Journal of Language Teaching and Research

Contents

Education: An Excellent Opportunity to Respect, Maintain and Promote Indigenous Children's Cultural and Linguistic Richness

Karla Del Carpio

Department of World Languages and Cultures, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado, United States

Abstract—Education can provide the opportunity to affirm indigenous children's cultural and linguistic identity by using their funds of knowledge as an essential tool in the teaching and learning process. This paper emphasizes the importance of using indigenous children's voices, knowledge, and wisdom to continue to develop their talents and capacities to share, learn, inquire, analyze, and create. To do so, indigenous children should be given the opportunity to participate in meaningful activities that allow them to utilize their native language and culture which can be done through bilingual discussions, debates, artistic works, creation of poems, singing of songs, games and group activities related to their own indigenous culture while using both their native and second languages. Also, critical thinking skills can be developed through the use of this type of activities that can be artistic and also promote collaborative work since bringing the community together is fundamental in the indigenous cosmovision. In addition, the techniques that are suggested in this piece can help create a peaceful/harmonious environment in the classroom where students' affective filters are open to welcome and practice the target language since enriching interactions that embrace diversity in all its dimensions are promoted. Thus, the purpose of this manuscript is to share some ideas to make the teaching and learning process more meaningful, respectful, harmonious, and enjoyable through artistic activities that promote indigenous children's own language, culture and cosmovision. The ideas that will be discussed in this piece are based on a qualitative research study conducted at a Spanish-Indigenous Tsotsil bilingual school in Chiapas, Mexico.

Index Terms—children, culture, education, indigenous, language

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's society, the list of challenges that one faces is endless; from social, political, economic and ideological challenges to linguistic and cultural ones just to name a few. These challenges, in one way or another, impact how education and the school are conceived and directed. As well as, the tasks of the teacher and the student, especially in bilingual schools where a dominant language such as Spanish and an indigenous language are involved. For instance, in the context of Latin America, which is considered to be one of the culturally and linguistically richest areas in the globe with approximately 400 native groups with an estimated population of 40 million that live in the area (López, 2009). Mexico, the focus of this paper, is considered to be one of the countries with one of the largest indigenous populations in the subcontinent with an estimate of 10 million, which represents between 12% and 15% of the Mexican population (Chacón, 2005). National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) (2010) indicates that there are approximately 6,695,228 inhabitants aged five years old and older who speak an indigenous language (INEGI, 2010), which represents 6.8% of the population ranked in these ages.

Unfortunately, historically in Mexico, the school and transitional bilingual education have been used to favor the learning of Spanish, putting indigenous languages at a disadvantage, which has affected the linguistic and cultural wealth of the Mexican nation, and this has also been a violation of the human-linguistic and cultural rights of indigenous children. Many times, the value and importance of indigenous languages has been forgotten. In this regard, De Varennes (s.f.) argues that:

> Language has a tremendously important role as both gatekeeper and doorway: indigenous peoples may be excluded or disadvantaged where a government limits or refuses to allow the use of an indigenous language within the institutions of the state and relations with the public, or a doorway can be opened in both education and advancement when the use of an indigenous language can serve to empower members of indigenous communities (p.2).

It is important to remember that the prohibition of native languages or their refusal has contributed to the exclusion of indigenous communities from different facets of political, educational, and social life. The exclusion of indigenous peoples and with them their languages and cultures are one of the many reasons why it was considered necessary to carry out the research study that is described in this manuscript.

II. THE STUDY

Research Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative research was to explore the current situation of the Mayan indigenous Tsotsil language by analyzing a Spanish-Tsotsil bilingual program implemented at an elementary bilingual school in Tentic, Chiapas, Mexico. Furthermore, the study analyzed how the indigenous Tsotsil language is preserved or hindered through bilingual education. This was a qualitative ethnographic study that required to live in the indigenous community at different times. The research question that guided the study was: How is the indigenous Tsotsil language maintained or hindered through bilingual education at a Spanish- Tsotsil bilingual elementary school in Tentic, Chiapas, Mexico?

To collect data for this study, fieldwork was done on the research site. Dewalt and Dewalt (2001 as cited in Kawulich, 2005) argue that fieldwork includes active looking, the improvement of memory, informal conversations (interviews), writing meticulous field notes and patience. Keeping these ideas in mind and considering the purpose of this research, Tsotsil third graders were observed passively and actively and were also interviewed over the course of one semester. The students' teacher was also observed passively when teaching and was interviewed during the semester. In addition, written questionnaires were used and extensive field notes were written during the data collection process. In both the semi-standardized interviews and the open-ended written questionnaires, students were asked about the language(s) they speak, where they use them, and the language they identify themselves with. Moreover, they were asked about the language(s) they speak in school with the teacher and their friends, as well as in different locations with their relatives. Also, they were asked questions about their language preference and attitudes. The semi-standardized interviews were conducted in Spanish and Tsotsil. To ensure communication took place, sixth graders who are fluent in both languages were asked to be present when interviews were conducted with 25 third graders.

As for the teacher and the principal, the interviews were done in Spanish. The teacher was asked, for example, with regards to the purpose of the semester, the subjects she was teaching, the languages she uses when teaching, how she sees the role of the Spanish and Tsotsil languages and cultures in the teaching and learning process and about how her students behave when they are spoken in Spanish or Tsotsil. Also, the instructor was asked about her students' behavior and academic performance during the term. Following Berg's (2009) suggestion, the semi-standardized interviews conducted with participants were very useful as the questions in this type of interview "are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent, order, but the interviewers are allowed freedom to digress; that is, the interviewers are permitted (in fact, expected) to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared standardized questions" (Berg, 2009, p. 107), which was what occurred in this research. Moreover, all participants were asked probing questions as relevant information became apparent during the observations. Interviews conducted with the school principal and teacher were conducted individually; those for the students were mostly in small groups. The researcher adapted the interviews depending on how the students wanted to have these oral conversations, individually or with their classmates.

