responses about the effects of tests on the process and outcomes of the EFL learning. Those ten students were split into two groups, and one single interview. Groups one and two consisted of five and four students, respectively. The students were split into small groups in order that they had sufficient opportunities to speak during the discussions. The single interview was conducted because one student missed the group discussions. The focus group discussions and interview were audio-taped and transcribed for further data analysis.

#### ***Data analysis***

Data were analyzed statistically to investigate the possible relationship between student attitude to language tests and their selection of strategies in acquiring the target language. The data obtained from the questionnaire were tabulated using the SPSS software program to find out the percentage of the students' responses to each option of the questionnaire items (see Tables 1 and 3), and the correlation between one item and the others (see Tables 2 and 4). The analysis also specifically looked at the Mean Scores of the students' confidence in different language skills (Table 5).

The result of the focus group discussion was analyzed descriptively. The analysis was included in the result of the research to support the data from the questionnaire. The analysis was also generally compared to the result of the questionnaire. The comparison of the two sources of data was done to cross-check the students' individual responses to questions against the students' group perceptions of the effects of tests on EFL learning.

Overall, it was expected that the direct, objective reactions obtained from the questionnaire would be expanded and clarified by the less formal, more detailed explanations given during the qualitative responses in the discussions. This balanced research method was employed in order to provide data-driven interpretation of the questionnaire material, rather than relying solely on the intuition of the researcher.

## III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### **Students' emotive reaction in doing tests**

Most of the students involved in the project responded positively to the effects of tests on language learning by choosing the positive options on the questionnaire (e.g. strongly agree, agree and tend to agree). Tests administered to students had apparently influenced the students' learning motivation (Lambert & Gardner, 1972).

TABLE I.  
THE EFFECTS OF TESTS ON LANGUAGE LEARNING

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Disagree	2	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Tend to disagree	1	2.4	2.4	7.1
	Tend to agree	12	28.6	28.6	35.7
	Agree	12	28.6	28.6	64.3
	Strongly agree	15	35.7	35.7	100.0
Total		42	100.0	100.0	

The data in Table 2 shows that the students responded differently to their state of feeling when doing tests. There were more students (61 percent) who responded that they were happy when doing tests; 11.9 percent of them responded 'very happy', 21.4 percent responded 'happy' and 26.2 percent responded 'tend to be happy'. However, 39 percent of the students responded negatively to doing tests, in which 7.1 percent chose the unhappy option, 31.0 percent responded 'tend to be unhappy' but interestingly no one responded 'very unhappy'. One student did not respond to the question.

TABLE II  
THE STATE OF FEELING WHEN DOING TESTS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very happy	5	11.9	12.2	12.2
	Happy	9	21.4	22.0	34.1
	Tend to be happy	11	26.2	26.8	61.0
	Tend to be unhappy	13	31.0	31.7	92.7
	Unhappy	3	7.1	7.3	100.0
	Very unhappy	0	0.0	0.0	100.0
	Total	41	97.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.4		
Total		42	100.0		

The Students who were happy when doing tests were also motivated to study, as shown in Table 3. Information from this table indicates the correlation between the student happiness in doing tests and other questions of the survey. The most important information obtained from the table is that the happier the students, the more motivated they are in learning the lessons of the course. Table 3 also shows that the students' happiness in doing tests and their learning motivation are significantly correlated (at 001).

TABLE III.  
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE STUDENT HAPPINESS IN DOING TESTS AND MOTIVATION IN LEARNING

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q3 Tests motivate me to study	Equal Variances assumed	2.155	.150	-3.511	39	.001	-1.083	.308	-1.706	-.459
	Equal Variances not assumed			-3.824	38.871	.000	-1.083	.283	-1.655	-.510

However, students also experienced stress when doing tests. The results of the survey showed that the majority of students experienced stress when doing formal language tests. This can be seen from Table 4 where 85.7 percent of the students selected the positive options, from which 50 percent responded agree, 19 percent responded strongly agree, and 16.7 percent responded tend to agree. However, 14.3 percent of the students chose the negative options, from which 9.5 percent of the students responded that they did not experience stress when doing formal language tests, and 2.4 percent responded that they tended to disagree that they experienced stress when doing tests. Another 2.4 percent of the students responded that they never became stressed because of tests, as this student chose the strongly disagree option.

TABLE IV.  
THE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE WHEN DOING TESTS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	2.4	2.4	2.4
	Disagree	4	9.5	9.5	11.9
	Tend to disagree	1	2.4	2.4	14.3
	Tend to agree	7	16.7	16.7	31.0
	Agree	21	50.0	50.0	81.0
	Strongly agree	8	19.0	19.0	100.0
	Total	42	100.0	100.0	

### Student confidence in doing tests on the four language skills

Students had different levels of confidence in doing tests on the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students were more confident doing tests on speaking (Mean 3.07), followed by reading (Mean 2.93). Listening tests were third in terms of the students' confidence in doing them (Mean 2.67), and students were least confident in doing tests on writing (Mean 2.57).

The data in Table 5 shows that students who were confident doing tests on listening were also confident doing tests on speaking, reading, and writing. Also, students who were confident in doing tests on speaking were confident in reading and listening, and those students who were confident in reading tests were also confident in writing tests. However, students who were confident in speaking tests were not necessarily confident in writing tests.

TABLE V.  
PAIRED SAMPLES CORRELATIONS OF STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE IN DOING TESTS ON LANGUAGE SKILLS

	Description	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	I'm confident in doing tests on listening & I'm confident in doing tests on speaking	42	.489	.001
Pair 2	I'm confident in doing tests on listening & I'm confident in doing tests on reading	42	.344	.026
Pair 3	I'm confident in doing tests on listening & I'm confident in doing tests in writing	42	.337	.029
Pair 4	I'm confident in doing tests on speaking & I'm confident in doing tests on reading	42	.323	.037
Pair 5	I'm confident in doing tests on speaking & I'm confident in doing tests in writing	42	.177	.263
Pair 6	I'm confident in doing tests on reading & I'm confident in doing tests in writing	42	.493	.001

Tests can possibly motivate students to study. The time frame and the structure of a language course can encourage the students to prepare themselves for tests in order to achieve high scores and move to the next levels. Social and family pressure is another aspect that encourages the students to succeed in their English studies. In this situation, the students must learn lessons intensively in order to be able to better perform the tests and meet the requirements for the completion of their studies from the university.

Language tests may have a positive or negative influence on students' motivation to learn the target language. Students may respond differently to the effect of tests on their motivation in the learning process (McNamara, 2001; Hughes, 2003). This happens because the students may have different perceptions about tests. Students who participated in the research had mixed feelings when doing tests. As shown in Table 2, the majority of students (85.7 percent) experienced stress in relation to tests. Interestingly, a high proportion of students were also 'happy' when tests were administered to them. Table 4 describes that 61 percent of the students responded that they were happy to undertake the tests, while only 39 percent of them responded negatively. The students were under stress but they were also 'happy' because testing was a part of the process of the language studies. Clearly, they became much happier when they passed the tests and moved to the next level of the course.

However, the inclusion of testing procedures has often been looked on with mixed feelings by language teachers, since it is possible for stress and anxiety to have severe detrimental effects on student language. The result of this questionnaire appears to indicate that the majority of students accept that such stress is a normal part of learning and would much rather have tests included in their course, rather than excluded.

The results of the focus group discussions show that some of the students were very anxious to be able to complete their language studies. They had a high expectation of passing the language tests. Therefore, they studied the target language extensively in order to obtain perform well in the tests. Those students intended to complete their undergraduate degree in three and a half years.

There is a significant correlation at .001 (Table 3) between the students' happiness in doing tests and the learning motivation. This indicates that the happier the students were the more motivated they were in studying the target language. Teachers are thus encouraged to provide interesting and enjoyable learning materials and learning activities in order for the students to become positively motivated. If the students find the materials interesting, they are more likely to be happy and be motivated in the process of learning, and as a result, the student learning achievement may be improved. Although the results of tests in such courses may be viewed as having serious consequences for student career advancement, it seems clear that some levity, comfort, and easing of pressure is likely to prove productive for many such learners.

Interestingly, the student stress level was also significantly correlated with their learning motivation at .030 (Table 5), which means that the more stressed the students were the more motivated they were in their studies. This indicates that stress does not always have a negative effect on student learning but that it may also stimulate learning motivation.

Clearly, teachers need to be aware of possible dual effects of stress on students and try to maintain a productive stress level rather than a debilitating one. The findings of Chastain (1975) and Scovell (1978) are of importance in developing this realization.

Student confidence in doing tests was another factor investigated in this research. The results of the survey suggest that the students had different levels of confidence in doing tests across language skills that include listening, speaking, reading and writing. The students were most confident in speaking test but they were least confident in writing tests.

Speaking and writing are productive skills which require the students to do an extensive amount of practice in order to be able to better perform in the tests. The students may have different reasons for performing more confidently in speaking tests. As the information obtained from the focus group discussions indicates, the students had more opportunities to practice using the target language in the classrooms with their teachers or classmates and outside the classrooms with other users of the target language. Another reason is that students may experience less psychological pressure when doing speaking tests, as they can freely express their ideas which are related to the topic being discussed in the tests. Besides, spoken language can be perceived to lack substance an utterance can be changed or recanted quite quickly.

However, in writing tests, the students have to display a number of different skills at the same time. They are expected to be knowledgeable in writing well-structured paragraphs. They also have to possess sufficient knowledge of grammar and sufficient vocabulary in order to be able to produce different kinds of sentences to express their ideas in written contexts. Writing, too, is a more tangible; concrete piece of evidence of language skill whereas spoken language is transient and may be modified during production. Thus, the degree of accountability and responsibility for written text can be viewed to be heavier than that for spoken one. It is thus the substantial nature and judgmental attitudes on spelling, grammar, etc. that can cause a loss of confidence in relation to written formats.

Reading tests are in second place in terms of the students' confidence in doing tests of language skills, followed by tests on listening skills. The students were not highly confident in doing tests on listening and reading. Listening and reading skills are receptive skills which may require the students to possess the ability to receive and understand a variety of language used in different contexts. In doing listening and reading tests, the students may have less opportunity to produce the language but they have to be able to comprehend a range of varieties of spoken and written language. Since the end-product of these receptive skills is the social understanding achieved through communication, it becomes immediately and embarrassingly obvious if one does not achieve this understanding. One's basic social need to 'belong' to a group may well be impaired, so it is probably not surprising that such 'high stakes' activities may well be accompanied by some lack of confidence.

Celce-Murcia (2001) suggests that language skills and language components should be integrated into teaching in order the students can learn different skills simultaneously. This will also help the students to gain proficiency in those four language skills. The teacher has to provide teaching materials that enable the students to do exercises in different language skills. In the learning process, the teacher may emphasize one or two skills in order to be able to evaluate the students' progress in those emphasized skills during or after instruction. An appropriate aim for teachers may well be to try to instill the same confidence that characterizes speaking into the associated listening skill. Indeed, such integration is part of the foundation of the Communicative Approach to language learning and may be seen as being preferable to having the skills taught in isolation.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The administration of a test has both negative and positive effect on teaching and learning activities. Tests create student anxiety and stress in the process of learning. Nevertheless, the research findings also demonstrate that tests can motivate a majority of the students. Tests also benefit teachers since they provide information about the student learning progress or outcomes, the development of appropriate teaching materials and the selection of teaching methods.

Formal test administration tends to lead to students' stress and anxiety, and this tends also to lead to failure. The administration of tests, therefore, should minimize the students' stress and anxiety in order for the students to be motivated to prepare for tests and be relaxed during the tests. Thus, the students can perform better in the tests, as well as allowing the test itself to contribute positively to the students' language learning.

The tests provide a security blanket for students. Although tests produce stress and anxiety, the students are still encouraged to undertake the tests because tests are viewed as part of the integral structure of the language courses. The results of this research demonstrate a majority of the students (90 percent) respond that tests can motivate them to study the target language, because the tests become one of the processes of the language studies, the students are motivated to learn the target language extensively in order to improve language proficiency and expect to be able to perform well in the tests. The students are likely to be instrumentally motivated, because they learn the language in order to acquire proficiency and to succeed in the final semester tests. The students demonstrate different levels of confidence in terms of performing in tests across four language areas that include listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking tests are the most favored among the students and they are most confident in doing them. However, they are least confident in doing tests on writing. Reading tests are in second place in terms of the student confidence in undertaking tests, while listening tests are in third place. This description of the students' confidence in doing tests shows that the students have very different level of confidence in the tests of productive skills, while in the tests of receptive skills the student

confidence is not significantly different. It implies that the teaching of the four language skills should not be in isolation at the beginning of a course but they must be paired as has been previously proposed by Celce-Murcia (2001) that the language skills and the language components are taught integrately. The integration of the four language skills in language teaching learning process at the beginning of the course will accustom the learners with the test types used to assess their achievement, which in turn, from time to time, the known tests type will build up confidence of the learners to sit the language tests regardless of the type of the language skills. After getting a better confidence on any types of the language tests on language skill integrately, the learners may be then tested in isolation based on taught language skills.

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# The Mapping of Thematic Roles to Grammatical Functions in Mandarin *BA* Construction Denoting Causation: From the Perspective of Lexical Mapping Theory

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**Abstract**—NP1 in the position of the subject of the mandarin *BA* construction denoting causation is usually occupied by patientlike roles and NP2 immediately following *BA* is usually occupied by agentlike roles. The causative relation between NP1 and NP2, with the former being the Cause, and the latter the Affectee, derives from the word *BA*, which triggers in the lexicon the morpholexical operation of causativization when it unites with the predicate. The operation involves either assignment of causative roles Cause and Affectee to the existent thematic roles or insertion of a new role Cause to the thematic structure, with the prominence of Cause or the thematic role assigned Cause always being over the other roles. Having undergone this morpholexical operation, the thematic structure correctly maps to and generates the grammatical functional structure according to the general principles and conditions stipulated by the Lexical Mapping Theory (LMT). The result of this research shows that even for a construction as unique as the mandarin *BA* construction denoting causation compared with any other languages, LMT is still well applicable in explaining its role-function mapping.

**Index Terms**—*BA* construction denoting causation, Lexical Mapping Theory, thematic role, grammatical function, morpholexical operation

## I. INTRODUCTION

The traditional assumption that the mandarin *BA* construction semantically denotes disposal (Wang, 1980) has been constantly challenged. Jiang (1997), Shao and Zhao (2005) and Guo (2008), for example, argue that in addition to disposal, the *BA* construction can also denote causation. Moreover, Guo (2010) identifies a third denotation of the *BA* construction existing in modern (not contemporary) Chinese: suffering<sup>1</sup>. Sentences (1) through (3) below represent the three types of *BA* constructions respectively:

(1) 小高把那碗酒喝了。(Disposal)

*Xiao Gao ba nawanjiu he le.*

Xiao Gao BA that bowl of liquor drank ASP

Xiao Gao has disposed of that bowl of liquor by consuming it.

(2) 那碗酒把小高喝醉了。(Causation)

*Nawanjiu ba Xiao Gao he-zui le.*

that bowl of liquor BA Xiao Gao drink-drunken ASP

That bowl of liquor has caused Xiao Gao who consumed it to get drunken.

(3) 小高把个媳妇跑了。(Suffering)

*Xiao Gao ba ge xifu pao le.*

Xiao Gao BA a wife run away ASP

[Unfortunately] Xiao Gao's wife ran away.

The *BA* construction denoting disposal (hereinafter referred to as Disposal *BA*) represents how NP1, the subject of the construction which is usually the proto-agent, has disposed of NP2 immediately following *BA* which is usually the proto-patient (See Dowty, 1991, p. 572 for the discussion of proto-roles), through an action represented by a VP following *BA*+NP2.

The *BA* construction denoting causation (hereinafter referred to as Causation *BA*) describes how C (the Cause) has caused T (the Target) to have an R (a result) (Zou, 2001, p. 19), where C is in the position of NP1, the subject, which is sometimes the proto-patient [as in (2)] and sometimes assumes no thematic roles as in (4) below. T corresponds to NP2 which is usually the proto-agent, and the VP after *BA*+NP2 denotes both the action and its result.

<sup>1</sup> Actually, the *BA* construction with the denotation of suffering is not only found in modern Chinese, but also in contemporary Chinese, as is shown by (3) below. So I would like to group the *BA* constructions in contemporary Chinese into three types: those denoting disposal, causation and suffering.

(4) 这活儿把小高累倒了。

*Zhe huor ba Xiao Gao lei-dao le.*  
This work BA Xiao Gao tire - collapse ASP

This work has caused Xiao Gao to be so tired that he collapsed.

A distinctive feature of the Causation *BA* in contrast to the Disposal *BA* is that when the word *BA* and those preceding it are taken away<sup>2</sup>, the remaining part is still eligible, with the agent being the subject, and in such a case, *BA* may be viewed as a delexicalized verb which is semantically equal to *SHI* (使, meaning “to cause”) (Guo, 2008, p. 89). In Sentence (2), for example, after “*nawanjiu ba*” being taken away, the remaining part “*Xiao Gao he-zui le*” (Xiao Gao has got drunken) is still an eligible reading, whose subject is the agent. *BA* serves as the function of *SHI*, or to cause, i.e. it is that bowl of liquor that has caused Xiao Gao to get drunken.

The *BA* construction denoting suffering (hereinafter referred to as Suffering *BA*) means one suffering from damages, misfortune, dissatisfaction, etc., the structure of which can be represented as: (Subject the suffering entity) + *BA* + Object the theme + *V* + *le* the aspect (Guo, 2010, p. 50). In this type of construction, NP1 can be either vacant [as in (5)] or be the maliciary, i.e. the recipient of the misfortune [as in (3)], and NP2 is usually the proto-agent. When *BA* and the words preceding it are taken away, what remains is also an eligible reading, as in (3) where it reads as “*Xifu pao le*” (The wife has run away). However, NP1 is not the cause of the VP but the recipient of damages or misfortune caused by the VP. This is quite different from the Causation *BA*.