Interviews lasted between 20 to 30 minutes. The researcher let the participants know that the conversations were going to be audio-recorded and that these could be stopped at any time. Also, participants were made aware that they were able to decide the time and place for the interviews to be conducted. With regards to the written questionnaire, it was applied only to students and they were asked similar questions to those asked in the interviews, for example, questions about the language(s) they speak, their language preference, the language they identify themselves with and their attitudes towards both the Tsotsil and Spanish languages. Also, they were asked about the Tsotsil and mestizo cultures.

The conversations with the participants were recorded and translated from Spanish or Tsotsil into English. The interviews were transcribed in order to analyze them through content analysis, which Berg (2009) defines as "a careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases, and meanings" (p. 338). The identified units of analysis were used for coding the data (e.g., phrases, themes). After that, the researcher open coded the transcript data using the unit of analysis (Berg, 2009) "by asking specific and consistent set of questions, analyzing the data minutely, frequently interrupting the coding to write a theoretical note, never assuming the analytic relevance of any traditional variable such as age, sex, social class, and so on until the data show it to be relevant" (pp. 354-355). The researcher identified the common themes that emerged from the conversation and then she categorized them into coding frames. In addition, the findings were based on the researcher's observations and field notes.

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The following section provides information on the focus school as well as the themes that were identified from collecting data from the Tsotsil teacher, the school principal and the third graders. The results show the participant's attitudes towards the indigenous language as well as how it has been used at the bilingual school. Indigenous teachers working at the focus institution are committed to the maintenance and transmission of the indigenous language and traditions. Therefore, Tsotsil children have been given the opportunity to participate in meaningful activities that have allowed them to use their native language and culture through bilingual discussions, debates, artistic works, creation of poems, singing of songs, games and group activities related to their indigenous roots. Interestingly, the type of bilingual education these students have received has not only had a great impact on the way they perceive Spanish, Tsotsil and both cultures, but also on their openness to and curiosity for other languages. It is possible to say that the type of

education implemented at the research school has contributed to maintain the Tsotsil language and traditions.

The school has 1 principal, 8 teachers and 227 students who are mostly Tsotsil children. The school was founded in 1990 and is located in Tentic, which is a small town that belongs to the municipality of Chamula in the State of Chiapas.

A. The Teacher

Josefina (pseudonym), the students' teacher, is a female Tsotsil instructor who also took part in this study. She is in her early forties and is originally from Venustiano Carranza, Chiapas. Her first language is Tsotsil, but she also speaks Spanish as her second language as she was taught both languages by her parents as stated in the conversation the researcher had with her:

> **Josefina:** Tsotsil is my first language. In my hometown, since we're little we learn Tsotsil; we learn both Spanish and Tsotsil, we're bilingual from a very young age. We learn both languages. Of course, there are also families who don't know the native language; they are monolingual in Spanish as they weren't taught Tsotsil by their parents. In my case, my parents taught me both at home; mostly Tsotsil, but I'm fluent in both. Children here are monolingual in Tsotsil, so Spanish is difficult for them. It's important to teach children words in Tsotsil. Parents should also teach them Tsotsil…so the language doesn't disappear. (Josefina Perez, interview by Karla Del Carpio,*"Tsotsil children and bilingual education in Chiapas, Mexico: The social and academic consequences of considering or not indigenous children's language and culture in education",* Spanish Academic Editorial, August 2017).

Josefina is aware of the importance of transmitting the native language to younger generations as this can help prevent language loss so she ensures to use Tsotsil in the classroom as well.

Josefina holds a four-year bachelor's degree in Pedagogy which she earned from the National Pedagogic University (*Universidad Pedagógica Nacional* (UPN)) in San Cristóbal de las Casas. While doing her bachelor's, she took courses in pedagogy, culture, interculturality, research methods, Spanish and other courses. Her professors were from different regions in Chiapas. She feels that the contents she learned at UPN were useful; however, she also mentioned that she was not taught how to teach with a bilingual approach as observed in part of the conversation I had with her:

> **Josefina:** The contents I learned at UPN were useful as I was taught how to interact with young children and how to teach them…they taught us different strategies. However, they didn't teach us how to teach with a bilingual approach. They only taught us what they had on their syllabus…bilingual education wasn't part of it. We didn't have bilingual professors, most of them were monolingual in Spanish…well maybe there were bilingual professors, but I didn't have one (Josefina Perez, interview by Karla Del Carpio*, "Tsotsil children and bilingual education in Chiapas, Mexico: The social and academic consequences of considering or not indigenous children's language and culture in education",* Spanish Academic Editorial, August 2017).

Interestingly, the latter has been a common situation among teachers working at bilingual schools in indigenous areas, that is, they are not strongly trained to teach with a bilingual approach. Another participant in this research was the school principal.

B. The School Principal

Antonio (pseudonym), the principal of the elementary school, is a mestizo male in his late 40's who has been teaching at the research school for the last 5 years. His first language is Spanish, but he also speaks Tsotsil and Tzeltal. The latter is another indigenous language spoken in Chiapas. Antonio declared that at the beginning of his teaching career, he did not know he had a passion for teaching as his initial profession was in Economics. This can be observed in part of the conversation the researcher had with him in which he provided some information on his academic and professional journey as well the love he developed for teaching:

> **School principal:** I'm from Panteló, Chiapas. But, I left my hometown when I was 6 years old. I studied in Yajalón for a year then from second to fourth grades I was in Panteló, from fifth grade to upper grades, I studied in San Cristóbal. I was 11 years old when I moved there. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from the Faculty of Social Sciences in San Cristobal. After that, I started a career in teaching. I worked for the state government for 3 years and then I started teaching. Teaching was definitely my vocation, but I didn't know this in the past. Due to financial reasons, I wasn't able to study what I wanted. I wanted to pursue a career in Law, but I couldn't do so. When I was completing my undergrad studies, I had to work in the morning and I went to school in the evening. I'm an Economist, but it's difficult to get a job with this profession plus the pay is really low too. Therefore, I went for teaching. It was the financial need that pushed me to go into teaching. Moreover, I speak 2 indigenous languages.
> **Researcher:** Which ones?
> **School principal:** Tzeltal and Tsotsil, so I applied for a teaching position in an indigenous school. Having a bachelor's degree and being able to speak indigenous languages made it easy for me to get a job at an elementary school. I just had to take a teaching course. I was sent to Chalchituitan, Chiapas as the school principal at an elementary school there.
> **Researcher:** Can you please tell me about your experience there?
> **School principal:** I didn't have any experience as a school principal. I didn't know how to organize things. However, I started learning about this little by little. There was a teacher at the school that wasn't able to teach

for one week as he was sick, so I had to substitute him. That was my first time teaching children. That's when I discovered my vocation as a teacher. When I saw how children participated in class; how affectionate they were with me…how much they shared, for example, they always gave me fruits such as bananas, pineapples and papayas. Children always showed me their affection. This was really motivating. That's how my vocation for doing service started; service to children. This makes me happy. I've had other job opportunities to work as an Economist; however, I don't want to change my teaching job as teaching makes me happy; it makes me feel complete; I give everything for children. (Aurelio Rodriguez, interview by Karla Del Carpio, *"Tsotsil children and bilingual education in Chiapas, Mexico: The social and academic consequences of considering or not indigenous children's language and culture in education"*, Spanish Academic Editorial, August 2017).

One of the positive aspects is that most of the indigenous teachers working at the focus school are committed to the maintenance and transmission of the indigenous language and traditions. However, they are not necessarily trained to teach with an intercultural bilingual approach as their academic background is not always in teaching, but on a different area. Also, there are instructors who go into the teaching field without planning to do so or without knowing they have an interest in it. However, they choose to become teachers as it represents employment and financial opportunities. Through the numerous observations and interactions, the researcher had with the school principal, she noticed that although he does not have a background in teaching, he has become an efficient and caring instructor who is definitely committed to his students, colleagues and the teaching field. The researcher observed that the students the school principal works with love him and enjoy being around him. This is evidenced by the fact that it is them who many times take the initiative to go to the main office just to say hello to him, to give him a hug or to share some of their fruits or vegetables with him. Antonio's caring and approachable personality has fostered this positive attitude in the students.

C. The Third Graders

This research also had the participation of 25 indigenous Tsotsil third graders. All of the students' first language is Tsotsil and are in the process of learning Spanish as their second language. Most third graders understand Spanish, but do not speak it fluently, so they feel more comfortable when communicating in Tsotsil. There are third graders who are monolingual in Tsotsil, so the school is their first contact with the Spanish language. All of the students were born and raised in Tentic. Unfortunately, most of these children live in a disadvantageous situation as they live in extreme poverty. The poverty in which these Tsotsil indigenous children in Chiapas live coincides with the reality lived by other indigenous children in different parts of Latin America, for example, in Peru where it has been found that the inequities experienced by Peruvian children are directly related to their ethnic origin (Group for the Analysis of Development (GRADE), National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) , n.d. as cited in Inversión en la Infancia, 2010). "Indigenous young children and adolescents who learned to speak Quechua, Aymara or any Amazonian language live in worse conditions and have less access to better development opportunities than those whose first language is Spanish" (Inversión en la Infancia, 2010, para. 2). It is among the indigenous population where "the highest negative ratings of poverty, healthcare, education and identity are found" (Inversión en la Infancia, 2010, para. 2,). A clear example of this is the Tsotsil children who took part in this research.

Most Tsotsil children have positive attitudes towards their first language and Spanish. However, it was noticed that when they were asked questions in class, they respond in Tsotsil. Also, the language mostly spoken in the classroom and at the school in general is Tsotsil. In other words, the use of Tsotsil in the classroom is predominant, which was confirmed by the teacher who mentioned that when students get to grade 3, the language they know and speak the most is Tsotsil.

It was noticed that the third graders' teacher and her colleagues have positive attitudes towards the native language and culture, this has influenced their teaching practice, which has had an impact on students' attitudes. When students were asked about the language(s) and culture (s) they identify themselves with all of them answered they identify with Tsotsil. Here are some examples:

Student A: I identify with Tsotsil because it is my mother tongue. I feel good when I speak it. I don't speak Spanish.

Student B: The Tsotsil culture is a pretty culture that has always lived in Chiapas through the traditional clothing, the indigenous language, the way of being… the Tsotsil people's traditional stuff has also being sold abroad.

Student C: I speak Tsotsil. My family doesn't speak Spanish. I identify with my indigenous language.

Student D: We like Tsotsil and we also preserve our traditions. We weave and embroider. But, boys don't know how to do those activities. Boys only know how to cultivate the land, they grow pumpkins or beans. Sometimes they don't come to school because they have to go seed or because they get sick.

Student E: I like Tsotsil because there are things we can only say in Tsotsil. There are things we can't translate into Spanish, for example, when we talk about clothes or things like that. There are certain things we can only say in Spanish. We write more in Spanish…sometimes in Tsotsil. We can write a letter in Tsotsil, but it's easier to write in Spanish. But, we can also write a story in Tsotsil. Our textbooks are mostly in Spanish (Tsotsil students, interview by Karla Del Carpio, *"Tsotsil children and bilingual education in Chiapas, Mexico: The social and academic consequences of considering or not indigenous children's language and culture in education"*, Spanish Academic Editorial, August 2017).

Also, as it can be seen in the previous quote, the fact that they have positive attitudes towards their native language and culture does not imply they reject the Spanish language. In other words, students seem to also have positive attitudes towards Mexico's dominant language and culture as can be seen in the following excerpts:

Student A: The mestizo culture is nice. It is good to learn to speak Spanish because it is a pretty language.

Student F: I also like Spanish other than Tsotsil.

Student G: I identity with Tsotsil, but I like both Spanish and Tsotsil. We speak both.

Student H: I like both languages. We like both languages here (Tsotsil students, interview by Karla Del Carpio, *"Tsotsil children and bilingual education in Chiapas, Mexico: The social and academic consequences of considering or not indigenous children's language and culture in education"*, Spanish Academic Editorial, August 2017).

Interestingly, other than having positive attitudes towards Spanish and Tsotsil, they seem to have curiosity and interest in the learning of other languages such as English, French and Chinese:

Student I: When I get to junior high school, I'd like to learn English because I like it. They say that English is easier than Tsotsil so it'd be easier for us to learn English.

Researcher: Why would you like to learn English?

Student I: Sometimes we meet people who speak English, but we don't understand them. We like English because we'd like to learn animal names in English so we can translate them into Spanish and Tsotsil.