(5) 偏又把凤丫头病了。

*Pian you ba Feng yatou bing le.*  
Unfortunately again BA Xifeng girl get sick ASP  
Unfortunately Xifeng has got sick.

The thematic structures (or  $\theta$ -structures) in the semantic level of the three types of *BA* constructions are diversified, while their grammatical functional structures (or f-structures) in the syntactic level are almost the same: subject + oblique (*BA* NP2) + (retained object). How the latter is generated from the former is a topic worth in-depth exploration. Even within the same type of the *BA* construction, the  $\theta$ -structures vary from case to case, which gives rise to complicated process of generation of the f-structures. In this article, I will focus on one type of the *BA* construction – the Causation *BA* and explore within the framework of Lexical Mapping Theory (LMT) how its  $\theta$ -structures map to and generate the f-structures.

## II. LEXICAL MAPPING THEORY

LMT, initially proposed by Bresnan and Kanerva (1989), is “about the syntactic realization of the arguments of a predicate” (Falk, 2001, p. 101). It is a subordinate theory of Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG) developed in the 1970s. LMT has later been modified by Bresnan (2001), Falk (2001) and Her (2003), among others. In this article, I will base my analysis on Falk (2001, pp. 101-114)’s model (together with my own fine tuning), which distinguishes three hierarchical structures through which the thematic roles assigned by the predicate are mapped to the grammatical functions (GFs):

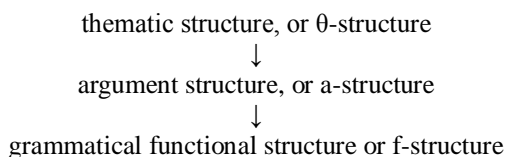


Figure 1. Mapping in LMT

The mapping between each structure is confined by certain principles and conditions, to which I will offer a brief introduction using the predicate *place* as an example (see also Li, 2011, 2012 and 2018).

(6) <i>place</i>	<ag	th	loc>.....1
$\theta$ -structure	[-o]	[-r]	[-o].....2
Addition of values		[+o]	[+r].....3
f-structure	SUBJ	OBJ	OBL <sub>loc</sub> .....4

Line 1 shows the  $\theta$ -structure of *place*, in which the order of the roles is arranged according to their prominence in the *thematic hierarchy*, and the left-most role is called the  $\hat{\theta}$  (theta hat).

### A. Thematic Hierarchy

ag(ent) > ben(eficiary) > exp(eriencer)/go(al) > ins(trument) > p(a)t(ient) / th(eme) > loc(ative)

In Line 2 is the a-structure of *place*, where *r* stands for “thematically restricted”, indicating whether a certain GF is restricted by thematic roles, i.e. whether only specific roles, not all roles, correspond to that function, and *o* is the symbol for “objective”, denoting whether the GF is object or not. The values [ $\pm r$ ] and [ $\pm o$ ] reflect the features of the GFs in the syntactical level, and they per se are arguments which also reflect the prominence of thematic roles in the

<sup>2</sup> Guo (2008, p. 89) argues that it is when the word *BA* (not *BA* together with the words preceding it) is taken away that the remaining part is eligible, but this may be true only for modern (not contemporary) Chinese, as is shown in such classics as *Red Chamber Dream*; it may not be true for contemporary Chinese, where only when both *BA* and the preceding words are taken away can one get eligible readings.

semantic level. Hence it can be said that a-structure is the locus linking both the  $\theta$ -structure and the f-structure. B below shows how the GFs are decomposed into values of features, and C are the principles of mapping from the  $\theta$ -structure to the a-structure.

#### B. Feature Decomposition of GFs

	[-o]	[+o]
[-r]	SUBJ	OBJ
[+r]	OBL $_{\theta}^3$	OBJ $_{\theta}$

#### C. $\theta$ -structure to A-structure Mapping

- Patients and themes map to [-r].
- Secondary patients and themes map to [+o] as a marked option.
- Non-theme/patient roles map to [-o].

According to C-c, both the *ag* and *loc* of *place* is mapped to [-o], and according to C-a, the *th* is mapped to [-r] – this is how the a-structure in Line 2 is generated.

Line 3 shows the process of mapping for the a-structure to the f-structure, which is constrained by three principles and two conditions:

#### D. A-structure to F-structure Mapping

- SUBJ mapping 1: A [-o] which is  $\hat{\phi}$  maps to SUBJ.
- SUBJ mapping 2: [-r] may map to SUBJ.
- NonSUBJ mapping: Add positive values of features where possible.

#### E. Well-formedness of A-structure to F-structure Mapping

- Function-argument biuniqueness (FAB): Each a-structure role corresponds to a unique f-structure function, and each f-structure function corresponds to a unique a-structure role.
- The subject condition: Every predicator must have a subject.

Based on D-a, the first argument of *place* [-o], which corresponds to the  $\hat{\phi}$  – agent in the  $\theta$ -structure, is directly mapped to the SUBJ in the f-structure. The second argument [-r] can also be mapped to SUBJ according to D-b, but this would violate E-a because, if so, SUBJ would correspond to two arguments. At this time, D-c stands out and adds the positive value [+o] to [-r] (it is [+o], not [+r], that is added because the latter would contradict the existing value [-r]). Similarly, the positive value [+r] is added to the third argument [-o]. Finally, both the second and third arguments are respectively mapped to OBJ and OBL $_{loc}$  according to B.

The afore-mentioned principles and conditions are supposed to be universal across languages, but they may not be applicable directly to individual languages for the sake of parametric variation. Certain morpholexical operations, including deletion, insertion or change of roles (or sometimes of arguments<sup>4</sup>), are needed to modify the  $\theta$ -structure (or the a-structure) within the lexicon before the universal principles and conditions are applicable.

### III. $\theta$ -STRUCTURES OF CAUSATION BA

The VP in the Causation BA is usually a verb compound: it can be a resultative verb compound (RVC), like *he-zui* in (2) and *lei-dao* in (4), or a V-DE construction, “a complex stative construction” (Li, 2015, p. 2), like *jide tuantuanzhuang* and *chide zhi xiang tu* in (7) and (8).

(7) 小高把他妈急得团团转。

Xiao Gao ba tama ji-de- tuantuanzhuang.

Xiao Gao BA his mum worry-DE pace around

Xiao Gao worried his mum so much that she paced around (like a cat on hot bricks).

(8) 这碗饭把小高吃得直想吐。

Zhewanfan ba Xiao Gao chi-de- zhi- xiang- tu.

This bowl of rice BA Xiao Gao eat-DE almost want vomit

This bowl of rice that Xiao Gao was eating almost caused him to vomit.

The Head of the compound (which is the first verb) in the Causation BA can be a one-valency verb like *lei* and *ji*, or a two-valency verb like *chi* and *he*. Most of the compounds can not be followed by a retained object, but they can if they are composed of the Head and *cheng le* (become ASP):

(9) 那条阴沟把这好好的孩子摔成了个残废。(Zou, 2001, p.18)

Natiao yingou ba zhe haohaode haizi shuai-cheng le ge caifei.

That ditch BA this able-bodied child tumble-become ASP a cripple

<sup>3</sup> OBL = oblique case, as “on his head” in “He placed a rabbit on his head”. It is a grammatical function whose role (usually thematic role) is explicitly marked, either by a preposition (as in English) or a semantic Case. The subscript “ $\theta$ ” indicates it is restricted to certain thematic roles. In the case of *place*, only the role of *loc* can fill the position, so this grammatical function is represented as OBL $_{loc}$ . OBJ $_{\theta}$  refers to the secondary object in some languages which is characteristically restricted to a single thematic role or a small set of thematic roles.

<sup>4</sup> Traditional LMT did not mention operation of arguments, nor change of roles, but in some mandarin expressions like BA constructions and resultative verb compounds, morpholexical operations in these aspects are quite necessary to ensure correct mapping from the  $\theta$ -structure to the f-structure.

That ditch into which the child was tumbled has turned him from an able-bodied person to a cripple.

- (10) 那副药把小高吃成了个傻子。  
*Nafuyao ba Xiao Gao chi-cheng le ge shazi.*  
 That medicine BA Xiao Gao eat-become ASP a fool  
 That medicine Xiao Gao took has caused him to become a fool.

Differences in the valency of the verbs and the presentation (or lack) of retained objects naturally lead to different  $\theta$ -structures:

- (2a) *he-zui* <ag th <exp>>  
*Xiao Gao nawanjiu Xiao Gao*
- (4a) *lei-dao* <exp <th>>  
*Xiao Gao Xiao Gao*
- (7a) *ji-de-tuantuanzhuan* <exp <th>>  
*tama tama*
- (8a) *chi-de-zhi-xiang-tu* <ag pt <exp>>  
*Xiao Gao zhewanfan Xiao Gao*
- (9a) *shuai-cheng* <ag <th<sub>1</sub> th<sub>2</sub>>>  
*haizi haizi canfei*
- (10a) *chi-cheng* <ag pt <th<sub>1</sub> th<sub>2</sub>>>  
*Xiao Gao nafuyao Xiao Gao shazi*

The illustrations, where the broken line means one entity bearing two roles simultaneously, the outer pointed brackets represent the  $\theta$ -structure of the Head and the inner ones indicate the  $\theta$ -structure of the other verb following the Head, provide us with a complicated picture of the  $\theta$ -structures of the Causation BA.

What is noticeable is that one entity may bear two thematic roles in this type of constructions, like “Xiao Gao” in (2a) who bears the role of agent assigned by *he* and simultaneously the role of experiencer assigned by *zui*. These two roles constitute one “composite role”, represented as *ag-exp* (see Her, 2004 and Li, 2011 for more discussion about composite roles).

It is also noticeable that some VPs like *lei-dao*, *ji-de-tuantuanzhuan* and *shuai-cheng* may assign an additional role when appearing in the BA construction, a situation which can not possibly occur in a more “normal” reading where the proto-agent is at its usual position of the subject:

- (4b) 小高累倒了。  
*Xiao Gao lei-dao le.*  
 Xiao Gao tire-collapse ASP  
 Xiao Gao has got so tired that he collapsed.
- (7b) 他妈急得团团转。  
*Tama ji-de-tuantuanzhuan.*  
 His mum worry-DE-pace around  
 His mum was worried so much that she paced around (like a cat on hot bricks).
- (9b) 孩子摔成了个残废。  
*Haizi shuai-cheng le ge caifei.*  
 Child tumble-become ASP a cripple  
 The child was tumbled into a cripple.

In these “normal” readings, only one or two roles are assigned (the composite role is counted as one role), but in their corresponding BA constructions (4), (7) and (9), an additional role is introduced, borne respectively by *zhehuoer*, *Xiao Gao* and *nataiao yingou*.

How are such complicated  $\theta$ -structures of the Causation BA mapped to the f-structures? This is the question to be addressed in the following sections. Since the  $\theta$ -structures of both RVC and V-DE constructions are similar to each other and the paths of mapping from the  $\theta$ -structures to the f-structures are also similar, I will only focus on the former in the following discussion.

#### IV. F-STRUCTURE OF CAUSATION BA

LFG divides GFs into two types (Dalrymple, 2001):

Governable: SUBJECT, OBJECT, OBJECT<sub>0</sub>, COMPLEMENT, XCOMPLEMENT, OBLIQUE<sub>0</sub>

Non-governable: ADJunct, XADJunct<sup>5</sup>

Studies in LMT frequently focuses on the four major governable functions: SUBJ, OBJ, OBJ<sub>θ</sub> and OBL<sub>θ</sub>. There is no exception for this study. What is out of question is that NP1 in the Causation *BA* corresponds to SUBJ, but what remains a problem is the GF NP2 corresponds to. This actually is determined by the syntactic properties and semantic functions of the very word *BA*. It has been labeled as a verb, co-verb, light verb or preposition respectively by different researchers (Zhang & Bai, 2013, p. 139). But at present a consensus seems to have been arrived at in the field of generative grammar, which views *BA* as a light verb. Huang, Li and Li (2009), for example, claims in *The Syntax of Chinese* that “*BA* is an explicit light verb which does not assign thematic roles and has a VP as its complement; the NP following *BA* is the external OBJ of the VP, which is semantically related to its internal OBJ” (As cited in Hu, 2011, p. 208).

As for the semantic functions of *BA*, an obvious one is to express the meaning of causation. What is equally important is the function of introducing and marking a role of the VP (since it does not assign any roles) represented by NP2. In this sense, NP2 can be said to correspond to the OBL, a GF that is “associated with particular semantic roles and marked to indicate their function overtly” (Dalrymple, 2001, p. 26). In the *BA* construction, only specific roles can appear in the position of NP2, and what is more, they are overtly marked by *BA*. This conforms to the semantic function of an OBL.

Nevertheless, it is not without controversy concerning the category label of *BA*. As has been pointed out by Kit (1998, p. 499), since Zhang (1956), researchers of Chinese linguistics have tended to see *BA* as a simple preposition. Yang (2014, p. 418) also implicitly take *BA* as a preposition in the discussion of the thematic roles of the *BA* construction. Wen and Cheng (2007, p. 112), on the other hand, explicitly exclude *BA* from the category of light verbs. However, the controversy about *BA*'s syntactic properties does not alter its semantic function as a marker of specific roles of the VP. Hence, the fact of NP2 corresponding to OBL does not change with the change of the category label of *BA*.

In addition to NP1 and NP2, NP3 also exists in some cases when the VP has its own retained object. In such cases, of course, NP3 corresponds to OBJ.

Take again (2), (4), (9) and (10). Their f-structures are represented as:

(2b) *he-zui* <SUBJ            OBL<sub>ag-exp</sub>>  
      *nawanjiu    Xiao Gao*

(4c) *lei-dao* <SUBJ        OBL<sub>exp-th</sub>>  
      *zhehuoer    Xiao Gao*

(9c) *shuai-cheng* <SUBJ            OBL<sub>ag-th</sub>        OBJ>  
      *Natiao yingou    haizi        canfei*

(10b) *chi-cheng* <SUBJ        OBL<sub>ag-th</sub>        OBJ>>  
      *Nafuyao    Xiao Gao    shazi*

It can be seen that diversified as the  $\theta$ -structures of the Causation *BA* are, its f-structures are quite similar (SUBJ, OBL, with or without OBJ). Then how does mapping from the former to the latter occur? Can LMT correctly predict the mapping since the Causation *BA* is an alien construction compared with the majority of other patterns both in Chinese and other languages including English on which LMT was developed? These questions will be answered in the next section.

## V. MAPPING OF $\Theta$ -STRUCTURE TO F-STRUCTURE

For the Causation *BA*, the first problem concerning mapping is that of the composite roles, which means two roles are simultaneously mapped to one GF, which would violate FAB (E-a). In (2a), for instance, the two constituent roles *ag* and *exp* of the composite role *ag-exp* are mapped respectively to [-o] and [-o], which in turn are simultaneously mapped to one single GF, namely, OBL [as is shown in (2c)]. To tackle this problem, Her (2004) and Li (2011) propose a morpholexical operation rule of “role suppression”, which means through the operation undergoing in the lexicon, the role assigned by the Head of the VP figures prominently and suppresses the other role, with only the former being mapped to the a-structure and further to the f-structure (Li, 2011). Under this rule, the mapping of (2c) is modified [as is shown in (2d) where  $\emptyset$  indicates role suppression].

(2c) *he-zui* <ag        th        <exp>>  
          [-o]            [-o]  
          |  
          OBL

(2d) *he-zui* <ag        th        <exp>>  
          <ag        th        < $\emptyset$ >>

<sup>5</sup> Governable and non-governable mean whether the grammatical function can be governed by the predicate or not.



Composite roles are not unique to the Causation *BA* or the other types of *BA* constructions; they are ubiquitous in Chinese where verb compounds exist in large numbers. Whenever there is a verb compound, there is the possibility of the existence of composite roles because each of the constituent verbs will assign its own roles, some of which may be co-borne by one single entity. So the solution to the mapping problem of composite roles is just a tiny part of the story; more is needed to tackle the mapping problem of the whole construction.

Since the complexity and diversity of the  $\theta$ -structures of the VP in the Causation *BA* are largely attributed to the Heads with different valencies, as can be seen from the discussion in Section 3, and since different  $\theta$ -structures will naturally lead to different mapping processes, in this section I will explore the  $\theta$ -structure to f-structure mapping by dividing the Causation *BA* constructions into two groups: those with a two-valency Head in the VP and those with a one-valency Head in the VP.

A. Mapping When the Head Is of Two Valencies

If the Head of the VP in the Causation *BA* is a two-valency verb, it will assign two roles, one of which may form a composite role with one assigned by the other verb in the compound. Take (2) again as an example:

(2e) <i>he-zui</i>	┌───────────┐		
	<ag	th	<exp>>
Role suppression	<ag	th	<∅>
A-structure	[-o]	[-r]	
Addition of values		[+o]	
F-structure	SUBJ?	OBJ?	
	<i>Xiao Gao</i>	<i>nawanjiu</i>	

Following the standard path of mapping regulated by the LMT principles and conditions, the composite role *ag-exp* is mapped to SUBJ, and the role *th* to OBJ. But what we get is a reading without *BA*: *Xiao Gao he-zui le nawanjiu* (Xiao Gao consumed that bowl of liquor and got drunken), instead of the original *BA* construction. This means that parametric variation exists with the mapping of this particular construction. We can assume that, when *BA* unites with the VP in the lexicon, some morpholexical operation has to function to modify the  $\theta$ -structure or a-structure before the LMT principles and conditions can function well to ensure the correct mapping. In other words, it is the introduction of *BA* that triggers the operation that “rectifies” the unconventional linguistic parameter and brings it back to the “right path.”