Student J: We'd also like to learn French and Chinese (Tsotsil students, interview by Karla Del Carpio, *"Tsotsil children and bilingual education in Chiapas, Mexico: The social and academic consequences of considering or not indigenous children's language and culture in education"*, Spanish Academic Editorial, August 2017).

The previous conversation is an example of the positive effects of bilingual education. In this case, the type of bilingual education these students have received has not only had a great impact on the way they perceive Spanish, Tsotsil and both cultures, but also on their openness to and curiosity for other languages. It is possible to say that the type of education implemented at the research school has contributed to maintain the Tsotsil language and traditions. An example of this is the fact that students at this school do not have to wear a uniform every day except for Monday which is when they have the traditional national homage. This provides students with the option of wearing their typical indigenous outfit, offering them the option to decide whether they want to wear their traditional clothing or the uniform.

At the focus school, indigenous children have been given the opportunity to participate in meaningful activities that have allowed them to utilize their native language and culture which can be done through bilingual discussions, debates, artistic works, creation of poems, singing of songs, games and group activities related to their own indigenous culture while using both their native and second languages. In the following section some of these activities are described.

D. Activities to Preserve and Promote the Tsotsil Language and Culture

Theater has been a valuable tool to share some of the traditions of the Tsotsil community. The teachers stated that the use of art is an educational proposal that highlights various social functions. The Secretary of Public Education (SEP) (2006) points out that art is a source of discovery for the student therefore it is used to produce crafts, put on shows for school festivities and different events to promote children's languages and cultures. Tsotsil teachers have done a phenomenal job motivating and preparing their students to participate in plays, which has allowed the Tsotsil language to be used in an artistic setting at the local and national level. This has been done as part of the National Indigenous School Theater project in Mexico.

Teachers have also created poetry contests at the school which have given Tsotsil children the opportunity to write poems in their mother tongue. The content of many of these poems reflects some of the traditions of the town, as well as the Tsotsil cosmovision. Teachers choose a date for the children to recite their poems in front of the rest of the students and teachers. This event at the school is known as the "Top Ten Poetic." The Tsotsil culture has also been spread through the typical dances of the region in which the dancers are the Tsotsil children themselves. Furthermore, it is admirable that the Tsotsil children with the help of their teachers have translated songs from English or Spanish into the Tsotsil language. These songs have been performed in Tsotsil at events such as festivals or ceremonies within the school. It was fascinating to observe the interest and curiosity that these children have for other languages and cultures, but not at the expense of their own, that is, they want to learn about other communities and their languages, but always maintaining their indigenous language and culture. Olcina-Sempere (2018) emphasizes that music in today's society must be viewed from a multicultural perspective. Therefore, it is necessary to "incorporate the music of different cultures at all educational levels, reformulate the contents and strategies, and develop new teaching materials (Kraus, 1967; Bruhn, 2010; Rodríguez-Quiles, 2013)" (Olcina-Sempere, 2018, p. 63). Music can therefore be a resource that contributes to the development of intercultural competence. In the case of children, from a very young age, their environment is influenced by music, which can be used to develop intercultural competence in them, which is being carried out in the children who participated in this ethnography.

The fact that the focused Tsotsil children have used their native language and aspects of their culture in bilingual discussions, debates, artistic works, creation of poems, singing of songs, games and group activities while using both their native and second languages have contributed to raise the status of the Tsotsil language. Also, this type of activities has helped promote collaborative work and create a peaceful/harmonious environment in the classroom where

students' affective filters are open to welcome and practice the target language since enriching interactions that embrace diversity in all its dimensions are promoted. In other words, these artistic activities have allowed indigenous children to coexist with each other, get to know each other better, and develop their language skills, just to mention some of the benefits of such activities. On the other hand, the fact that these little ones can socialize and build healthy relationships with their peers fulfills one of the many characteristics of education; the social aspect of it. It is important to remember that education is a social process in which each child must have the opportunity to live with others and with their environment in order to continue growing, learning and maturing. It is true that education happens throughout life and not just within school. However, it is essential that in this space the child has enough opportunities to interact with their peers, which is beneficial since through these interactions they can learn not only from the "other" but also from themselves. The implementation of quality education is fundamental for the progress of any society since its original purpose is to be a valuable tool that enriches the student through knowledge that allows them to grow academically and staff in addition to developing.

IV. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The fact that the teachers who work at the research school are Tsotsil and have positive attitudes toward their native language and culture increases the possibilities of using the indigenous language at school. This is an asset as it strengthens the preservation and promotion of the native language. According to the UNESCO's (2003) Language Vitality and Endangerment report, "a language is endangered when it is on the path towards extinction . . . when its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next. That is, there are no new speakers, either adults or children" (p.3). In the case of the Tsotsil community, their native language is mostly transmitted from elders to younger generations as in some cases it is the only language spoken by older generations. Therefore, in order for communication to take place between, for example, grandparents and grandchildren, the indigenous language needs to be learned.

Since Tsotsil is widely used in the town and also at the school, the indigenous language is in an active and living situation, which decreases the chances of putting it in danger of disappearance which has been the case of many minority languages not only in Latin America, but in different parts of the world. It should be noted that the researcher is not suggesting that using the Tsotsil language as the current dominant language both in the town and at the school guarantees its preservation in the future as languages are always evolving/changing as well as their situation because they reflect the modifications taking place in society. What the researcher is saying is that the Tsotsil language does have an active role in the town and such a role is being supported at school as the teachers speak it both inside and outside of the classroom. Also, it is the primary language spoken by the students. This situation reinforces the vitality of the native language as its use is supported in an academic environment, which has not been a common practice. It is true that schools alone are not enough to revitalize indigenous languages as this occurs "within an ecology of languages, in a context of other local and global languages with their relative statuses and uses in domains and social fields such as employment, religion, government, cultural life, media and others" (Hornberger, 2011, p.1). Also, native language revitalization is "subject to the vagaries of policy, politics, and power; and it is subject to the economics of the linguistic marketplace (Hornberger, 2011, p.1). Nonetheless, the use and promotion of native languages in education is an essential tool that can help their revitalization or strengthening. Also, education can help elevate the status of these languages.

In the case of the Tsotsil language, it is used as a language of instruction at the research school. However, its use could be increased if all of the instructors received more training on how to teach with a bilingual approach. The lack of training has been a common barrier in bilingual schools. It should be mentioned that although they lack such a training, they do teach using both languages especially in higher grades such as fourth, fifth and sixth grades. However, in other Spanish-Indigenous elementary bilingual schools, there is tension between languages since it is usually the dominant language that is more privileged when teaching instead of both.

The fact that teachers have developed different activities where students can use their first language and aspects of their culture is very positive since it allows students to use their L1 in a creative way. Now more than ever, it is important that teachers find ways to develop students' creativity which "implies managing knowledge with flexibility: the notion that man is capable of structuring and integrating knowledge in many ways, also in new, unusual ways, which can lead to new, unique solutions (p. 3-4)" (Roeders, 2005, cited in Jane, 2013, para.7). To achieve this objective, it is necessary for teachers to being updated with respect to renewed methodologies. For this reason, it is essential for them to receive training courses or workshops that enrich their teaching practice and equip them with various techniques to stimulate the student's creativity and for them to have an active role in their own learning. One of the first steps to achieve this goal is to reflect on the real meaning of education so that significant improvements can be made with the aim to benefit students especially those from linguistic minority groups such as indigenous children.

Reflecting on Education

Campanas (2012) points out that the concept of education involves promoting the development of feelings, convictions and the character of the student. Therefore, it is important that teachers pay attention to the student's personality, their needs and interests to look for the best ways to guide them, which could be observed by the teacher and school principal who participated in this research study. On the other hand, it is worth emphasizing that education

and instruction are not the same. Education involves guiding and accompanying the student in the process while instruction involves teaching "the correct answer." In this regard, Eriesco (2016) emphasizes that:

> Education is about personal development and growth, achieving your goals, earning your bread, being happy, etc. In schools "the correct answer" has always been taught. This is not education, but instruction, a form of indoctrination. While this enslaves you, true education sets you free, shows you various options, and allows you to choose. True education does not impose on you; it does not demand from you or punish you for not knowing how to do something but offers you possibilities and helps you (para. 1).

Therefore, quality education should lead to liberation, not to oppression or imposition of the truth of the teacher or of a certain group of people in the dominant society. Unfortunately, the school, the educational system and instructors' teaching practice have been characterized by being that of controlling and domination. "One of the ways in which this dominating force is mostly exerted comes from a type of analytical and conceptual education" (Hernández & Mariño, 2017, p. 9) which should be explored and modified. This reality of imposing and controlling education should invite us to reflect on the numerous times in which students especially those from linguistic minority communities such as indigenous students, have been imposed a "correct answer." In other words, we should reflect on to what extent indigenous students have been instructed or educated. On the other hand, it is also worth reflecting on the implications that instruction has and has had on these students, for example, we should explore the multiple ways that have been used to silence indigenous children through an educational system that preserves and only promotes the dominant language of the country instead of promoting all the multiple languages that are in the nation which has resulted in monolingualism in the dominant language and the assimilation of linguistic minority groups to mainstream society.

Calvo (2001) argues that imposing a partial and relative truth eliminates "the wonder of the mystery" (p. 7) and what is actually done is the promotion of superficial generalizations that decrease the chances of stimulating students' enthusiasm. In addition, it destroys the confidence that they have in themselves. Other consequences of imposing a partial and relative truth is that the adventure of knowing is eliminated, the theory is devalued and students are subjected to what is considered "concrete" (Calvo, 2001, p. 7). This significantly minimizes some of the teacher's tasks such as stimulating the self-responsibility and creativity of each student.

Now more than ever, it is important to remember and put into practice the real meaning of education to ensure that all students especially those who have been historically marginalized and excluded, indigenous children, for example, receive quality education that affirms their cultural and linguistic identity by using their funds of knowledge as an essential tool in the teaching and learning process. By doing so, indigenous children's language and culture will be respected, preserved, and promoted. Therefore, it is fundamental to finds ways to improve the current type of education that is implemented to indigenous children which is one of the main reasons that motivated the research study that was described in the previous sections. Moreover, if the current type of education that indigenous children receive improves, the possibilities for structural racism, discrimination and exclusion and the continuation of colonial policies and practices to continue to happen may decrease. Let us not forget that the negative attitudes towards indigenous communities are rooted in an unfair history that ignored their cultural and linguistic rights where they were thought as human beings, but historically and culturally different. Moreover, they were considered to be undeveloped therefore it was thought they did not deserve to be recognized as citizens (UNAM, 2001). Indigenous communities have been denied of their basic rights and have suffered the consequences of colonial domination. The state has perpetuated structural inequalities therefore these groups have experienced neglection, destitution and abuse. Situation originated in the past, but that continues to have a strong influence in today's society. Therefore, one of the main recommendations based on the findings of this research study is to make education become quality inclusive education so that repeating the same historical mistakes that have violated the rights of indigenous communities stop taking place. Also, indigenous languages need to be given an active role in education and other formal domains such as the government, media, public institutions, etc. By doing so, indigenous languages could be preserved, promoted and their status could be elevated.

V. CONCLUSION

Significant work still needs to be done in Mexico to actually accept and promote the many identities that there are in the nation. The first step is to recognize diversity as something that enriches us rather than something negative. By doing so, the possibilities for new actions and public policies would be created and would replace the old assimilationist ones that have characterized the educational system. Only when we recognize and promote that Mexico has more than one face (the dominant society's face), that is, that it has more than 65 indigenous faces is when we will be able to say that Mexico is a multicultural and multilingual nation. Now more than ever, we need to work together as a community to improve the type of education indigenous children receive to ensure that their voice is taken into account into the content they learn and the type of activities they are asked to do. The Tsotsil children who participated in this research study show that with the help of teachers, it is possible to maintain and promote indigenous languages and cultures through artistic activities. The findings of this ethnography show that indigenous children are active agents of cultural and linguistic preservation and promotion as evidenced by all the work they have done to make education more humane which should motivate us to follow their example.