Then what is the morpholexical operation *BA* triggers? A comparison of the reading without *BA* and the one with *BA* [(2)] may reveal that the former is an objective report of the fact, while the latter puts stress on causation: It is exactly that bowl of liquor that has caused Xiao Gao to get drunken. This is why we call this type of *BA* construction as Causation *BA*, and it is dependent on *BA* that the meaning of causation is known to the readers. Hence, we can assume that the morpholexical operation of causativization is triggered when *BA* unites with *he-zui* in the lexicon. Causativization assigns two causative roles, namely Cause and Affectee, to the existing roles, bringing about the changes of their hierarchical relation, i.e. the prominence in the  $\theta$ -structure, so that they can be correctly mapped to the f-structure<sup>6</sup>. The lexical rule that governs this operation can be tentatively expressed as:

F. Causativization of the Causation *BA*

When *BA* denoting causation unites with a verb compound, the Cause (C) is assigned to the proto-patient of the Head and Affectee (A) to its proto-agent; the role assigned C has prominence over any other roles in the  $\theta$ -structure.

In this rule, it is the roles of the Head, not those of the other verb, that are assigned causative roles. This is because the latter have been suppressed in the morpholexical operation of role suppression which functions prior to causativization. The assignment of causative roles stipulated in the rule is based on the observation that the proto-agent of the Head (borne by NP2) is always acted upon by the Cause, while the proto-patient (borne by NP1) is always the Cause that acts upon the proto-agent.

Now apply this rule to the mapping of (2) and we will see the right outcome:

(2f) <i>he-zui</i>	┌───────────┐		
	<ag	th	<exp>>
Role suppression	<ag	th	<∅>
Causativization	< th-C	ag-A	<∅>
A-structure	[-r]	[-o]	
Addition of values		[+r]	

<sup>6</sup> Causativization is proposed by Li (1995) in the discussion of the mapping between thematic roles and syntactic arguments of mandarin RVC within the framework of GB. The core concepts are: thematic roles and causative roles are simultaneously assigned to the arguments when causative relation exists between the constituent elements of the verb compound; similar to thematic roles, there is also hierarchical relation between causative roles, with Cause being more prominent than Affectee; causative hierarchy has priority over thematic hierarchy whenever there is a conflict. In this article I borrow the concept of causativization to discuss the role-function mapping of the Causation *BA* within the framework of LMT.

F-structure	SUBJ	OBL <sub>ag-exp</sub>
	<i>nawanjiu</i>	<i>Xiao Gao</i>

First, *exp* is suppressed due to the rule of role suppression; then, Rule F is activated to assign A and C respectively to *ag* and *th*, and this inverts their hierarchical relation, with *th* being more prominent than *ag* and becoming the  $\hat{\alpha}$ . Till now, the  $\theta$ -structure has been modified in the lexicon, and what follows is the functioning of the LMT principles and conditions which will regulate the follow-up mapping: One, *th* is mapped to [-*r*] according to C-a, and *ag* to [-*o*] according to C-c; two, [-*r*] may be mapped to SUBJ according to D-b and this is strengthened because of its correspondence to the  $\hat{\alpha}$ ; three, [-*o*] is added a positive value [+*r*] according to D-c and is mapped to OBJ according to B. The result we get is exactly the f-structure as is shown in (2b), which manifests that Rule F is legitimate in modifying the  $\theta$ -structure of the VP so that it can be mapped to the f-structure along the right path under the guidance of the LMT principles and conditions.

To test the applicability of Rule F, I will examine a more complicated case [see (10)]: the Causation *BA* with the VP having a retained object where the Head is still of two valencies.

(10c) <i>chi-cheng</i>	┌──────────┐			
Role suppression	<ag	pt	<th <sub>1</sub>	th <sub>2</sub> >>
Causativization	<ag	pt	< $\emptyset$	th <sub>2</sub> >>
	< pt-C	ag-A	< $\emptyset$	th <sub>2</sub> >>
A-structure	[- <i>r</i> ]	[- <i>o</i> ]		[- <i>r</i> ]
Addition of values		[+ <i>r</i> ]		[+ <i>o</i> ]
F-structure	SUBJ	OBL <sub>ag-th</sub>		OBJ
	<i>nafuyao</i>	<i>Xiao Gao</i>		<i>shazi</i>

Similar to the mapping in (2f), *pt* and *ag* are correctly mapped to SUBJ and OBL<sub>0</sub> when *BA* triggers the morpholexical operation of causativization. Th<sub>2</sub>, which corresponds to NP3 the retained object, not influenced by causativization since it is not the role assigned by the Head, is also correctly mapped to OBJ according to the LMT principles and conditions. It shows that, complicated as the  $\theta$ -structure of the Causation *BA* is, Rule F together with the LMT principles and conditions can guarantee correct role-function mapping.

*B. Mapping When the Head Is of One Valency*

Different from the verb compounds with a two-valency Head, those with a one-valency Head will usually assign new thematic roles as long as they are integrated into the Causation *BA* (see Section III). This is also assumably attributed to the semantic function of *BA*, which triggers a kind of morpholexical operation that adds a new thematic role for the compound in the lexicon when it unites with the latter. Take (4) as an example. The VP *lei-dao* only assigns one composite role *exp-th* (4a) before *BA* joins it, but an additional role borne by *zhe huoer* appears after *BA* joins it. This role can not be *ag* for it does not initiate the action of *lei* tire, nor can it be *exp* for it is not *zhe huoer* but Xiao Gao who felt tired. It can not be any other agent-like roles, either. As a matter of fact, instead of being a thematic role, it is purely a causative role, namely the Cause, that brings about the consequence of *Xiao Gao lei* (Xiao Gao got tired). Here what *BA* triggers is not the assignment of causative roles to the existent thematic roles but the insertion of C to the original  $\theta$ -structure. Likewise, we can assume that C has the prominence over any other roles, i.e. it being the  $\hat{\alpha}$ . We also assume that it is mapped to [-*o*] since the NP representing C generally will not be the OBJ. Then we get another lexical rule:

G. Cause insertion of the Causation *BA*:

When *BA* denoting causation unites with a verb compound, the Cause is inserted to the latter's  $\theta$ -structure, and is kept prominent over the other roles and mapped to [-*o*].

According to this rule, the mapping of (4) can be represented as:

(4d) <i>lei-dao</i>	┌──────────┐			
Role suppression		<exp	<th>>	
Insertion	< C	exp	< $\emptyset$ >>	
A-structure	[- <i>o</i> ]	[- <i>o</i> ]		
Addition of values		[+ <i>r</i> ]		
F-structure	SUBJ	OBL <sub>exp</sub>		
	<i>zhe huoer</i>	<i>Xiao Gao</i>	<i>Xiao Gao</i>	

C, after being inserted, becomes the  $\hat{\alpha}$  and is mapped to [-*o*] and further to SUBJ according to D-a. *Exp* is mapped to OBL<sub>0</sub> according to C-c and D-c. So the mapping is successfully accomplished.

Rule G is also applicable to the Causation *BA* with a retained OBJ. Take (9) as an example:

(9d) <i>shuai-cheng</i>	┌──────────┐			
Role suppression		<ag	<th <sub>1</sub>	th <sub>2</sub> >>
Insertion	< C	ag	< $\emptyset$	th <sub>2</sub> >>
A-structure	[- <i>o</i> ]	[- <i>o</i> ]		[- <i>r</i> ]
Addition of values		[+ <i>r</i> ]		[+ <i>o</i> ]



F-structure	SUBJ	OBL <sub>ag-th1</sub>	OBJ
	<i>nataio yingou</i>	<i>haizi</i>	<i>canfei</i>

As a matter of fact, Rule G, like Rule F, is a kind of causativization by nature since it changes a reading without causative meaning (*haizi shuai-cheng le ge canfei* The child was tumbled into a cripple) into one with causative meaning [(10)] by inserting the causative role Cause (represented by *nataio yingou*). Besides, in the lexicon, *BA* is the identical word with the one in the previously discussed case, i.e. the Causation *BA* with a verb compound whose Head is a two-valency verb, which means that it is redundant or even contradictory to govern causativization triggered by the same *BA* with two different rules. Therefore, it is quite necessary to integrate F and G into one single rule to govern the two kinds of causativization which are seemingly different but in essence are the same. Just two steps are needed to accomplish the integration: First, naming the two rules with one term: causativization, and second, clarifying when to insert and when to assign the causative roles. Then the integrated rule can be represented as:

#### H. Causativization of the Causation *BA*:

When *BA* denoting causation unites with a verb compound, it either inserts C (the Cause) to the latter's  $\theta$ -structure and maps it to [-o] (when the Head is a one-valency verb), or assign C to the proto-patient of the Head and A (the Affectee) to its proto-agent (when the head is a two-valency verb); C or the role assigned C has prominence over any other roles in the  $\theta$ -structure.

This rule covers both cases of the Causation *BA* which have different  $\theta$ -structures and gets *BA* to automatically determine whether to insert or assign causative roles based on the valency of the Head so that redundancy and randomness are avoided.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The VPs that can enter the Causation *BA* are usually verb compounds like RVCs and V-DE constructions, the Head of which can be of one valency or two valencies. When the very word *BA* denoting causation unites with the VPs in the lexicon, it will trigger the morpholexical operation of causativization which either inserts the causative role Cause to the  $\theta$ -structure of the Head when it is of one valency or assigns the two causative roles Cause and Affectee to its existent thematic roles when it is of two valencies. The inserted Cause will be mapped to [-o]; the Cause or the role assigned Cause possesses prominence higher than any other roles in the  $\theta$ -structure. The  $\theta$ -structures of the Causation *BA*, having undergone this morpholexical operation, are mapped successfully to the f-structures following the path stipulated by the LMT principles and conditions.

The result of this research provides adequate evidence for the explanatory power of LMT whose principles and conditions that are hypothesized to be universal across languages can ensure the correct mapping of  $\theta$ -structures to f-structures of the Causation *BA* after morpholexical operation that is of language-specific parametric variation, no matter how diversified and complicated the construction's  $\theta$ -structures are and how alien its f-structure may seem to be, compared with other languages like English.

As has been mentioned, there are three types of *BA* constructions in contemporary Chinese. Even though they are gathered under the same umbrella of "*BA* constructions", the word *BA* in each type has different semantic functions, which means that the morpholexical operation *BA* triggers may be different and accordingly the  $\theta$ -structure to f-structure mapping may also be different. It is not likely that one lexical rule be applied to govern the morpholexical operations of all types of *BA* constructions. It may be legitimate to see *BA* in each type as a different word stored in the lexicon which functions differently in its domain. Therefore, the three types of *BA* constructions need to be investigated separately in order to explore the different ways of realization of the  $\theta$ -structure in the surface f-structure. I have discussed the Disposal *BA* elsewhere (Li, 2018) and the Causation *BA* in this article; further research is needed to explore the Suffering *BA*.

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# Basis of Designing Test Questions of English Language That Reflect Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

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**Abstract**—Teaching is one of the most important professions that affect different aspects of life. Brown (1994) stated that testing and teaching are different, but they are interwoven and interdependent, that it is difficult to tease them apart. Teachers teach, and then test to find out if they had achieved their course objectives. As teachers sometimes fail or find difficulties to come out with perfect test that backwash the whole process of course learning; in other words they fail to construct test that meets all intended learning outcomes (ILOs). So, this paper aims at: finding out reasons behind questions' weakness of English Language tests, and finding solutions that can help educators write their test-questions in scientific pedagogical way, that tests all course content, and reflects (ILOs). The researcher used the descriptive analytical method, a teachers' questionnaire is used as instrument to collect data, and 10 tests' questions were analyzed to tackle reasons behind questions' weakness. Participants of this study are 22 instructors from College of Science & Arts, Muhayil "KKU" Finding indicated reasons behind questions' weakness of English Language tests are the inadequate way of designing tests, as a result of ignorance of the basics of test questions criteria and lacking knowledge of how to use Bloom Taxonomy and (TOS). Instructors need training about how to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specification in designing Tests' Questions of English Language in a pedagogical way.

**Index Terms**—designing, table of specification (TOS), Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching and testing are integrated, it is impossible to work in either field without being concerned with the other. Scientific measurement ensure accuracy and form the foundation for test theory , Brown (1994) stated that testing and teaching are different, but they are interwoven and interdependent, it is difficult to tease them apart. Teachers teach their students language and then test, they teach them for the whole year then test them to find out if they have achieved their goal or not. Writing test questions is not a matter of opening a book and writing questions that have answers inside the book, it is a scientific process that tests students' learning outcomes, it helps teachers find out if they have achieved their desired planed objectives and learning outcomes of a course or not. During my work as a teacher I used to make my tests the last month before the assigned time for it, and they always test lower level of thinking, with experience, I learnt to start making my test questions from the 1<sup>st</sup> day I start teaching my course, at the end of the semester I prepare dozens of questions, but not in a helpful way that help me choose the right question for the right learning outcome. Later I learnt how to write test-questions that are aligned with intended learning outcomes, this happened after getting a training titled "How to make a questions' bank" done by the Ministry of General Education in Sudan. After the training, when I was chosen by Sudan Ministry of General Education / Sudan Examinations & Evaluation Directorate in 2009, to feed Sudan Secondary Certificate questions' bank, I practiced what I have learnt. By participating in feeding the questions' bank with 20 exams - questions for S.S.C in 2010, which was a unique and fruitful experience for me that helped me write my test-questions in a pedagogical way.

CBU (2017) pointed that learning outcomes reflect what a person must do or know through the educational process. Learning outcomes are the most important part in curriculum design, as they provide a clear map for designing, delivering and testing procedure

By the end of the any educational process, teachers test students to:

- Evaluate students' performance.
- Identify students' strength and weakness.
- Reinforce learning and teaching.
- See which part of the syllabus needs amendments.
- Gain college credit.
- Provide a way to measure a teacher and/or school's effectiveness.
- Provide a basis for entry into an internship, program, or college.
- Motivate learning when students learn from their mistakes.
- Have a wash back on teaching methods and techniques used by teachers.

Any of the previous learning outcomes or reasons requires testing. As testing is a scientific process. Educator tests samples of what the students learn, so this sample should be chosen carefully to backwash teaching methods and techniques that are applied and what have been learnt.

**This paper aims at:**

- 1- Finding out reasons behind questions' weakness of English Language tests.
- 2- Finding solutions that can help educators write their test-questions in scientific pedagogical way that test all course content, and reflect intended learning outcomes.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bloom (1965) stated most of our tests test lower level of thinking, then Wiggins G. (1992) pointed to consider higher level of thinking in instruction and assessment, to assess students' ability of problem solving. Wiggins, G. (1992) stated good teaching is inspirable by good testing. McMillan (2003) pointed that variety of strategies employed by teachers in the educational process to teach their students, are reflected by assessment, which illustrate how students experienced during process of learning. McMillan also pointed that Shepard in (1997)(2000a)(2000b) has argued that "traditional assessment perspectives based on traditional behaviorist theories of learning "scientific measurement" and conventional psychometric principle (i.e. those important for large scale standardized objective test) conflict with implication for classroom assessment derived from more contemporary views of learning represented by cognitive constructivist and interpretive paradigms. Brown's (2004) showed the relationship among testing, assessing and teaching, and then showed how teaching overlaps assessment and measurement, he pointed that the reason of testing is to evaluate learners' competence. During ongoing processes, teachers provide instructions along with assessment in order to evaluate how learners acquire and produce what they have learned in the classrooms. Thus, assessment, measurement, tests are interrelated to teaching. Reynolds, Livingston, & Willson (2006) argued that although many teachers love teaching, they have negative interest in testing students. John Biggs and Catherine Tang (2007) stated: *Designing assessment tasks should be aligned to intended learning outcomes ILOs, this assessment task should tell us what and how well our students achieved from the intended learning outcomes, and each assessment task may address several ILOs.* Alexis & Ricardo (2009) highlighted the importance of providing adequate training in language assessment for all prospective language teachers in Colombia, as language teachers are not trained to construct assessment design that helps students to be motivated and engaged or enhanced in the learning process. What Alexis & Ricardo highlighted is probably the same situation in most Arab countries. Umer & Omer (2015) reviewed many researches that indicate teaching can be affected by testing either positively, negatively or even both, this depends on tests and tasks nature, poor test will results undesirable effect on both teaching and learning. All reviewed studies above agreed that tests and teaching cannot be separated, they strongly affect achieving the desired learning outcomes.

Before preparing any test educators must know:

- 1- Bloom Taxonomy to decide which learning area or domain (cognitive domain, affective domain, psychomotor domain) you want to examine.
- 2- Types of questions, their advantages and disadvantages.
- 3- Validity, reliability and their relation with leaning outcomes of the course.
- 4- Table of Specifications. (TOS)
- 5- Level of difficulties of the test questions.

### A. Bloom Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy was created by Benjamin Bloom 1965 in order to promote higher forms of thinking in education he developed it in 1979. He divided these Taxonomy to three learning domains:

- Cognitive Domain: test mental skills. (knowledge)
- Affective Domain: test growth in feelings or emotional areas. (attitude or self)
- Psychomotor Domain: test manual or physical skills. (skills)

Figure1 below illustrate the three learning domains.