REFERENCES

[1]   Berg, B. (2009). Qualitative research methods for the social sciences (7th ed.). Toronto: Allyn & Bacon.
[2]   Calvo, C. (2001). Los niños y la propensión al aprendizaje. Congreso Europeo: Aprender a ser, aprender a vivir juntos Santiago de Compostela, diciembre 2001. Retrieved June 4th, 2020 from sitio http://www.waece.org/biblioweb07/pdfs/d201.pdf.
[3]   Campanas, E. (2012). Diferencias entre educación e instrucción. Retrieved July 4th, 2020 from https://www.scribd.com/.
[4]   Chacón, O. (2005). Teoría de los derechos de los pueblos indígenas; problemas y límites de los paradigmas políticos. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
[5]   Del Carpio, K. (2017). "Tsotsil children and bilingual education in Chiapas, Mexico: The social and academic consequences of considering or not indigenous children's language and culture in education", pp. 1-267, ISBN: 978-3-659-65833-4, Editorial Académica Española.
[6]   De Varennes, F. (s.f.). Language, rights and opportunities: The role of language in the inclusion and exclusion of Indigenous peoples. Paper not published.
[7]   Eriesco, L. (2016). La diferencia entre educación e instrucción. Encontrado el 24 de julio de 2019 en el sitio https://luisriesco.wordpress.com/2016/12/09/la-diferencia-entre-educacion-e-instruccion-2/.
[8]   Hernández, N. & y Mariño, C. (2017). Multidiversidad de y para niñas y niños (Manuscrito doctoral). University of La Salle-Costa Rica.
[9]   Hornberger, N. (2011). Can schools save indigenous languages? Policy and practice on four continents. New York: N.Y. Palgrave Macmillan.
[10] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). (2010). Principales resultados del Censo de Población y Vivienda 2010. Retrieved August 18th, 2020 file:///C:/Users/Karla/Documents/Etnografía%20CHENALHO/Texts/INEGI%202010.pdf.
[11] Inversión en la Infancia. (2010). Inversión en la infancia. Retrieved September 6th, 2019 from https://inversionenlainfancia.net/
[12] Jane, J. (2013). El rol del docente en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Retrieved June 28th, 2020 from https://janijanett.blogspot.com/2013/06/el-rol-del-docente-en-el-proceso-de.html.
[13] Kawulich, B. (2005). Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method [81 paragraphs]. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 6(2), Art. 43, Retrieved March 2nd, 2019 from http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0502430.
[14] López, L. (2009). Reaching the unreached: indigenous intercultural bilingual education in Latin America. Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, Reaching the marginalized. Retrieved February 27, 2019 from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001866/186620e.pdf.
[15] Olcina-Sempere, G. (2018). "La música como instrumento para el fomento de la educación intercultural," En Cultura de paz y buen trato a la infancia coord. por Jiménez et al., 2018, ISBN 978-84-09-05740-5, págs.. 61-71, CIPI Ediciones, Huelva, España.
[16] The Secretary of Public Education (SEP). (2006). Educación básica. Secundaria. Artes. Teatro. Programas de estudio, Ciudad de México, México.
[17] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2003). Language vitality and endangerment UNESCO ad hoc expert group on endangered languages. Retrieved June 27, 2019 from http://www.ice.ge/kartuliena/pages/unesco/1e.pdf
[18] Universidad Autónoma de México. (UNAM) (2001). Chiapas. Instituto de Investigaciones Economicas, UNAM, México.

Karla Del Carpio is currently Associate Professor in the Department of World Languages and Cultures at the University of Northern Colorado. She earned her bachelor's degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language from the Autonomous University of Chiapas in Mexico, her master's degree in Applied Linguistics from the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies of the University of Alberta (UofA) in Canada and her PhD in Secondary Education from the Faculty of Education of the UofA. Dr. Del Carpio has won different awards in Canada, Mexico and the United States, for example, she received the 2011 Zita and John Rosen Teaching Award in Canada, the 2013 National Academic Achievement Award in Mexico and the 2020 Humanities and Social Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award in the United States. Her research interests are in the areas of second language acquisition, teaching English as a second language, bilingual education, indigenous languages revitalization and promotion and linguistic human rights.

A Wild Animal Inside My House: An Analysis of the Children's Picturebook *Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock* by Espen Villseth and Anita Sletten

Nahúm M. Tórrez
Department of Language and Literature, University of South-Eastern Norway, Horten, Norway;
Tranby Middle School, Lier, Norway

Marjorie N. Gómez
Department of Language and Literature, Universidad Nacional Autonóma de Nicaragua, Estelí Nicaragua

Abstract—**Svenn, a wild otter, has become an Instagram celebrity with over 140,000 followers around the world. Svenn has his own YouTube channel and Facebook page. Moreover, in December 2020, NRK, an influential Norwegian TV channel, released a series entitled "Oteren Svenn" (Svenn, the Otter), consisting of ten episodes. In addition to all of this, Svenn has his own picturebook for children, which is entitled *Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock* (Villseth & Sletten, 2020). This article presents the picturebook and analyzes three of its significant spreads. The aim is to uncover aspects of the sociocultural context in which Svenn – along with other characters – is portrayed by images and verbal language in the book, and to provide a short discussion of how the book may be used in English Language Teaching (ELT). Our analysis builds on tools from multimodal text analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2005; van Leeuwen, 2005) and Narrative Intelligence (Mateas & Senger, 2003). The analysis focuses on the significance of the picturebook to represent participants in actions, the relationship between the book's participants and the reader, and the value of presenting images and verbal text together. Our analysis also touches on some implications for ELT, on the potential that visual literacy can have in language teaching.**

Index Terms—**children's picture books, Svenn, the otter, English Language Teaching (ELT), multimodality**

I. INTRODUCTION

Svenn has become an Instagram celebrity with over 140,000 followers around the world. Svenn has his own YouTube channel and Facebook page. Moreover, in December 2020, NRK, an influential Norwegian TV channel, released a series entitled "Oteren Svenn" (Svenn, the Otter), consisting of ten episodes. In addition to all this, Svenn has his own picturebook for children, entitled *Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock* (Villseth & Sletten, 2020).