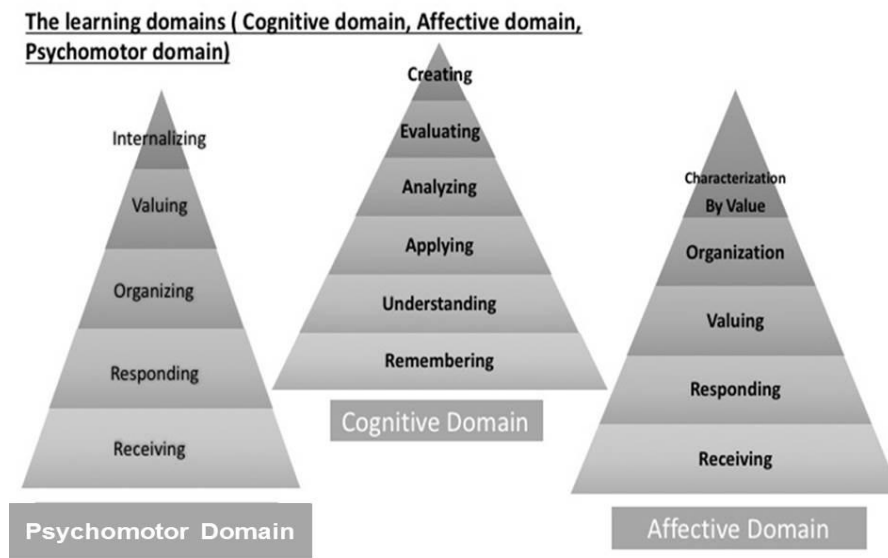


Figure.1 Bloom's Learning Domains  
 Source: <https://www.papermasters.com/taxonomy-learning.html>

As cognitive domain is usually used to test language learning, this paper will focus on how to use the cognitive domain to make test questions. Benjamin Bloom and colleagues have suggested six levels of learning cognitive domain. These six levels are: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating. To achieve the educational objectives Bloom classifies the educational process in the cognitive domain starting from the simplest behavior "remembering" to the most complex "creating". The first one must be mastered before the next one can take place to serve the development of intellectual abilities and skills.

Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl; former students of Bloom; in 2000 rearranged the levels of the cognitive domain in the mid-nineties and made some changes in the higher levels , which perhaps the most noticeable ones being, see figure 2 below to recognize the change.

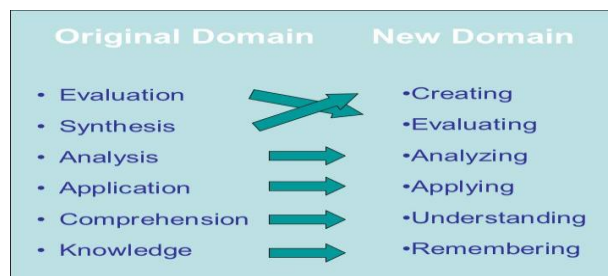


Figure.2 Original Taxonomy vs. Revised One  
 Source: <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html>

Each learning level in the cognitive domain is assigned for intended learning outcomes or objective .Figure 3 below illustrates the six cognitive domains learning levels, and their objective, it also illustrates the sequence and the development of knowledge and concepts through the educational process form the easiest level “remembering” to the most difficult level “creating”.

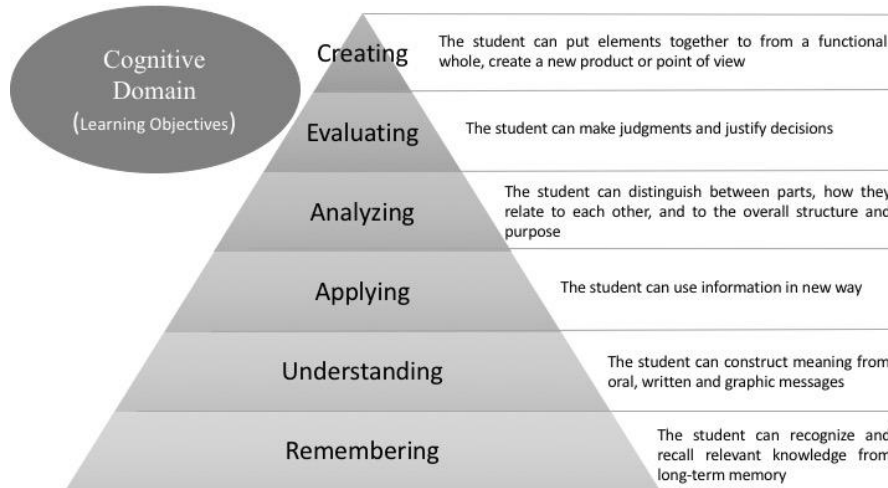


Figure 3: Cognitive Domain (Learning Objectives)  
 Source: <http://edu4techs.com/archives/3069>

After learning, the objectives of each learning level of the cognitive domain, it is important to learn about stem verbs used to phrase learning objectives of each domain, The Learning and Teaching Unit at the University of New South Wales in Australia have presented a list of verbs to help educators to construct learning outcomes which align with Bloom Taxonomy. Figure 4 below illustrates some of the stem verbs that are used to write learning objectives of each level of the cognitive domain, and help teachers: 1. Map their teaching. 2. Achieve learning objectives of the cognitive domain. 3. Use the right stem verb in writing tests - questions.

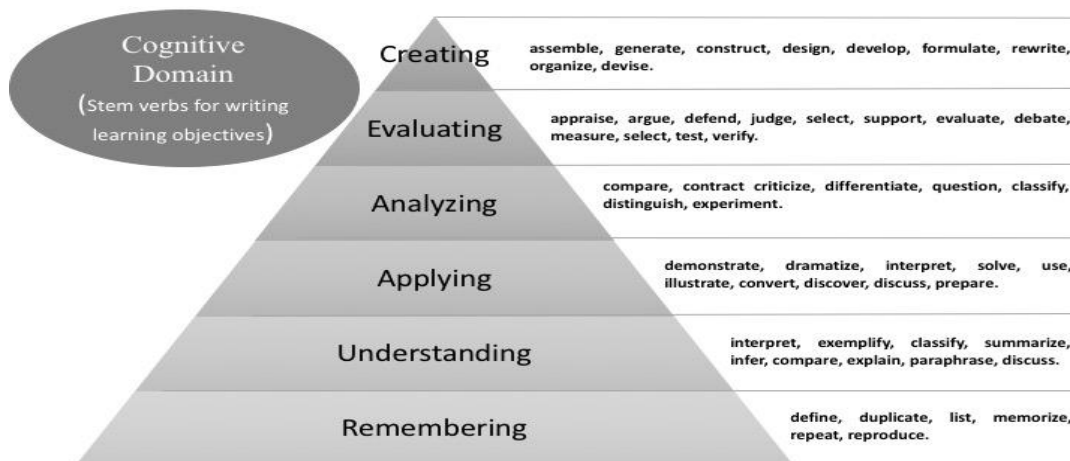


Figure 4: Cognitive Domain (Stem verbs for writing learning objectives)  
 Source: <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>

**B. Types of Questions**

Tracy (2015) pointed there are two types of tests questions, they can be objective or subjective questions, each type of these questions has its advantages and disadvantages which teachers should consider when they write their test; these advantages and disadvantages are not covered in this paper.

Writing test-questions on any given subject matter must be prepared according to the objectives and learning outcomes of the course, teachers must choose the best test format for the cognitive ability or comprehension that they seek to evaluate, and this format of test-questions must be suitable to achieve desired learning outcomes of course. So before writing a test, it is vital to specify; what do you want to test? what is the objective of the test? These questions will help you to choose the suitable type of questions; there are different types of test such as:

- A proficiency test is one that measures a candidate's overall ability in a language; it isn't related to a specific course.
- An achievement test on the other hand tests the students' knowledge of the material that has been taught on a course.
- A diagnostic test highlights the strong and weak points that a learner may have in a particular area.
- A prognostic test attempts to predict how a student will perform on a course.

Tests types mentioned above are constructed by objective or subjective questions; the table below illustrates main types of tests-questions.

TABLE I  
TYPES OF TEST-QUESTIONS

Tests questions			
No.	A- Objective Questions	No.	B- Subjective Questions
1	Multiple choice questions. (MCQs)	1	Short answer questions
2	True/false questions	2	Essay questions: a- Guided writing questions. b- Open writing questions.
3	Matching questions	3	Performance test / Oral questions
4	Fill-in-the-Blank Questions		

C. *Validity, Reliability and Their Relation with Learning Outcomes of the Course*

To achieve learning outcomes of the course teachers should be aware about the following definitions," validity, reliability, goal, objective and learning outcome" these are connected lines in the educational process.

- Validity refers to whether or not the test measures what it claims to measure.
- Reliability has to do with the consistency, or reproducibility, or an examinee's performance on the test, for example, if you were to administer a test with high reliability to an examinee on two occasions, you would be very likely to reach the same conclusions about the examinee's performance both times.
- Goal – A goal is a broad definition of student competence that is planned to be achieved.
- Objective – A course objective describes what a faculty member will cover in a course to reach goals (teaching methods, materials, strategies).
- Student Learning Outcome – A detailed description of what a student must be able to do at the conclusion of a course, and it must be measurable criteria to help guiding teaching, learning, and assessment process of the course.

Each course specification has clear intended learning outcomes ( *ILOs* ) to be achieved at the end of the course; teachers should consider these ( *ILOs* ) when they write their tests' questions, results of these tests are the indicators of success or failure of achieving the course learning outcomes. Any teacher must consider the learning domain level that must be useful to assess the course objectives and learning outcomes, and then choose the suitable type of questions that cover the different parts of the course and this will be clear after reading table of specifications (TOS) section and understand the application rules for using it to construct questions.

D. *Table of Specifications. (TOS)*

Notar, Zuelke, Wilson & Yunker (2004) defined ( TOS), which sometimes is called a test blueprint, is a table that helps teachers align objectives, instructions, and assessments. (TOS) is a two way chart which describes the topic to be covered by the test or exam and number of items which should be associated with each topic. Grondlund (2006) pointed that (TOS), sometimes called a test blueprint, is a table that helps teachers map a test onto their instructional objectives for a given segment of study. Wolming & Wilkstrom (2010) stated that the cornerstone of classroom assessment practices is the validity of the judgments about students' learning and knowledge and this validity can be achieved by using (TOS) which can be taken as a map that help teachers construct ideal test fulfilling course - objectives, not only must (TOS) be developed before the test is written, it must be developed before the actual teaching. Helenrose Fives & Nicole Di Donato-Barnes (2013) stated that classroom tests provide teachers with essential information used to make decisions about instruction and student grades. A table of specification (TOS) can be used to help teachers frame the decision making process of test construction and improve the validity of teachers' evaluations based on tests constructed for classroom use. In this article we explain the purpose of a (TOS) and how to use it to help construct classroom tests. Nicole, Helenrose and Emily S. (2013a) (2013b) investigated if instruction of Table of Specifications (TOS) would influence the quality of classroom test construction. They pointed that results proved (TOS) is informative for educational researchers, teacher educators, and practicing teachers interested in evidenced-based strategies that may improve assessment-related practices, and they found that participants were able to use (TOS) tool and choose items that reflect the subject matter specified in the (TOS) tool, however, they experienced difficulty selecting items at the cognitive level specified in the (TOS) tool. Helenrose & Nicole (2013a) (2013b) approved that (TOS) is one tool that teachers can use to support their professional judgment when creating or selecting test for use with their students. The (TOS) can be used in conjunction with lesson and unit planning to help teacher make clear the connections between planning, instruction, and assessment.

As a conclusion to the previous studies, table of specification (TOS) has many advantages; (TOS) can be used to help educators to:

- 1- Map a test into their instructional objectives for a given segment of study.
- 2- Make the decision about test making process and construction.
- 3- Improve the validity of teachers' evaluations based on tests constructed for classroom use.
- 4- Identifies the content area covered in the class.
- 5- Identifies the performance objectives at each level of the cognitive domain of Blooms Taxonomy.

**Steps of using (TOS)**

Abdelwahab , Al-Bashier , Abderahaman (2009) stated the steps of using (TOS) as follow:

- Specify the educational goals of the content which will be tested.
- Specify the items in the content to be assessed.
- Specify the percentages of the content division based on the following equation.

$$\frac{\text{Hours of each unit}}{\text{Total hours of the course}} \times 100$$

- Specify the level of the cognitive domain to be assessed according to the teaching specification. E.g. 25% remembering, 30% understanding, 20% applying, 20% creating.
- Specify the number of questions for the test.
- Specify the number of items in each question.

Table 2 below illustrate example for content analyze as a step to construct questions.

TABLE. 2  
EXAMPLE OF HOW TO FIND THE PERCENTAGES OF THE CONTENT DIVISION ACCORDING TO COURSE SPECIFICATION BASE ON THE FOLLOWING EQUATION  $\frac{\text{Hours of each unit}}{\text{Total hours of the course}} \times 100$

Content analysis according to course specification Grammar 2 ENG-3 (117)			
List of Topics	No. of Weeks	Contact hours	Percentages of the hours to the content to construct the test question
Connecting ideas	2	6	$\frac{6}{45} \times 100 = 13\%$
Comparisons	2	6	$\frac{6}{45} \times 100 = 13\%$
The passive	2	6	$\frac{6}{45} \times 100 = 13\%$
Count/Non-count nouns and articles	2	6	$\frac{6}{45} \times 100 = 13\%$
Adjective Clauses	2	6	$\frac{6}{45} \times 100 = 13\%$
Gerund and infinitives	2	6	$\frac{6}{45} \times 100 = 13\%$
Noun Clauses	2	6	$\frac{6}{45} \times 100 = 13\%$
Revision	1	3	$\frac{3}{45} \times 100 = 7\%$
Total hours	15	45	

After specifying the percentages of the content division; which indicate the percentage of each part of the content to the total percentage of the test-questions; then teachers move to the next step to find which level of cognitive domain to be assessed and number of questions for each level in that part according to the division results this can be illustrated in table 3.

TABLE 3  
EXAMPLE OF USING (TOS) TO CREATE QUESTIONS SHOWING THE NUMBER OF EACH PART OF THE CONTENT DIVIDED TO THE LEARNING LEVEL ACCORDING TO THE COURSE OBJECTIVES

Example of using TOS to create questions							
Content	Percentage in the test	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Evaluating	Creating	Total questions
Connecting ideas	20%	3		2	2	3	$\frac{20}{100} \times 50 = 10$ q
Comparisons	20%		3	2	2	3	$\frac{20}{100} \times 50 = 10$ q
The passive	20%	2	3		2	3	$\frac{20}{100} \times 50 = 10$ q
Count/Non-count nouns and articles	20%	2	3	2	3		$\frac{20}{100} \times 50 = 10$ q
Adjective Clauses	20%			5	5		$\frac{20}{100} \times 50 = 10$ q
Total question of the test	100						50

The above table illustrates how to divide questions of the content according to the time devoted for teaching each part of the course unit, and also helps you draw a map of which level of learning domain you need to test. If we take connecting idea unit as example, there will be 10 questions out of 50 question in the test in this area, then according to the objectives, 3 questions test remembering, 2 questions test applying, 2 questions that test evaluating, 3 questions that test creating, to be total 10 questions that test connecting idea unit. If we take "The Passive" unit, there should be 10 questions, 3 questions test creating, 2 questions test evaluating, 3 questions test understanding and 2 questions remembering, and so on for the rest of the units using same equation.



*D. Level of Difficulties of the Test Questions*

Level of difficulties of the test questions can be known by applying the test questions in a small number of students as a sample, then analyzing the results according to the marks.

There are many advantages of analyzing exam questions:

- 1- Gives the teacher feedback about questions to be developed.
- 2- Draw a map-picture about planed skills students didn't achieve.
- 3- Help teachers to evaluate themselves.
- 4- Build the foundation to create questions bank.
- 5- Help to develop better tests that have certain characteristic of validity and reliability and objectives in the future.

**How to evaluate level of difficulties for test- questions?**

We can do that basing on the following equation to find the percentage that reflects level of difficulties.

$$\text{Indictor of difficulties} = \frac{\text{no.of correct answers}}{\text{total no.of students}} \times 100$$

Table 4 below illustrates percentage agreement to questions' level of difficulties.

TABLE IV  
PERCENTAGE AGREEMENT TO QUESTIONS' LEVEL OF DIFFICULTIES.

Difficult	Ideal	Easy
Less than 50%	50%	More than 50%

If we take the percentage in the table above in example: E.g. If 30 students sat for the test, 10 students only answer the 1<sup>st</sup> question then we can calculate this test difficulties of that question based on the equation mentioned above as follow:

$$\text{Level of difficulties} = \frac{10}{30} \times 100 = 33\% \text{ and that means it is difficult}$$

Table .5 below illustrates questions' level of difficulties according to percentages after getting the results doing the equation  $\frac{\text{no.of correct answers}}{\text{total no.of students}} \times 100$

TABLE. V  
QUESTIONS' LEVEL OF DIFFICULTIES ACCORDING TO PERCENTAGES

Question No.	Indicator of level of difficulties	meaning
1	25%	Difficult
2	70%	Easy
3	60%	Easy
4	90%	Very easy
5	50 %	Ideal
6	5%	Very difficult

Classifying questions-level of difficulties help to reuse the questions in future test if it is stored in a designed questions- bank.

III. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive analytical method is used to conduct this study.

*A. Data Collection*

The study has been carried in King Khalid University, English Department, College of Science & Arts Muhayil in the academic year 2018-2019

*B. Participants*

English Language instructors of College of Science & Arts Muhayil are the participants of this research.

*C. Research Instrument*

- 10 testes are analyzed.
- A questionnaire is sent to English Language instructors in College of Science & Arts Muhayil 22 instructors out of 56 answered the questionnaire.

*D. Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire*

According to table using Cronbach's Alpha, Spearman&Brown and - One-Sample Test it is obvious that .873 and .859 reflect the validity and reliability of the questionnaire is suitable for the study

TABLE. 6  
VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

	Cronbach's Alpha	Spearman&Brown
Reliable	0.763	0.739
Validity= $\sqrt{\text{Reliable}}$	0.873	0.859

#### IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

##### A. *Tests*

The researcher have analyzed 10 test papers for English language courses, these tests were chosen randomly, two for Grammar, two for Applied Linguistics, two for Vocabulary Building, one for Speech Workshop, one for Reading, one for Research Methods and one for Study Skills. The researcher found that only three of these tests have covered 90% of the units that are part of the course specification, and only five of them consist of questions test higher levels of thinking of Bloom Taxonomy. This means instructors either do not use Bloom Taxonomy Cognitive Domain and Table of Specification to design and write their test questions, or they misuse them, this agrees with Nicole, Helenrose and Emily S. (2013) and Alexis & Ricardo (2009) studies which indicate that instructors need training to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specification correctly in test writing as most researches agreed that testing and teaching are integrated and can't be teased .

##### B. *Questionnaire*

Twenty two instructors from English department answered the questionnaire.

###### 1. General information

A. Gender: seven males instructors and fifteen are female instructors are the participant of this research paper.

B. Qualification: Seven instructors are Ph. D holder and 15 are Master Degree holder.

C. Experience: Eleven instructors have been teaching more than ten years, eight instructors have been teaching between 6-10 years and only, only three instructors have less than five years-experience. These results show that most of the participants have quite long experience of teaching.

###### 2. Questionnaire questions analysis.

Table .6 illustrates questionnaire statistical results using SPSS

TABLE VII  
QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS.

statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Test Value = 2			reality Of 0.05 significance	Value
			T	df	Sig		
1-Do you have any experience about Bloom Taxonomy domains?	1.59	.796	-2.409-	21	.025	significance	no
2- Do you plan your lesson using Bloom Taxonomy domains?	2.18	.907	.940	21	.358	insignificance	No idea
3- Do you use Bloom Taxonomy domains when you write your test questions?	2.32	.839	1.779	21	.090	insignificance	yes
4- Do you use the Affective domain of Bloom to write English test?	1.18	.588	-6.521-	21	.001	significance	no
5- Do you use the Cognitive Domain of Bloom to write English test?	2.09	1.019	.418	21	.680	insignificance	No idea
6- Do you use the Psychomotor Domain of Bloom to write English test?	1.73	.985	-1.299-	21	.208	insignificance	No idea
8- Did you find Bloom Taxonomy domains helpful to write test questions?	2.64	.492	6.062	21	.001	significance	yes
9- Did you get any training to use Bloom Taxonomy domains to write your test questions?	1.73	.935	-1.368-	21	.186	insignificance	No idea
10- Do you have any experience of using Table of Specifications?	2.09	.971	.439	21	.665	insignificance	No idea
11-Do you plan your course your course using Table of Specification?	1.86	.941	-.680-	21	.504	insignificance	No idea
12- Do you use Table of Specification to write your tests questions?	1.95	.999	-.213-	21	.833	insignificance	No idea
13-Did you get any training to use Table of Specifications to write your test?	1.45	.858	-2.982-	21	.007	significance	no
14-Did you find Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications helpful to write test questions?	1.73	.883	-1.449-	21	.162	insignificance	No idea
15-Do you need training to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications to write test questions?	1.86	.990	-.646-	21	.525	insignificance	No idea

1. Showing results of phrase No .1 “Do you have any experience about Bloom Taxonomy domains?” Seen from the table above, (T.test) value calculated is (-2.409-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.025), which means that there statistical significance of the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participants have no experience about bloom Taxonomy domain, it is clear from the reality of statistical inference and the approval subjects of this phrase moderately at the significance level of (0.05)
2. Showing results of phrase No .2 “Do you plan your lesson using Bloom Taxonomy domains?” Seen from the table above,(T.test) value calculated is (.940), with degree of freedom (21),and with a probability value (.358), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant don’t plan their lesson using Bloom Taxonomy domains ,this is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)
3. Showing results of phrase No .3 “Do you use Bloom Taxonomy domains when you write your test questions?” Seen from the table above, (T.test) value calculated is (1.779), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.090), the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant do not use Bloom Taxonomy domains to write their test – questions, it is clear from the reality of statistical inference approval subjects of this phrase moderately at the significance level of (0.05)
4. Showing results of phrase No (4) “Do you use the Affective domain of Bloom to write English test?” “Seen from the table above, (T.test) value calculated is (-6.521-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.001), which means that there statistical significance of the statistical reality conclusion of the term, that says: the participant don’t use the Affective domain of Bloom to write English test. This is clear from the reality of statistical inference approval subjects of this phrase moderately at the significance level of (0.05)

5. Showing results of phrase No (5) “Do you use the cognitive domain of Bloom to write English test?” Seen from the table above, (T.test) value calculated is (.418), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.680), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term, shows that: the participant are not sure if they use the cognitive domain of Bloom or not to write English test. It is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)
6. Showing results of phrase No (6) “Do you use the Psychomotor domain of Bloom to write English test?” Seen from the table above, (T.test) value calculated is (-1.299-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.208), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term says that: the participant are not sure if they use the Psychomotor domain of Bloom or not to write English test. This is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)
7. Showing results of phrase No (6) *Which level of Bloom Taxonomy do you use to write English tests? Tick all levels you use.* Results can be read from the figure 6 below, which illustrates that no one use creating level in writing question, and many ticked combination of levels, but not more than three levels that are used together, twelve participants use remembering level, twelve participants use understanding level, thirteen participants use applying level, thirteen participants use analyzing level, and six participants use evaluating level and no one use creating in their tests.

Figure .6 results reflects the frustration that instructors have about using levels of Bloom Taxonomy in their test, which means either they use it wrongly or don't have experience about using it .

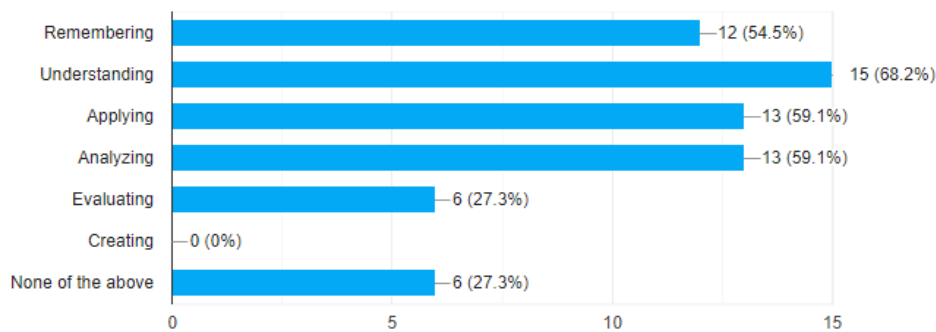


Figure 5. Participants' answers to question .7

8. Showing results of phrase No (8) “Did you find Bloom Taxonomy domains helpful to write test questions?” Seen from the table .6, (T.test) value calculated is (6.062), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.001), which means that there is a statistical significance of the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant agreed that Bloom Taxonomy domains are helpful to write test questions. It is clear from the reality of statistical inference approval subjects of this phrase moderately at the significance level of (0.05)
9. Showing results of phrase No (9) “Did you get any training to use Bloom Taxonomy domains to write your test questions?” Seen from the table above, (T.test) value calculated is (-1.368-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.186), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant did not get any training to use Bloom Taxonomy domains to write your test questions. This is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)
10. Showing results of phrase No (10) “Do you have any experience of using Table of Specifications?” “Seen from the table above, (T.test) value calculated is (.439-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.665), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant do not have any experience of using Table of Specifications. It is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)
11. Showing results of phrase No (11) “Do you plan your course your course using Table of Specification?” Seen from the table .6, (T.test) value calculated is (-.680-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.504), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant do not have clear answer if they plan their course using Table of Specification. This is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)
12. Showing results of phrase No (12) “Do you use Table of Specification to write your tests questions?” Seen from the table .6, (T.test) value calculated is (-.213-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.833), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant do not have clear answer about using Table of Specification in writing their test using. It is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)

13. Showing results of phrase No (13) which reads “Did you get any training to use Table of Specifications to write your test?” Seen from the table above, (T.test) value calculated is (-2.982-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.007), which means that there statistical significance of the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant did not get any training to use Table of Specifications to write their tests. This is clear from the reality of statistical inference approval subjects of this phrase moderately at the significance level of (0.05)
14. Showing results of phrase No (14) “Did you find Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications helpful to write test questions?” Seen from the table .6, the (T.test) value calculated is (-1.449-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.162), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant were not sure if Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications are helpful in writing test questions .This is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)
15. Showing results of phrase No (15) “-Do you need training to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications to write test questions?” Seen from the table .6, (T.test) value calculated is (-.646-), with degree of freedom (21), and with a probability value (.525), which means that the statement is not significant, and the statistical reality conclusion of the term that says: the participant don’t know if they need training or not to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications to write test questions. This is clear from the reality of statistical inference which is not approved by significance level of (0.05)
16. Showing results of phrase No (16) Do you think Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications are important to write test questions? Explain. Eleven of the participant answered positively while seven of them answered negatively and four participants their answers were neutral.

#### V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We can see that most of the participants have more than six years’ experience in teaching regardless to the gender , and most of them are master degree holders , question number one results show that the participants have no experience about Bloom Taxonomy domain .Participants’ answer of question two and three prove that participant don’t plan their lesson or write their tests question using Bloom Taxonomy domains ,which reflect a dangerous feature in the educational field .Participants’ answers of question four show that they don’t use the Affective domain of Bloom Taxonomy to write English test , also results of question five and six say that the participants are not sure if they use the cognitive and Psychomotor domains of Bloom , this reflects participants’ ignorance about Bloom Taxonomy in the educational field. Participants’ answers of question seven about levels of Bloom Taxonomy which they use in their test reflect participants’ confusion, that even if they use Bloom Taxonomy in writing question, they use it wrongly. Answers of question eight showed that participants agree that Bloom Taxonomy domains are helpful to write test questions in spite of the confusion that they have. Participants’ answers of question nine reflect the reason behind participants’ confusion about Bloom Taxonomy domains, is that they didn’t get training to use Bloom Taxonomy domains in their lesson planning and test-questions writing. Participants’ answers of question ten show that participants do not have any experience of using Table of Specifications, which is a necessity to test- questions balance. Participants’ answers of questions eleven and twelve prove that participants do not have clear answer if they plan, write their questions using Table of Specification or not. Participants’ answers of question thirteen show that they didn’t get training to use Table of Specification questions. Answers of Question fourteen show that participants were not sure if Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications are helpful to write test questions. Participants’ answers of question fifteen show that they cannot recognize their need for a training to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications in writing test questions. Participants’ answers of question sixteen reflect a clear picture of the confusion the participants have about Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications, as some said they have heard about them, but didn’t know their importance and how to use them ,while others explain that they have learnt about them and used them in lessons-planning and test question writing , although this question answers doesn’t agree with participants answers of question seven, which show that most of the participants don’t use more than three levels of Bloom Taxonomy in their tests-questions.

Although a few participants’ opinions reflect their knowledge of both Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications, still the results show that participants need training to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specification in their lesson planning and test-writing.

Results of question eight agree with McMillan (2003) study that assessment is still based on traditional behaviorist theories of learning.

Results of question seven, eleven and thirteen agree with Alexis, & Ricardo (2009) study that teachers have a negative view of assessment, and need adequate training in language assessment for all prospective language teachers is important.

Results of questions twelve, thirteen and fourteen which show that participant need training to use Table of Specification are clarified by Helenrose & Nicole (2013a) (2013b) who said TOS is a connections between planning, instruction, and assessment. Results must be considered, taking Wolming & Wilkstrom (2010) result , (TOS) which can be taken as a map that help teachers construct ideal test fulfilling course.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Regarding the results above, reasons behind questions' weakness of English Language tests are the inadequate way of designing tests, as a result of ignorance of basics of test questions criteria and lacking main knowledge of how to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specification.

Instructors need a training to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specification, to have the basics of designing Tests' questions of English Language, that reflects (ILOs) in a pedagogical way. Learning these basis will help them develop their test in scientific pedagogical way.

Training will help instructors:

- Develop good questions that suitable to all students regardless to students' different personality or learning style.
- Evaluate and develop their questions standard by adapting it according to the results of the test .
- Prepare ideal test questions according to desired objectives of the unit and the course.
- Keep teaching and testing integrated and interwoven in a scientific way.
- Help teachers feel secure to have their questions ready in any situation.
- Keep teaching and testing integrated and interwoven in a scientific way
- Decrease the stress accompanied with test time for teachers.

## APPENDIX. INSTRUCTORS QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear colleague,

This questionnaire is an instrument to collect data of a research paper titled:

**“Basis of Designing Test Questions of English Language That Reflect Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)”**

The researcher is trying to find out reasons behind questions' weakness of English language tests and solutions that can help teachers use a scientific basis for writing ideal tests-questions in a pedagogical way that tests all course content, and reflects students' learning outcomes. Your answers will be confidential and will be used only for research purpose.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Dr. Mona M. Hamad

**1-General information**

**A. Gender** : Female Male

**B. Qualification:** Bachelor Master Doctorate

**C. Your experience in teaching field:** 0-5 years 6-10 years more than 10 years

**2-Questionnaire**

	No	Question	Yes	No Idea	No
1		Do you have any experience about Bloom Taxonomy domains?			
2		Do you plan your lesson using Bloom Taxonomy domains?			
3		Do you use Bloom Taxonomy domains when you write your test questions?			
4		Do you use the Affective domain of Bloom to write English test?			
5		Do you use the Cognitive Domain of Bloom to write English test?			
6		Do you use the Psychomotor Domain of Bloom to write English test?			
7		Which level of Bloom Taxonomy do you use to write English tests? Tick all levels you use.			
		• Remembering			
		• Understanding			
		• Applying			
		• Analyzing			
		• Creating			
		• Evaluating			
		• None of the above			
8		Did you find Bloom Taxonomy domains helpful to write test questions?			
9		Did you get any training to use Bloom Taxonomy domains to write your test questions?			
10		Do you have any experience of using Table of Specifications			
11		Do you plan your course your Table of Specification?			
12		Do you use Table of Specification to write your tests questions?			
13		Did you get any training to use Table of Specifications to write your test?			
14		Did you find Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications helpful to			

- write test questions?
- 15 Do you need training to use Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications to write test questions?
- 16 Do you think Bloom Taxonomy and Table of Specifications are important to write test questions? Explain.

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# The Effectiveness of MALT on Vocational College English Teaching

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**Abstract**—With the fast development of modern information technology, mobile terminals and their applications, an increasingly number of teachers come to realize it may be probable to improve teaching quality by using mobile terminals. However, there is no solid data so far in literature that support the effectiveness of MALT (Mobile Assisted Language Teaching). Therefore, this article is dedicated to prove its effectiveness on vocational college English teaching using Moso Teach as a platform. It is found that MALT has effectively improved teaching quality. The students who used Moso Teach more have achieved greater progress. But poor students are not active in using the mobile teaching platform. As a result, it is suggested that teachers should integrate MALT in their English teaching on condition that teaching is carefully designed, and teachers should try to help poor students change their attitudes toward using mobile teaching platforms.

**Index Terms**—MALT, vocational college, English teaching

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the development of modern information technology, the teaching mode of higher education has made a great leap forward. Since 2012, web-based teaching has risen rapidly all over the world. Shipments of mobile terminals around the world reached nearly 1 billion units in 2013, triple the number of PCs. As of January 2015, the total number of mobile devices connected to the Internet worldwide exceeded 7 billion. In the fourth quarter of 2017, the smart terminals in China reached 1.42 billion, each carrying over 40 APP units on average (China Industry Information Net, 2018). Mobile terminal has replaced PC as the main carrier of network teaching, forming a new teaching form -- mobile teaching. At the same time, the application service for mobile online teaching is also being perfected, and various educational application software has mushroomed and spread rapidly. Many teachers are keenly aware that these applications can be used to improve teaching quality, so they have made many useful explorations.

Post-90s generation college students, especially higher vocational students, are willing to accept novelties and have a strong dependence on mobile phones. According to the characteristics of students, many teachers began to use mobile applications to assist classroom teaching in practice. But mobile assisted teaching is original. By using MALT, the physical environment of teaching and the way of spreading knowledge have both changed compared with traditional teaching methods. Therefore, most teachers are eager to know whether and to what extent mobile assisted teaching can improve teaching quality so that they can decide whether and how to use it.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Basic Concepts

Mobile learning is a learning mode in which learners can obtain learning resources, complete learning tasks and communicate with peers and teachers at any time and place through mobile devices such as smart phones and tablet computers (Su & Li, 2016). Mobile learning should include at least the following four elements: mobile learners, using mobile devices, connecting with mobile networks, and learning in mobile situations (Ye, 2004). Mobile assisted teaching is that teachers use mobile learning software to assist classroom teaching. It complements and serves classroom teaching, promoting teaching quality. This article focuses on mobile assisted language teaching (MALT), which expects to raise the English language teaching quality.

Generally speaking, mobile learning applications can be divided into two categories. One is a comprehensive application-oriented app with functions of uploading resources, assigning tasks, interactive discussions, evaluation and testing, such as WeChat group, QQ group and Moso Teach, etc. The other is a task-driven application, which aims at improving particular ability such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Cutting-through Hundred Words, Zhimi Word Memorization and Interesting Dubbing in English, etc., belong to the second category.

Moso Teach is one of the most popular mobile learning applications for teachers. It was introduced into the market in 2014 and is a cloud teaching tool that integrates cloud computing, big data, mobile connectivity and other technologies and is closely integrated with classroom teaching. Teachers can independently upload teaching related materials, which makes it more targeted for school teaching. Through Moso teach, teachers can assign homework tasks, organize activities such as discussion, questionnaires and brainstorming, etc. Those activities, which can be carried out anytime and anywhere, systematically integrate fragmented teaching resources and learning time, creating a favorable learning environment. Every time a student completes a particular task, he or she will get the corresponding experience points,

and the learning results can be evaluated by three parties of machines, teachers and classmates, thus improving the learning enthusiasm of students. Moso Teach has a certain management function. It can automatically track the learning progress and evaluation of each student, and the results are fully presented by big data. It enables teachers to understand the learning status of students in a timely and scientific manner, thus realizing intelligent teaching based on big data.

### *B. Theoretical Basis*

Constructivism, the Affective Filter Hypothesis and Ubiquitous Learning are the three theoretical bases of mobile assisted teaching.