The aforementioned statements demonstrate how increasingly interconnected the world is through different resources. We are currently interacting with a wider range of communication practices: videos that can be edited and posted on the Internet or documents that can be sent in seconds or shared simultaneously (Freire, 2020). We are also constantly overwhelmed with new textual genres (e.g., blogs, pop-up ads). Moreover, we have technological resources that allow us to choose more easily between ways of meaning making (e.g., posting a photo of a scene rather than describing it verbally) (Fuchs, Hauck, & Müller-Hartmann, 2012). Based on these observations, we highlight the increasing role that images are taking on in different spaces (e.g., education), in comparison to – and alongside – verbal language, in a wide diversity of texts in our daily lives.

Texts or printed works have shaped different aspects of society since human beings began to manifest their reality by manipulating linguistic signs in order to record moments, stories, or creations (Lehtonen, 2000). Texts, marked by the development of languages around the world and the socio-cultural expansion of their different variations, are vast and mixed. Therefore, it is not wrong to consider texts as part of cultures, products of different contexts based on social interaction and supported by communities that enable the development of languages in their different manifestations (e.g., visual, semiotic). As Lehtonen (2000) points out, human beings embody some kind of social spoken and unspoken language. For instance, visual literacy, which can be understood as the active process of reading, interpreting and understanding images and visual media, has been developed in compelling ways in different educational subjects in education; for example, in English (Stafford, 2010). One of the values of visual literacy is its link to the act of storytelling, which helps us to better understand concepts such as plots, themes or narratives.

In this article, we present the children's picturebook *Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock* and analyze a group of three significant spreads. Our aim is to analyze aspects of the sociocultural context in which Svenn – along with other

characters – is portrayed by images and verbal language in the book. Moreover, we provide a short discussion of how the book may be used in English Language Teaching (ELT). An important goal of this paper is to present a reader-friendly and practical discussion for ELT classroom teachers in Norway and beyond. As Svenn has gone viral around the world, and the resources mentioned earlier are available everywhere, we argue that our discussion can be useful for teachers in different learning contexts. This article also aims to illuminate how storytelling brings language and other meaning-making resources together to convey traces of people's cultural and linguistic contexts through the power of narratives. The specific objective of this paper is to describe and analyze the possible nature and function of picturebooks and, mainly, to highlight the multimodality of storytelling in ELT and how narratives in storytelling are configured to accomplish both sociocultural and social semiotic purposes.

In relation to the picturebook, the Norwegian author Espen Villseth wrote the verbal text, and the Norwegian artist Anita Sletten illustrated the book. The picturebook was originally published in both Norwegian and English; this article examines the English version. The picturebook is addressed to children ages two to five. However, according to the publishing house Nordic Wild, older children, teenagers and adults may also enjoy reading the book.

The picturebook was published in November 2020. It tells the story of Svenn, the otter, who has a magic rock that can talk. In the book, we are also introduced to Pernille, a pug dog. Apart from Svenn and Pernille, no one knows that Svenn's rock can talk. Two children are also part of the story. Their names are Isak and Iselin. One day, Svenn wakes up with a lump in his stomach; the magic rock is missing. Faced with this situation, Svenn and Pernille embark on a mission to find their missing friend, the rock.

II. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Despite the growing interest in multimodality in international scholarly research, multimodality has received little attention in relation to ELT in Norway (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2014). Skulstad (2018) has analyzed textbook tasks, calling for a new understanding of communicative competence that includes multimodality. In English language education, communicative competence ought to be focused on the speaker's social performance in terms of language use, using various resources such as discourse, images or texts (Gomez, 2020). In relation to cultural representation, Lund (2016) and Waallann-Brown and Habegger-Conti (2017) have investigated textbook images, finding a tendency to stereotype indigenous peoples as primitive. In terms of assessment, Jakobsen (2019) has examined the role of multimodality in assessment practices, finding that multimodal preparation material and well-designed examinations can help students understand the content of such assessment material better.

In terms of language teaching, the field has been altered due to transmutations with regard to the concept of language, as language is less and less interpreted as an immovable autonomous system. With the interaction of people using different resources for communication, the sociocultural use of language is in a constant state of evaluation and transformation (Gomez, 2020). Traditionally, oral and written speech continues to be essential in any situation of social communication. However, the abilities and the knowledge that characterize the person as a good communicator, in any given language, have been influenced by the variety of multimodal resources (e.g., images, text) available to the person (Donaghy & Xerri, 2017). In this new multimodal scenery, education ought to be changed, methodologies reevaluated, and new digital and physical resources included. It can be argued, then, that the development of appropriate abilities by way of multimodal resources in the teaching-learning process needs to be discussed and evaluated. A good starting point for discussion would be children's multimodal learning resources.

With respect to Norwegian research on children's picturebooks from a multimodal perspective, Maagerø and Øines (2019) have analyzed one picturebook that deals with how to make a baby. Maagerø and Lørentzen (2017) have analyzed issues of liberation, i.e., a girl fighting for freedom and self-esteem. They have also analyzed a picturebook in which issues of existential topics such as life and death, growing up and growing old, God, and children's relationship to nature are discussed. Our work with the picturebook *Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock* follows in a similar vein as the last-mentioned analysis. That is, we examine the relationship between nature and children in the picturebook, understanding the social context, at least to some extent. However, our work is also aimed at adding to the discussion of the relevance of picturebooks applied to ELT.

We set out to answer the following research questions:
1. How is the otter Svenn portrayed by images and verbal language in the children's picturebook, and what insights can be gained from the social context in which he is depicted?
2. How can this children's picturebook be used in ELT, when working with understanding events and retelling stories from different perspectives?

In the following sections, we first present our theoretical and analytical framework. Second, we provide a summary of the categories which guide our analysis. Third, we analyze three significant spreads. Finally, we discuss our findings and conclude the article with some limitations and suggestions for further research.

III. THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The analysis of the children's picturebook *Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock* builds on the theory of multimodality (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), which is anchored in a social semiotic approach to language and communication

(Halliday & Hasan, 1989; van Leeuwen, 2005). In a general sense, multimodality focuses on the way people draw on distinctly different sets of resources for making meaning (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016). The term "multimodal texts" is used to refer to texts that create meaning from several semiotic resources such as images, speech, writing, sound, color, etc. (see also Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Today's picturebooks consist mainly of colorful pictures and verbal text. Some books feature supplementary materials such as audio files, which attempt to grab the learner's attention more easily. In this way, picturebooks may contribute to language learning through the interaction of multiple modes.