Constructivism is a theory of knowledge and learning developed from philosophy, psychology and anthropology. It was put forward by Swiss psychologist J. Piaget, who advocates that the essence of learning is a process of knowledge construction for students, in which learners construct new knowledge on the basis of existing old knowledge with the help of others (including teachers and learning partners) and necessary learning materials under certain circumstances. Constructivists believe that learning has the characteristics of enthusiasm and initiative, and advocate learner-centered learning under the guidance of teachers. It not only emphasizes the cognitive subject status of learners, but also does not ignore the guiding role of teachers. Therefore, it is in line with the educational concept of mobile assisted teaching, where teachers upload courseware, micro-lectures, videos, test questions and other learning resources in the application, organize activities and assign tasks to guide students to study. Students give full play to their subjective initiative, browse resources in the mobile learning environment, complete learning tasks such as homework, tests and group work in application, thus acquiring new knowledge and skills. Therefore, mobile assisted teaching is a model for the application of constructivism.

In the 1980s, American linguist S. D. Krashen put forward his famous Five Hypotheses. The "affective filter hypothesis" points out that the process of second language acquisition is influenced by many affective factors. Language input must be filtered through emotion before it can be absorbed. Krashen believes that the affective factors that affect language acquisition are motivation, personality and emotional state. Emotional state mainly refers to anxiety and relaxation. People with strong anxiety have high emotional barrier and less input. On the contrary, it is easier to get more input. In the traditional class, some students are always in a state of high tension due to personality reasons or poor academic performance, which affects their learning result. However, in mobile-assisted teaching, students' learning partners are machines that act as mobile terminals and do not laugh at students, so the anxiety of learners will be greatly relieved and the influence of anxiety factors on language acquisition will be minimized.

Ubiquitous learning (U-learning) refers to an intelligent learning environment where people use any terminal at any time and at any place. It is different from learning in specific places such as schools and libraries. Ubiquitous learning has the following basic elements: firstly, it needs the support of ubiquitous learning environment; secondly, it is learner-centered and focuses on learning tasks; thirdly, it is a natural or spontaneous behavior and learners actively participate in it; lastly, the learners will focus on the learning tasks and objectives themselves, rather than the peripheral learning tools or environmental factors. U-learning is the embodiment of a learning state which integrates various kinds of learning such as digital learning, mobile learning and lifelong learning. It is an inevitable development stage of learning. Mobile learning is one of the important means and concrete forms of ubiquitous learning (Pan, et al., 2010).

The above three theories provide theoretical support for the development of mobile assisted instruction. Teachers guide students to carry out ubiquitous learning purposefully and systematically through mobile terminals and during this process students construct new knowledge. Because the students get rid of the limitation of time and space in their study and their emotional anxiety is greatly relieved, their enthusiasm and initiative are further brought into play. All of those contribute to promoting students' language learning effect.

### *C. Current Research Findings*

A broad literature review was done by searching in the databases Web of Science and ScienceDirect. It was found that in recent years, mobile assisted teaching has become increasingly popular in higher education home and abroad and a large number of researchers explored MALT from various aspects.

#### *1. Research on the Functions of Mobile Applications*

Some scholars focused on the functions and features of mobile applications, such as Wechat, podcasting, Duolingo, WhatsApp, etc. In 2014, a group of English teachers in Guang Dong Jiangmen Polytechnic College explored the feasibility of applying WeChat in their college English teaching (Guo & Guo, 2015). The research group believes that WeChat has the characteristics of dissemination, interactivity, equality and friendliness, making up for the traditional classroom teaching. They put forward three major implementation strategies: opening WeChat platform, establishing chat groups and managing at different levels. Cavus (2016) studied an intelligent app that promotes English pronunciation, and found it makes learning easier and more enjoyable than the traditional learning methods. He (2017) studied micro-mobile teaching for college English based on Apps. She found that the popular applications, such as Bacon Vocabulary Expansion, Cutting-through Hundred Words and Cloud Words, have diversified the ways of learning vocabulary. Their stepped vocabulary learning tasks are applicable to students with different vocabulary bases, which can reduce boredom and improve the efficiency of vocabulary learning.

These researchers generally believe that the use of mobile-assisted teaching software can greatly stimulate learning interest and enhance learning motivation. At the same time, they also put forward some problems that should be paid

attention to in carrying out mobile teaching, such as strengthening the learning function of software and timely follow-up of teaching control measures (Guo & Guo, 2015). Besides, Souza, et al. (2017) found that some applications, such as Duolingo, cannot supply the need for communication and interaction that make language learning more effective although they aim at carrying the learning beyond the borders of classrooms by a frequent contact with the target language.

## 2. Research on Students' Attitudes toward Mobile Learning

Some researchers also investigated the students' attitudes towards mobile based learning, their learning status and the factors affecting learning. Al-Emran, et al. (2016) made an investigation among students and teachers about their attitudes toward using mobile learning (M-learning) in higher education of Oman and UAE in the Arab Gulf region. Findings revealed significant differences among students with regard to their country and age. At the same time, it pointed out that M-learning could be one of the promising pedagogical assistances in tertiary education within the Arab Gulf countries. Saidouni, et al. (2016) explored teachers' and students' attitudes toward the effectiveness of MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning). It was found that they not only have positive attitudes toward MALL, but also agreed on its potential and regarded it as a promising approach for teaching EFL. Manman Ding's (2017) research showed that college students generally gave positive comments on mobile learning. Self-management ability is the main factor that affects their mobile learning result. She proposed strategies to optimize mobile learning based on smart phones from the aspects of individual learners, learning resources, learning environment and technical support.

## 3. The Impact of Mobile Apps on Teaching Quality

Other researchers made literature research to investigate the impact of mobile applications on education, especially on language teaching. Yao-Ting Sung (2016) performed a meta-analysis and research synthesis of the effects of integrating mobile devices in teaching and learning. Analysis of their empirical research revealed that the overall effect of using mobile devices in education is better than when using desktop computers or not using mobile devices as an intervention. Khalitova, et al. (2016) made a case study of using mobile application Instagram and found Instagram was efficient as an online educational environment for learning EFL.

Some of the researchers went further to put mobile devices into their teaching practice, which yielded some interesting results and seemed to elicit more diverse and innovative educational methods. Ruofei Wang (2018) conducted a questionnaire survey on the two classes after implementation of mobile teaching, and found that 95 % of the students were fond of mobile teaching mode. The students thought learning by mobile phones was interesting, especially when they could get timely feedback and encouragement after completing a task, so their learning enthusiasm was greatly stimulated. Zhanpeng Xu, et al. (2018) tried to apply mobile Internet technology in hybrid teaching. They selected Moso Teach as a hybrid teaching tool and carried out in-depth mobile, cloud, big data and intelligent teaching based on constructivism, creating a mobile internet plus class, integrating teaching, learning and management. Some English teachers have also practiced mobile assisted instruction. Jun Zhou (2017) applied a mobile learning platform to his English teaching in higher vocational colleges, believing that the application of mobile learning broadens teaching resources, optimizes learning content and promotes the informatization level of English education in higher vocational colleges. On the other hand, mobile learning, as a novel learning mode, breaks the traditional teaching phenomenon of emphasizing knowledge and neglecting practical training. It promotes the interaction between teachers and students in a convenient way and helps teachers keep abreast of students' learning situation, thus improving teaching quality.

## 4. The Challenges of MALT

However, the literature research also revealed a bit of uncertainty about the effectiveness of mobile assisted education, and a couple of challenges have been identified as well. Min Liu, et al. (2014) made an investigation of iPod Touch used by English learners in the United States. The results revealed the iPod Touch provides differentiated instructional support, and extends learning time from classroom to home, but it exerts a great time demand on teachers and needs professionally trained and dedicated support staff. A note-worthy finding of Yao-Ting Sung (2016) is that game-based learning did not achieve a significant overall effect on mobile learning. Haili Qiao (2018) also pointed out some problems of MALT. For example, students with less self-control will use their smart phones to engage in other activities, such as chatting or playing online games. In addition, some students do not check the contents of the resources in detail, but download the resources simply to increase the experience points. So it is note-worthy that the favorable features of mobile devices, such as individualized interfaces, real-time access to information, instant communication and feedback, etc., are not sufficient conditions for positive learning effects. Therefore, researchers put forward a couple of suggestions to enhance the educational impact of MALT. Firstly, instructions should be designed more elaborately; secondly, longer intervention duration is needed; thirdly, reconciliation of the closer connection between hardware, software, teaching process and users is required (Yao-Ting Sung, 2016).

In summary, the previous research findings indicate the mobile assisted language teaching generates positive effect on improving English teaching quality. A large part of the research deals with study of literatures and a small part of the empirical research focuses on the attitudes toward MALT exploiting the instrument of questionnaires. However, experimental research which provides data that could possibly address how best to use MALT and the effectiveness of doing so is highly insufficient. Therefore, more empirical studies, particularly experimental ones are needed to confirm the efficacy of the use of MALT on language teaching quality.

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN

After a detailed literature review, this study decided to explore the role of mobile assisted instruction in improving the quality of English teaching by means of experiments.

#### A. *Research Questions*

This study attempted to answer the following questions: Does MALT effectively improve the quality of English teaching in higher vocational education? Does MALT effectively improve the teaching quality of English vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing respectively?

#### B. *Subjects and Research Tools*

The subjects were 30 sophomores in a vocational college, including 20 males and 10 females. The experiment used Moso Teach as a teaching platform. The experiential points obtained by students after completing tasks on the platform were taken as part of the research data, which were analyzed by SPSS17.

#### C. *Research Methods*

This study adopted the methods of literature research, experiment and quantitative analysis.

#### D. *Research Procedures*

The first stage of the experiment consisted of 8 weeks from the beginning of the term to the middle exam. Four units of the textbook were covered during that period, in which teachers used traditional teaching methods without the help of Moso Teach, including lecturing, giving paper-based home assignments and checking students' homework, etc. In the ninth week, a mid-term examination was held to examine students' learning effects in vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing. The test items of vocabulary are subjective, including translation, filling in blanks and making sentences, accounting for 50 points. Multiple choices, which were objective questions, were used to examine grammar and 20 grammar questions accounted for 20 points. Reading comprehension was made up of three articles, each with 5 multiple choice questions, altogether accounting for 30 points. In the writing part, students were asked to write a practical article, accounting for 20 points. The total score of the mid-exam paper was 120.

The second stage of the experiment also lasted eight weeks from after the mid-exam to the end of the term and still four units were covered. While in the second period, the teacher used mobile assisted teaching approach, in which Moso Teach was employed as a platform. Teaching was carefully designed according to the net based English teaching strategies set by Wu (2017). In addition to the same classroom instruction as before the mid-term exam, micro lectures, PPT courseware and test questions, etc. were uploaded to the Moso Teach platform, and such learning activities as reading PPT, watching micro-lectures, brainstorming, discussion and self test, etc., were organized through Moso Teach. Students only finished their learning tasks given by their teachers on Moso Teach instead of doing traditional homework. Every time a student completed a learning task, he or she got the corresponding experience points. The final exam was held at the end of the second stage. Before that, the experiential points of each student were collected and input into SPSS 17 by researchers.

The same students, the same difficulty of learning content and the same teacher were used in the two phases of the experiment. And also, the mid-term exam and the final exam had the same test forms, the same quantity of questions, the same difficulty and the same scoring standard. All of the papers, whether they were of middle exam or final exam, were scored by the same teacher. The total scores and the scores for each particular skill were all input into SPSS 17 for quantitative analysis.

### IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The scores of mid-exam and final exam were obtained and the increased scores of the final exam compared to the mid-exam were calculated. The experiential points that students gained by participating in activities and completing tasks in Moso Teach were also collected. The whole set of data were input into SPSS 17 and then analyzed by paired sample t-test and correlation test so as to obtain the relationship between students' learning situation in Moso Teach and their learning result.

#### A. *The Difference in Scores between Middle and Final Exams*

The differences of students' scores between middle exam and final exam were detected using paired sample t-test. The result is as follows.

TABLE I  
THE DIFFERENCE IN SCORES BETWEEN MIDDLE AND FINAL EXAMS

Items	Exams	Mean	N	Paired Samples Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed) of Paired Differences
Total Score	Middle Exam	86.13	30	.959	.000
	Final Exam	92.10	30		
Score of Vocabulary	Middle Exam	36.93	30	.927	.000
	Final Exam	38.80	30		
Score of Grammar	Middle Exam	14.17	30	.952	.000
	Final Exam	16.27	30		
Score of Reading	Middle Exam	22.13	30	.865	.130
	Final Exam	22.73	30		
Score of Writing	Middle Exam	12.90	30	.864	.000
	Final Exam	14.30	30		

From table I, we can see that the final exam scores are higher than the middle exam in the total score and the scores of each item. The differences of all the items except reading comprehension have reached a significant level (Sig.<.05). This shows that the students' academic performance has been significantly improved after using Moso Teach, proving with data that MALT effectively improves the teaching quality, which is consistent with the research results of Yao-Ting Sung (2016 ), Khalitova et al. (2016) and Zhou (2017). Previous studies have also shown that the vast majority of students hold a positive attitude towards mobile learning, believing that mobile learning is more interesting, thus increasing their interest in learning. After completing a task, they can receive timely feedback and are therefore encouraged (Wang, 2018; Saidouni, et al., 2016; Ding, 2017). The convenience and the fun of using mobile terminals enable students to maintain a positive attitude towards mobile learning and eventually improve their academic performance.

*B. The Relation between Experience Value and Increased Scores*

TABLE II  
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN EXPERIENCE POINTS AND INCREASED SCORES

Increase of Scores		Experience points (Mean=44.07)		
Item	Mean	Pearson Correlation	Sig.(2-tailed)	N
Increase of Total Score	6.23	.283	.129	30
Increase of Vocabulary Score	1.87	.398	.029	30
Increase of Grammar Score	2.10	-.296	.112	30
Increase of Reading Score	0.60	-.034	.860	30
Increase of Writing Score	1.40	.232	.217	30

The correlation between the experience points and the increased score reflects the relationship between the situation of students' using Moso Teach and the degree of their learning progress. After calculation, the average experience value of the whole class is obtained which is 44.07, and then Pearson correlation is used to analyze the data. From Table II, we can see that the average total score of final exam is 6.23 points higher than that of the middle one. Although the correlation between the experiential points and the average increased total score has not reached a significant level, the correlation coefficient is .283, which is also a low correlation, thus to a certain extent indicating that the more students use Moso Teach, the greater their progress.

Obviously, the increased score of vocabulary is 1.87, and the correlation coefficient between experience points and the increase of vocabulary score is .398, which belongs to moderate correlation and reaches a significant level (Sig.<.05). The vocabulary item accounts for 50 points in the total test score which is 120, and has a large number of questions, including a complete set of subjective and objective ones, so the data are convincing to some extent. It shows that the students who frequently use Moso Teach have made remarkable progress in English vocabulary learning.

However, in grammar and reading, the relationship between the increased scores and the experiential points shows a negative correlation. This may be due to the fact that grammar questions are all objective multiple-choice questions, which not only have a single question type but also have a high probability of guessing scores. What is more, the grammar item accounts for only 20 points, which occupies a very low proportion of the total score, adding to the possibility that the data cannot accurately reflect the students' grammar learning effect. Reading comprehension requires a long period of knowledge accumulation and ability training to improve. It is impossible to achieve obvious results in a short time. Its progress has little to do with the knowledge learned in a short period. Besides, after investigation, it was found that in the second stage of teaching, the teacher did not set up reading comprehension tasks in the Moso Teach. On the one hand, it was relatively difficult to set up reading comprehension tasks, and it is hard for the teacher to control the students to finish these reading tasks conscientiously. On the other hand, reading comprehension needs to be improved gradually through the improvement of vocabulary, grammar and other comprehensive abilities. In addition, to a large extent, the experience points represent the quantity of tasks completed by the students and cannot reflect the quality of the tasks completed, that is, the experience value cannot fully reflect the degree to which the students have carefully used Moso Teach to learn.

*C. The Difference in Experience Value between Different Level Students*

The independent sample t-test was used to examine whether there were significant differences in the experiential points of students with different academic performance. The students are divided into three levels according to their final test results, namely three groups. The total score of the final exam is 120. The first group is a group with high scores greater than or equal to 96 points. The second group is the middle score group with scores ranging from 72 ( inclusive ) to 95 ( inclusive ). The third group is a low score group with a score of less than 72 points. Statistics show that there are 12 students in the high score group with an average experience value of 47.92. There are 16 middle level students with an average of 44.06. And 2 students belong to the low level group with an average experience value of 21. There is no significant difference between the variance of each group of samples, so the two-sample equal variance t-test is adopted. The significant level of difference in experiential values between the first and the second groups is .010, between the first and the third groups is .000, and between the second and the third groups is .000. From the above data, it can be seen that the average experience value of students with high test scores and middle scores is evidently higher than that of students with low scores; the experience points of students in high, middle and low score groups are also ranked from high to low and the differences in experiential value between the three groups have reached significant levels. The above results show that the students with better academic performance use the mobile learning platform more frequently, which may be related to their good learning habits that they have developed over a long term. On the contrary, poor students have poor self-control ability and are prone to be interfered by entertainment software such as smart phone games. In addition, it is in agreement with the discovery of Al-Emran, et al. (2016) that lower level students employ learning strategies less than higher level students.

#### V. CONCLUSION

From the above analysis, it can be seen that mobile assisted language teaching has significantly improved the teaching quality of vocational college English. In addition, generally speaking, the quantity that students use the mobile teaching platform has a positive correlation with the degree of students' progress, i.e. the students who use the platform more have made greater progress. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers should actively employ mobile assisted language teaching approach. While teaching with MALT, teachers should elaborately and appropriately design their teaching. The resources uploaded should be practical as well as interesting, not too long or too large, suitable for fragmented learning. The learning tasks assigned by the teacher on the mobile platform should cover comprehensive English skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing so that students' English ability can be fully trained and improved. Teachers are also expected to adopt more effective measures to timely follow up the learning status and learning quality of students. If used properly, mobile assisted language teaching can be integrated successfully into a context of existing practices and beliefs. Besides, attention should be paid to the guidance and instruction for poor students in order to make them gradually see the interest and effectiveness of using mobile platforms and change their negative attitude towards mobile learning applications so that they can use mobile platforms more frequently to assist their English learning.

However, to a large extent, the experience value in this study reflects the quantity that students use the mobile assisted teaching platform, but not their learning quality, because a number of students may not study carefully and only click on the teaching resources, but they are still able to gain the experience points. In addition, in the middle and final exams, the items of grammar, reading and writing account for only a small proportion of the total score and have a single question type. As a result, no convincing data related to grammar, reading and writing were obtained in this experiment. Therefore it is suggested that in the future research the number and types of questions should be increased in grammar, reading and writing so as to further examine the impact that MALT has on those English knowledge and skills. Lastly, the number of samples in this study is relatively small, and the conclusions obtained need to be verified by a large number of samples in the future.

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# The Symbolic Forms of Indonesian Language Teaching's Discourse at IAIN Palopo: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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**Abstract**—This research aims at revealing the functions of symbolic forms of Indonesian language teaching (*PBI*). The method used is qualitative descriptive with data source in the form of conversations between lecturer and students who produce words, phrases, and sentences obtained by recorder instrument (handycam) and interview guidelines. The data is analyzed using data reduction, data display, and verification technique. The results show that the symbolic forms used in *PBI*'s discourse reveals the idea of characteristics concerning motivation, strengthening, competence, sharpening, and awareness. In line with that, the functions of the symbolic forms include (1) statements with "challenging" characteristic and its development; (2) direction, guidance, and advice; (3) praise; (4) threat (fear); (5) question and correction; (6) inadequacy and weakness; (7) sanction (discipline); (8) counseling and training service; (9) instruction or command; (10) honesty; and (11) request or demand.

**Index Terms**—symbolic forms, *PBI*'s discourse, critical discourse analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language as an action in communicating is closely related to characteristic's development and academic cultural behavior in higher education. Therefore, Indonesian language is one of the crucial instruments in the science and technology advancement. Thus, it has a role and function as a medium of communication in the world of education. This is explained in Law Number 24 Year 2009 Article 29 Paragraph 1 that Indonesian language must be used as the language of instruction in national education.

This occasion creates a special phenomenon. In other words, changes in social and cultural behavior of society affect the way people think and act. In expressing the intent, language is often shaped to be used to package meaning through text or discourse, both in writing and orally. As what has been confirmed by Rusdiati (2003, p.38) that the phenomenon of language use by Bourdieu referred to as "symbolic violence", which means violence gains compliance and not perceived as coercion.

Language action in a learning space often produces an idea (ideology) which makes categorization from moderate to radical thinking. This is due to the academic community in higher institution specifically at *Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palopo* (abbreviated as *IAIN Palopo*) which involves several ethnic groups and later causes multicultural. Accordingly, conflicts are unavoidable as well because those parties have mutual interest to embed their own influence and power. Fairclough (1989) confirms that to spread new influences or ideologies, then both individual and group shall use language as a medium where text (symbolic form) becomes a form of social practice.

In the view of critical discourse, all aspects of a text (words and grammar) are empowered to encapsulate certain interests (ideology and power) to be conveyed in speech interaction, such as between speaker and receiver. The disclosure of symbolic violence that lies behind a text of speech requires an attempt to liberate the language spoken by a speaker in conversational or textual interactions. It leads the use of critical discourse as an analytical tool to uncover the hidden ideology and power produced in text as a language action in a learning space.

The power of language in symbolic form becomes the subject matter and orientation of this research by focusing on the function aspect of Indonesian language. Several aspects of symbolic forms are used as empowerment of language action in learning which influenced by multicultural and pluralistic elements. In addition, some factors of geographic environment, speaker position, atmosphere or context of speech acts have an effect as well. The symbolic forms



produced in language action are driven by forms of interest, particularly ideology, power, and domination. The use of language in symbolic form is a deviation from the actual language due to an element of concealment from the real meaning.

The phenomenon of language in symbolic form produced in the language action between lecturer and students becomes important to be studied because it avoids the emergence of different meaning interpretation phenomena, both in academic community and in varied groups of society. Referring to these facts, the study of symbolic form in verbal language turns to be one of the essential aspects. It is intended for the purpose of communication and information where a statement can take place in harmony due to the similarity of intent and understanding between speaker and receiver. Thereupon, examining the symbolic form will reveal and lead to the understanding of implicit meaning.

The symbolic forms produced in the text of language action between lecturer and students taking place in the learning process can be studied using a critical discourse approach. Badara (2013, p.65) argues that by the use of critical discourse analysis framework approach, it can reveal the things implied behind the apparent reality. To observe the specific and in-depth symbolic form in language action between students and lecturer, it uses the theory of Bourdieu, Fairclough, and van Dijk. Those three theories are combined and for the purposes of the analysis, they are modified in the eclectic or theoretical form to expose the hidden symbolic form function of a text.

The study of symbolic forms in Indonesian language is indispensable to uncover and comprehend the clarity of hidden ideology and power behind verbal texts. If it is not done, it will lead the purpose of communication into unclear ones because of differences in understanding meaning of the text. Finally, those differences and disagreements cause to conflict. Equally important, academic community will not know the function and symbolic form they use in speech acts. They are only able to use symbolic forms in social practice, but lack of knowledge and understanding of the symbolic placement in a conversation. In the same way, here is the problem statement of this research, *what are the functions of symbolic forms of Indonesian language teaching's (PBI) discourse at IAIN Palopo?*

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs qualitative design because the data is obtained through natural setting and directly from complete and thorough research subject without any changes or data modification. The function and benefits of qualitative research are used to examine something in depth (Moleong, 2011, p.7). As described by Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln (2009, p.1), a qualitative research links with cultural and interpretative researches. Thus, this research is included as a qualitative research because it aims to examine the details and do the interpretation of the symbolic forms in Indonesian language teaching's discourse which found during oral learning interaction as a language action at *IAIN Palopo*.

Pursuing this further, it uses descriptive qualitative design due to seven factors. The first thing is, the data sources are natural because there is no interference of the researchers in the process of its creation. The second is the researchers as the key instruments also become as the assessors. The third is the data exposure or discussion is interpretative. The fourth is data analysis is done interactively. The fifth is the representation, type, and function of symbolic forms in Indonesian language become the main concern of this research. The sixth is the theory only used as an analytical instruction. The seventh is arranging theories becomes an optional because it is only used as an analytical instruction (Mulyana, 2003, p.159; Bogdan and Biklen, 1998, p.4-7).

This research data is in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences as primary data which consist of symbolic forms generated from oral text in a speech adapted through recorder, while the secondary data derived from experts' research findings and articles regarding the analysis of symbolic form to support the data. Several procedures and the design stages of research activities include recording, transcription, supporting instruments, data corpus, data reduction, results, discussion, and findings.

The instruments used to collect data such as (1) the researchers who act as an instrument (planner, executor, and data interpreter); (2) handycam as a data recorder to record and capture lecturer's and students' conversation during learning process; (3) statements or questions as the interview guidelines to collect answers for supporting the data research.

The validity of research data is examined based on five factors such as researcher's persistence, reference adequacy, suitability or data coverage, extension of data observation toward the recorded data, and data validation by experts in this field of research. The data were analyzed with a critical discourse analysis approach which is done in three stages, that is data reduction, data display, and conclusion or verification (Sugiyono, 2011, p.247-253).

## III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the results of the research is described in the form of clarified data. The following discussion is based on the data description.

### A. The Description of Research Findings

The symbolic forms are used to express violent meaning behind the spoken statements by lecturer and students. It aims to "sharpen or harden" meaning in *PBI's* discourse.

#### 1. The Statements with "Challenging" Characteristic and Its Development

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse reveals the symbolic form of expressing the meaning of "challenging" and its development. Here is the statement below.

Data (1)

*"Ayo, mana pikiran Anda mahasiswa? Anda berlatih bagaimana Anda berargumen, bagaimana Anda mengolah pikiran? Kemudian paling cocok lewat lisan. Jangan hanya disimpan dalam otak."* (UK II.6/12)

(Translation)

"Come on, where do you put your mind, students? You practice how to argue, how to process in mind? Then it is best expressed through speak. Do not just keep it in mind." (UK II.6/12)

The sentence in data (1) shows that the meaning in the form of "challenging" or the development of competence as the main subject of the conversation is *'Ayo, mana pikiran Anda mahasiswa?'* (*Come on, where do you put your mind, students?*). The lecturer as a speaker expresses the idea in the form of affirmation that emphasizes the ability to think and speak. In this case, he "challenges" the students with the statement where it contains the idea of strengthening the nature of giving pressure to the students to be more creative and productive in speaking. It is also clarified with a statement of *'...bagaimana Anda mengolah pikiran? Kemudian paling cocok lewat lisan.'* (*how to process in mind? Then it is best expressed through speak.*). Furthermore, it is reinforced through the statement of *'Jangan hanya disimpan dalam otak.'* (*Do not just keep it in mind.*). Through the description above, it indicates that the lecturer as a speaker gives a "challenging" emphasis with an intention as one strategy to awaken, encourage, trigger enthusiasm, and direct student's identity in expressing the ability to speak.

## 2. Giving Direction, Guidance, and Advice

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of directing, guiding, and giving advice function. Here is the statement below.

Data (2)

*"Kadang mahasiswa lebih senang diisi ya, tetapi tidak senang apabila kalian mencari sendiri. Padahal terbalik, kalian harus lebih merasa senang apabila kalian mencari sendiri, dan nantinya akan diperkuat oleh keterangan dosen. Nah, itu yang diharapkan ya, dari aktivitas perkuliahan kita. Bisakah kita bekerja sama saling mengisi."* (UK I.1/2)

(Translation)

"Sometimes students prefer to be dictated, right, and not keen to find out by their own self. As reversed, you should be more pleased if you can figure something out by your own self, and later will be supplemented by lecturer's information. Well, that's what we hope, right, from our lectures activity. Can we cooperate with each other to nurture." (UK I.1/2)

The sentence in data (2) shows that the meaning in the form of guiding as the main subject of the conversation is *'...kalian harus lebih merasa senang apabila kalian mencari sendiri,...'* (*you should be more pleased if you figure something out by your own self*). Lecturer as a speaker expresses ideas in the form of *motivation* or *affirmation*. It tends to give direction by expressing the statement where the speaker gives great respect and high motivation to students who are more creative and innovative. In this regard, the lecturer as a speaker suggests and invites the students to change their mindset to a more independent thinking by using modality of *'harus'* (*must/should be*). Thus, the idea or thinking structure of the speaker expressed through the data description confirms that *motivation* or *affirmation* embodied in the form of direction aims at creating a more innovative mindset.

## 3. Giving Praise

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of giving praise or compliment. Here is the statement below.

Data (3)

*Dosen* : *"Ini diskusinya kelompok dua sangat memuaskan."*

*Mahasiswa* : *"Hu..."* (IW IV.1/10)

(Translation)

*Lecturer* : *"Group two manages the discussion excellently."*

*Students* : *"Boo..."* (IW IV.1/10)

The sentence in data (3) shows that the meaning in the form of giving praise as the main subject of the conversation is *'Ini diskusinya kelompok dua sangat memuaskan.'* (*"Group two manages the discussion excellently."*) where the lecturer as a speaker expresses the idea of *affirmation* or *motivation* as well. It is made clear by the word option of *'sangat memuaskan'* (*excellent*). Thus, it indicates that the discussion delivered by the students from group two referred as great and successful which makes it excellent by the lecturer. The objectives or ideas form of *affirmation* and *motivation* are the lecturer as a speaker convinces the students that the discussion managed by them shows a maximum result. Therefore, such activities can be rearranged because the presentation and analysis of language errors run decently and give a maximum result.

## 4. Giving Threat (Fear)

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of giving threat or fear. Here is the statement below.

Data (4)

Dosen : *"Minggu depan awas! Semua peserta harus bertanya, makanya harus siap. Yang sudah bertanya, minggu depan lagi bertanya, mengerti?"*

Mahasiswa : *"Mengerti!"* (IW IV.1/10)

(Translation)

Lecturer : "For next week, beware! All participants should prepare one question, so be ready. All who have asked today, still have to prepare questions for next week, got it?"

Students : "Got it!" (IW IV.1/10)

The sentence in data (4) shows that the meaning in the form of giving threat or fear as the main subject of the conversation is *'Minggu depan awas!'* (*"For next week, beware!"*). The lecturer as a speaker expresses a threat to the receivers. Even so, it can be seen that the emphasis from the word option of *'awas'* (*beware*) indicates that the idea expressed by the lecturer as a speaker becomes the form of *prudence* and *readiness* as all the participants should get a turn to ask. It is intended for all participants to be active in the discussion where they are expected to think critically and creatively in formulating questions. The form of threat and force by the lecturer as a speaker is intended to terrify the students so they can change attitudes and thoughts into more creative and useful. This method is chosen by the speaker to reinforce and encourage responsiveness to improve teaching quality for maximum results. The encouragement is done by giving threatening situation, which is to provide affirmation to the students. The idea of *prudence* and *readiness* becomes affirmation in shaping and embedding attitudes toward competence mastery and increased ability to express thoughts or opinions as a manifestation of maximum teaching results.

The following data excerpt expressed by the speaker shows resentment which implies an impropriety event so he threatens the students.

Data (5)

*"Apakah dia merupakan bahasa yang baik dan benar? Okelah, kalau begitu kapan dia berbahasa Indonesia yang baik dan benar? Ayo, masa' empat puluh otak tidak ada, hanya dua orang yang bisa menjawab. Yang di belakang coba! Apa itu Nak? Apa itu? Hai'! Nanti kalau saya kasih masuk di ujian, cari memangko [memang] jawabannya. Nanti, kalau saya kasih masuk di soal semester, segera kau cari jawabannya."* (BAK I.3/6)

(Translation)

"Is it a correct and proper language? Alright, so when does he speak Indonesian correctly and properly? Come on, forty brains do not exist, only two of you who can answer. You at the backseat! What is it, Boy? What is that? Tck! Later if I include this question to exam, find the answer (seriously). Later, if I include this in final exam, immediately find the answer." (BAK I.3 / 6).

The sentence in data (5) shows that the meaning in the form of giving threat or terror as the main subject of the conversation is *'Nanti kalau saya kasih masuk di ujian, cari memangko [memang] jawabannya. Nanti, kalau saya kasih masuk di soal semester, segera kau cari jawabannya.'* (*"Later if I include this question to exam, find the answer (seriously). Later, if I include this in final exam, immediately find the answer."*) The lecturer as a speaker shows a sense of resentment towards the absence of response from the students as the receivers. A situation and condition of a lecture which do not produce desired responses or answers by the lecturer as a speaker threatens through the statement. It is intended to terrify and force the students that the question will be tested in final exam. The intention of the speaker through the statement is the students should be more active, creative, and competent in learning Indonesian language. Hence, the idea delivered by the lecturer as a speaker is *prudence* and *readiness* which is to motivate and encourage the students to prepare themselves and change the pattern of bad learning behavior.

##### 5. Giving Question and Correction

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of giving question and correction. Here is the statement below.

Data (6)

*Mahasiswa: "E, begini sebenarnya saya bertanya di sini untuk menguji. Jadi, saya hanya ingin memberikan pemahaman kepada teman-teman bahwa kelebihan dan kekurangan buku yang pertama kalau kelebihan itu..."*

(IW IV.3/10)

(Translation)

A Student: "Um, here is the thing, I actually asked here to test. So, I just want to give my friends an understanding that the advantages and weaknesses of the first book, where its advantages are..." (IW IV.3 / 10)

The sentence in data (6) shows that the meaning in the form of giving question and correction as the main subject of the conversation is *'...bertanya di sini untuk menguji. Jadi, saya hanya ingin memberikan pemahaman...'* (*"asked here to test. So, I just want to give my friends an understanding..."*). The student as a speaker expresses the idea in the form of *competence* or *knowledge* to other students as the discussion's participants which clarified through the statement. It shows that the raised question is used as a strategy to share speaker's competence to the other as receivers in such activities related to the books' advantages and weaknesses. Therefore, the purpose of the question form is to enforce learning activities.

##### 6. Stating Inadequacy and Weakness

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of stating inadequacy and weakness. Here is the statement below.

Data (7)

*"Pengamatan kita itu saja yang sering bicara, yang kita lakukan sekarang. Manakah suara yang tidak bersuara itu mengajukan pendapat. Ada apa denganmu sehingga kamu tidak bisa mengungkapkan pemikiran lewat diskusi yang biasanya kita terapkan di setiap kali pertemuan. Nah, siapa perwakilan ataukah, beberapa orang dari temanmu bisa mengungkapkan kenapa Anda diam."* (UK II.7/2)

(Translation)

*"All that we can witness only those who often speak, which we do now. Where are those voiceless people who speak their voice. What is wrong with you that makes you cannot express thoughts through regular discussions we usually conduct every meeting. Well, who is the representative, or, some of you here can tell why you keep silent."* (UK II.7 / 2)

The sentence in data (7) shows that the meaning in the form of stating inadequacy and weakness as the main subject of the conversation is *'...itu saja yang sering bicara, yang kita lakukan sekarang. Manakah suara yang tidak bersuara itu mengajukan pendapat. Ada apa denganmu sehingga kamu tidak bisa mengungkapkan pemikiran lewat diskusi....'* (*'...only those who often speak, which we do now. Where are those voiceless people who speak their voice. What is wrong with you that makes you cannot express thoughts through regular discussions....'*). The lecturer as a speaker expresses the idea of *strengthening* or *affirmation* form to the students as receivers. It is known through an emphasis using the lecturer's question form as the speaker who declares what causes some students as the receivers cannot speak up their thoughts through the discussion activity. From that statement, the lecturer as a speaker identifies the form of inadequacy and weakness in students. It is clarified through a statement of *'...siapa perwakilan ataukah, beberapa orang dari temanmu bisa mengungkapkan kenapa Anda diam.'* (*...who is the representative, or, some of you here can tell why you keep silent.*). In this matter, the lecturer tries to show inadequacy and weakness for encouragement and stimulation to be more creative and skilled in thinking and speaking. He states the students' weakness or incapacity as a form of strengthening to encourage and motivate them so they can qualify and adjust the procedures of learning activities well.

#### 7. Giving Sanction (Maintaining Discipline)

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of giving sanction or maintaining discipline. Here is the statement below.

Data (8)

*Mahasiswa* : *"Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullaahi wabarakaatuh."*  
*Dosen* : *"Wa'alaikum salam, Ade' yang baru masuk, boleh masuk, tapi di absen dikatakan alpa. Mau masuk atau tidak?"* (UK I.5/3)

(Translation)

*A Student* : *"Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullaahi wabarakaatuh."*  
*Lecturer* : *"Wa'alaikum salam, The girl who just entered, can stay in the class, but in Student's Roll, you will be absent. So you want to join the class or not?"* (UK I.5/3)

Data (9)

*"Terlambat Nak, lain kali masuk ya."* (BAK I.3/1)

(Translation)

*"You are late, Kid. Next time you have to join the class."* (BAK I.3/1)

Data (10)

*"Kemudian, saya juga perhatikan itu. Jadi itu absen saya kalau lewat mi (melewati waktu) kesepakatan jangan kasih tanda tangan di'. Siapa yang pegang absen saya dia bertanggung jawab nah."* (MG I.1/4)

(Translation)

*"Then, I also noticed. If students' attendance have been checked, we have to agree to not let the students who come late to put their sign in Student's Roll. Who holds the Student's Roll will be responsible for that."*

(MG I.1/4)

The sentences in data (8), (9), and (10) show that the meaning in the form of giving sanction or maintaining discipline as the main subject of the conversations are *'...boleh masuk, tapi di absen dikatakan alpa.'* (*'...can stay in the class, but in Student's Roll, u will be absent.'*), *'Terlambat Nak, lain kali masuk....'* (*'You are late, Kid. Next time you have to join the class....'*), *'...kalau lewat mi (melewati waktu) kesepakatan jangan kasih tanda tangan....'* (*'...we have to agree to not let the students who come late to put their sign in Student's Roll....'*). The lecturer as a speaker shows that his idea or thought is expressed in the form of *firmness* with regard to discipline. In the explanation, the lecturer as the speaker emphasizes the timeliness associated with students' attendance in learning activity. Thus, the form of symbolic form which the speaker wants to express is the *obedience* to the agreement. Therefore, if there is a student who comes late, he or she will be given a sanction which aimed at showing a sense of regret to awaken an attitude of consciousness so as not to repeat the same thing. By that way, giving sanction or discipline is an effort to build a sense of *awareness* and *obedience* toward the rules to be encouraged in teaching activities.

### 8. Provision of Counseling and Training Service

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of providing counseling and training service. Here is the statement below.

Data (11)

*Dosen: "...kalian Ibu suka, bagaimana Anda mengembangkan pola pikir, bukan Anda mengatakan 'iya sudah'. Moderator lanjut! Materi...' aduh! Bukan begitu yang Ibu Inginkan...kalau seperti, langsung diberikan, tetapi bagaimana Anda melatih lisan Anda berargumen. Bagaimana Anda dalam sosok mahasiswa yang akan memberikan pendapat-pendapat yang logis mengenai suatu hal memecahkan masalah. Jangan seperti orang yang baru belajar berbicara."* (UK II.6/23)

(Translation)

Female Lecturer: "You all, I prefer, how you develop mindset, not just saying, 'that's enough'. 'Moderator, continue! The material...' Oh! That's not what I want...if it is like, continue the reading, but how you practice your oral argument. How do you as a student provide logical statement on solving a problem. Do not be like a person who just learns to speak." (UK II.6 / 23)

The sentence in data (11) shows that the meaning in the form of providing counseling and training service as the main subject of the conversation is '*...melatih lisan Anda berargumen. Bagaimana Anda dalam sosok mahasiswa yang akan memberikan pendapat-pendapat yang logis...*' ('*...practice your oral argument. How do you as a student provide logical statement...*'). The lecturer as a speaker expresses her ideas or thoughts in the form of *affirmation* which is more emphasized on the process of counseling service aims at influencing and giving comprehension the students as receivers about the importance of practicing oral argument and provide logical statements. From that point, it is understood as a statement of ideas or more technical thoughts where it is expected to have the power in triggering enthusiasm and having creative and productive attitude for speaking ability. Thus, the idea is more directed toward the process of technical, interactive, and applicable counseling and training service which aims at providing *affirmation* to the students.

### 9. Giving Instruction or Command

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of giving instruction or command. Here is the statement below.

Data (12)

*Mahasiswa: "E, manfaat rangkuman memudahkan, ndak kutahu je' (saya tidak tahu) berapa Pak, tapi yang...."*

*Dosen: "Iya, sebut saja yang ada di kepala Anda! Sebut!"* (IW IV.3/13)

(Translation)

A Student: "Er, the benefits of a summary is to make it easier, I dont know how many points are them Sir, but the...."

Lecturer: "Yes, just mention what pops in your mind! Mention it!" (IW IV.3 / 13)

The sentence in data (12) shows that the meaning in the form of giving instruction or command as the main subject of the conversation '*...sebut saja yang ada di kepala Anda!*' ('*...just mention what pops in your mind!*'). The form expresses the instruction of an emphasis with the function to *strengthen* so that the students' ability and self-confidence increase. Therefore, the structure that the lecturer conveys as a speaker where its idea's construction contains a statement of command and affirmation is to make the receivers respond immediately. The statement above greatly confirms the form of *affirmation* which means to just express what you know with no doubt about the incorrect answer. The purpose of affirming idea is to give students *confidence* in answering questions.

### 10. Declaring Honesty

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of declaring honesty. Here is the statement below.

Data (13)

*"Saya suka sekali lisan, kenapa? Lisan itu ketika ujian lisan bagus. Kenapa saya bahasakan itu, karena hasil pemikiran sendiri, kalau tulisan banyak mencontek."* (IW I.4/4)

(Translation)

"I appreciate oral speaking much, why? It is good when conducting oral exams. Why I say that, because it is the results of our own thoughts, a written exam has a bigger chance to cheat." (IW I.4 / 4).

The sentence in data (13) shows that the meaning in the form of declaring honesty as the main subject of the conversation is '*karena hasil pemikiran sendiri,*' ('*because it is the results of our own thoughts,*'). The lecturer as a speaker also expresses the idea of *strengthening* form through honest attitude to make an emphasis by using expressive and rhetorical question, that is '*Saya suka sekali lisan, kenapa?*' ('*I appreciate oral speaking much, why?*'). The statement shows that the lecturer as a speaker tries to convince students as receivers of oral test's benefit due to the results of own thought which is different to written exam with a bigger chance to cheat. Thus, the lecturer as a speaker expresses the idea of reinforcing the attitude of honesty by comparing between oral and written exams. Through the comparison, the lecturer can motivate students in teaching and learning activity. Clearly, honesty can evoke critical and comprehensive curiosity which creates confidence as well in dealing with teaching activities. Therefore, developing an

attitude of honesty in conducting teaching is one way of building character as a motivation and affirmation of the students.

#### 11. Asking for Request or Demand

The following statement in *PBI's* discourse is expressed in symbolic forms of asking for request or demand. Here is the statement below.

Data (14)

*Mahasiswa* : “Assalamu’alaikum warahmatullaahi wabarakaatuh.”  
*Dosen* : “Masuk! Wa’alaikumsalam, ada yang bisa saya bantu?”  
*Mahasiswa* : “Ibu, maaf terlambat ki’ (terlambat) datang karena ada teman yang kecelakaan tadi Bu’.” (UK I.5/4)

(Translation)

A Student : “Assalamu’alaikum warahmatullaahi wabarakaatuh.”  
 Lecturer : “Come in! Wa’alaikumsalam, can I help you?”  
 A Student : “Ma’am, sorry for coming late because my friend had an accident, Ma’am.” (UK I.5 / 4)

The sentence in data (14) shows that the meaning in the form of asking for request or demand as the main subject of the conversation is ‘*Ibu, maaf terlambat ki’*’ (‘*Ma’am, sorry for coming late....*’). The student as a speaker shows her idea or thought which expressed through an *apology* statement that followed by an explanation of her friend’s accident as her reason for coming late. It shows that the student as a speaker expresses the idea in the form of *affirmation* to her lateness with reason to be understood by the lecturer. Therefore, the ability to improve lies in the argumentation of making a logical reason with the aim of *convincing* the lecturer to be allowed in attending lecture’s activity.

#### B. Further Description of Research Findings

Based on the data results in *PBI's* discourse, eleven functions of symbolic forms are expressed by the speakers as the formation of character building which include (1) statements with "challenging" characteristic and its development; (2) giving direction, guidance, and advice; (3) giving praise; (4) giving threat (fear); (5) giving question and correction; (6) stating inadequacy and weakness; (7) giving sanction (discipline); (8) providing counseling and training service; (9) giving instruction or command; (10) declaring honesty; and (11) asking for request or demand.

The eleventh description of the symbolic functions differ from Ritzer’s (2014, p.630-631) which describes the general function of symbolic forms into four functions, such as (1) giving people the ability to recognize the material and social world of understanding the environment; (2) improving the ability to think because language can broaden knowledge; (3) improving human’s ability to solve any problems; and (4) the use of symbols from actors who can visualize a metaphysical reality. In addition, it also differs from Yule’s statement (2014: 93-94) which classifies the meaning of general speech acts into five functions, that is (1) declarative function; (2) representative function; (3) expressive function; (4) directive function; and (5) commissive function.

The function of symbolic form delivered by speakers in *PBI's* discourse where its substance expresses characters about morals, affirmation, motivation, and self-development which also shows positive image behaviors. This is confirmed by Adisusilo, (2014, p.2) that moral behavior is basically something covered in one’s mind because it is stored in the way of thinking. Therefore, by just looking at personal appearance, it will be not enough to apprehend which is the moral reasoning behind his behavior. Thus, it is necessary to examine a deep critical discourse to reveal the character form behind an idea.

The developed character by speaker in *PBI's* discourse shows the critical attitude of scientific thinking. This is agreed by Zubaedi’s (2011, p.10) statement that character refers to a series of attitude, behavior, motivation, and skill. It includes attitude, desire to do the best, and intellectual capacity, such as critical and moral reason, behavior, honest, and responsible. It is shown through an interview with a lecturer about the condition of Indonesian language learning.

“Kalau menurut saya Pak kondisinya, kecakapan berbahasa untuk mahasiswa sendiri sebenarnya mereka belum sepenuhnya. Dan ini tantangan saya selaku dosen bahasa Indonesia. Di sinilah saya harus mengajarkannya. Apalagi mata kuliah Bahasa Indonesia memang keterampilan berbahasa, itu adalah salah satu e, pembelajaran yang harus saya berikan kepada mahasiswa dan, sepertinya aspek berbahasa dan aspek menulis yang sangat perlu saya tekankan pada mahasiswa”.

(Translation)

"From my perspective, Sir, the condition of, language proficiency for students themselves actually they are not fully capable. And this is my challenge as an Indonesian language lecturer. This is where I have to teach. Moreover, Indonesian Language course is a language skill, it is one of err, the learning that I have to give to the students and, it seems the language aspect and writing aspect are the most thing that I should force to the students."

The explanation above which is under the lecturers’ concern when teaching Indonesian language involves a high motivation to build students’ intellectual character especially in language proficiency skill. Thus, the effort of giving motivation and affirmation in *PBI's* discourse is an effective way of building moral values through attitude and cognition. This is according to Naim’s statement, (2012, p.57) that the character must always be maintained, defended, and grown. Therefore, the provision of motivation and reinforcement is one of the effective attitudes to encourage the improvement of creative and critical thinking in *PBI's* discourse. The statement is also supported by Marzuki (2015,

p.23) that without the intelligent effort of character education, it will not produce intelligent people who at once are able to use their intelligence to act and behave properly. This is in accordance with an interview result from a lecturer who explains about some difficulties in teaching.

*"Kesulitan pasti ada Pak, tapi kesulitan bisa diminimalkan. Kesulitan itu apabila mahasiswa tidak bisa mengeluarkan pendapatnya. Pak itu yang biasa agak mempersulit saya sebagai dosen untuk mengajar. Kadang beberapa orang yang mampu mengungkapkan hasil pemikiran mereka, sedangkan yang lainnya itu hanya menyimak apa yang disampaikan oleh teman ataupun dosen".*

(Translation)

"Difficulties are unavoidable Sir, but it can be minimized. The difficulty is if students cannot express their opinions. Sir, that is a usual barrier for me as a lecturer when teaching. Sometimes only several students are able to express their thoughts, while the others only listen to what is delivered by their classmates or lecturer."

Yet another reason why, the results of the interviews shows that lecturers in teaching Indonesian language find it difficult to encourage students to be actively involved in speaking to express opinions, but then it is minimized and successful to overcome such difficulties. This also indicates that the lecturers make a smart effort to find the right strategy. Specifically to overcome the difficulty as a step of character building in improving the ability to speak up.

The symbolic form expressed in *PBI's* discourse is able to build the character of scientific thinking and encourage students to be positive in overcoming difficulties during teaching and learning process. This can be observed in an interview result with a student about his difficulties during teaching and learning process.

*"Ada beberapa dosen menyampaikan bahasa ilmiah yang baru kita dengar, tetapi itu menjadi acuan bagi kita semua untuk mengetahui apa makna dari bahasa ilmiah itu. Jadi, dijadikan sebagai pembelajaran".*

(Translation)

"There are some lecturers who deliver new scientific terms to our ear, but it becomes reference for all of us to discover what actually the terms mean. So, it becomes as a learning material."

The interview result shows that the difficulties found by the students in learning process become as motivation to be more active. Additionally, it is used as a challenge to build self-image into a more positive direction for scientific competence. This is in accordance with the statement of Zuchdi et al. (2013, p.9) that the most important thing to teach is problem-solving skill, critical and creative thinking, and making decisions with full responsibility. Thus, the statements from the interview shows that there is a violent meaning conveyed in symbolic form where the difficulty used as a learning interpreted into the creative and critical way of thinking for solving problem.

The effort to build a good atmosphere and interaction structure in *PBI's* discourse is one effort to develop positive thinking insight. This is shown in the student's statement through the interview, "...I think when we are in a good environment, we will automatically also direct ourselves to good things as well." Thus, an effective teaching environment will affect students' character building toward positive things. Moreover, the creation of teaching environment and atmosphere can be utilized as a reinforcement and motivation. This is supported by Marzuki's (2015, p.42) that teacher or lecturer should create a conducive learning environment so that teaching can run effectively in a safe, active, creative, democratic learning environment which supported by discipline, honesty, and politeness. From these statements, it will form a reinforcement toward an understanding and insight of thinking in a strong character and visionary, as revealed by an interview result of a student about the motivation to continue education until university.

*"Motivasi saya di erah sekarang pendidikan itu penting. Kalau misalnya kita hanya \*stag di situ saja kapan kita mau maju, makanya kita harus berusaha bagaimana caranya agar pendidikan kita terus berlanjut agar ilmu kita makin banyak dan insya Allah bermanfaat."*

(Translation)

"My motivation in this era is education as an important thing. For instance if we are stuck in the same place, when do we move on, that is why we must try how to continue our education so that our knowledge is increased and by God's willing, it will be fruitful."

The interview result shows that the student views education as an absolute thing because it is one way to improve scientific competence. So, the way of thinking is imaging herself toward the understanding of educational progress that is efficient and effective.

As with the symbolic forms in *PBI's* discourse which its function confirms that character building through the provision of affirmation and motivation where there is an emphasis to influence the attitude and cognition of receivers. Empirically, Jufri & Achmad Tolla's findings [1] explain that the power of symbolic meaning is used to influence the structure of public cognition, so it is not difficult to join the circle of domination and become obedient. This shows the similarity, that is the symbolic form used to affect attitudes and cognitions without feeling compelled. The difference is, presidential discourse influences public to form domination and power, while *PBI's* discourse forms ideas concerning obligation to legitimize lecturer's role to influence students to grow and shapes the character of scientists.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the description that has been discussed in the previous section, it concludes eleven functions of symbolic forms regarding character building in *PBI's* discourse at IAIN Palopo as follows: (1) the statement of "challenging" characteristic and its development by representing an idea in the form of a competency sharpening; (2) giving direction,

guidance, and advice by representing the idea of affirmation/motivation form; (3) giving praise by representing the idea of affirmation/motivation form; (4) giving threat (fear) by representing the idea of emphasis on affirmation/motivation form; (5) giving question and correction by representing ideas in the form of reinforcement and justification; (6) stating inadequacy and weakness by representing the idea of self-awareness toward the level of ability; (7) giving sanction (maintaining discipline) by representing the idea of giving awareness to undisciplined manner; (8) providing counseling and training service by representing the idea of strengthening deep competence; (9) giving an instruction or command by representing the idea of strengthening and affirmation; (10) declaring honesty by representing the optimal idea of material mastery; and (11) asking for request or demand by representing the idea of affirmation/motivation form.

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# Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

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Journal of Language Teaching and Research (JLTR) is a scholarly peer-reviewed international scientific journal published bimonthly, focusing on theories, methods, and materials in language teaching, study and research. It provides a high profile, leading edge forum for academics, professionals, consultants, educators, practitioners and students in the field to contribute and disseminate innovative new work on language teaching and research.

JLTR invites original, previously unpublished, research and survey articles, plus research-in-progress reports and short research notes, on both practical and theoretical aspects of language teaching, learning, and research. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

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