Our work builds on the theory of the metafunctions (Halliday, 1978) and we also use Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) work with visual analysis. More specifically, we use the categories *representation* and *interaction* in order to shed light on how Svenn – along with other characters – is depicted in the book. We also use notions of *multimodal orchestration*, as suggested by van Leeuwen (2005), in order to examine how images and verbal text together contribute to making depictions of Svenn in the book. Additionally, we draw on studies related to the use of picturebooks and visual literacy in education, and on Narrative Intelligence (Mateas & Senger, 2003) in order to link our analysis to ELT.

For reasons of space and the nature of our paper, we will make an analysis of three spreads from the book. The spreads were provided by the author and illustrator to analyze main categories. Both visual and verbal language from the spreads make it possible to build narrative representations of the world, assigning roles to represent participants - people, objects, institutions, and to establish different relationships between participants in the text, as well as between them and the reader.

A. Visual Literacy and ELT

The inclusion of picturebooks in English language education has been addressed for more than four decades. However, research has shown a lack of diversity (e.g., minority groups) in books published for children (Koss, 2015). Arguably, books should reflect the social and cultural contexts of different populations in addition to standard literacy elements. Also, picturebooks ought to move away from graded materials in language teaching to more authentic ones (Mourão, 2017). Scholars, such as the aforementioned, have observed that picturebooks have the potential to provide an educational framework to help children understand different features of the target language, such as social, cultural, and linguistic aspects. They also have the potential to assist children's development as a whole, in the language education realm (Ellis & Brewster, 2014). One of the significant values of picturebooks can be seen in the use of storytelling in the education system across cultures. Research suggests that storytelling provides a context that can easily assist in the interpretation of the human experience, such as struggles we face with others or with nature, and also to teach cultural values in a natural way (Lucarevschi, 2016). Readers get emotionally engaged with the story as they see themselves and others reflected in the story. Certainly, stories bring experiences to life and we organize those experiences in the form of narratives.

B. Narrative Intelligence

Narrative intelligence (NI) was born as a study group in 1990, where some scholars gathered from MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA) Media Laboratory to discuss core ideas from philosophy, media theory and psychology, combined with research in computational theories. The main goal behind the creation of this discussion group was to understand the human use of narratives to make meaning of the world, using a variety of interdisciplinary ideas (Mateas & Senger, 2003). At that time, such an approach involved novel ways of thinking about narratives and their function in the human experience of the world. Over the years, NI has crossed disciplinary boundaries and it has influenced other areas of knowledge, for example, in literature studies. In NI, three main ideas have usually been discussed: "representation", "language", and "communication".

In storytelling, the simplest definition of narrative intelligence is the ability to convey and understand the story. This ability can have significant implications in language education, as a story can be a means to uphold the life experience of some cultures, especially those communities that have used storytelling to affirm their own culture (Pishghadam, Golparvar, Khajavi, & Iranrad, 2011). In ELT, a number of studies about the use of textbooks in schools have revealed biases favoring certain cultural groups over others; for instance, American and British culture (Song, 2013). Therefore, NI in ELT can be useful not only to develop cognitive abilities (i.e., long-term memory, visual processing) but also to represent students' own local culture through narratives in storytelling (Pishghadam, Golparvar, Khajavi, & Iranrad, 2011).

Based on the previous discussion; the following sections present the categories, within multimodality, which serve as a baseline for our analysis.

1. Representation

In the verbal mode, actions and events are usually registered using verbs (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). In the visual mode, the analysis of representation starts by identifying the people (hereafter "participants"), places, and things depicted in an image. This representation can be both abstract and concrete. Next, it looks at events and the actions carried out by the represented participants, and at their attributes and qualities. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) talk about two types of visual representations; namely, narrative and conceptual representation. The former is characterized by the presence of vectors or eyelines, which connect the represented participants as doing something to or for one another. In other words, narrative representations depict the participants in terms of their actions and the events in the

story. The latter is characterized by the lack of vectors or eyelines, and this type of representation portrays the participants in terms of their qualities and attributes. Conceptual representations depict the participants in their generalized essence.

2. Interaction

In the verbal mode, sentences can make an invitation to interaction or require a response (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). In the visual mode, the analysis of interaction deals with the relationship created between the represented participants and the viewer of the text. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) refer to two ways of interaction in the visual mode. They talk about demands and offers. In the former, the represented participants typically gaze at the viewer. This gaze creates a vector between the eyeline of the represented participant and the viewer, demanding a response of some kind. In the latter, on the other hand, the represented participants do not look directly at the viewer but gaze away. Here, the represented participants make indirect contact only, being offered as objects for the viewer's contemplation.

3. Multimodal Orchestration

Pictures are only half of the story when it comes to most picturebooks (Painter, Martin & Unsworth, 2013). One can thus also argue that the verbal language is only half of the story. In order to analyze the interplay between images and verbal language in the book under scrutiny, we build on van Leeuwen's notion of multimodal orchestration (van Leeuwen, 2005). Van Leeuwen's work includes several categories and sub-categories. However, in order to limit our analysis, we build on two specific categories: elaboration and extension. In the case of elaboration, one modality repeats or restates information for clarification. In the case of extension, on the other hand, one modality adds new information, linking it to the existing one (van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 222).

IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research material consists of the aforementioned children's picturebook entitled *Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock* (Villseth & Sletten, 2020). We have chosen to look closely at three significant spreads. The rationale behind the choice of these three spreads is that they all depict Svenn's encounter with a new environment. One of the spreads depicts Svenn in relation to Pernille and the two children (Isak and Iseline), and two spreads depict him in relation to his new physical home. The three spreads are the following[1]:

- Spread 6 – The relationship created between Svenn and the children (pp. 14,15)
- Spread 9 – Svenn's encounter with a flower vase and a pink basin (pp. 20,21)
- Spread 11 – Svenn's encounter with the toilet (pp. 24)

As mentioned above, our analysis builds on the work of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) with visual analysis. More specifically, we draw on the categories of representation and interaction. Additionally, we use notions of multimodal orchestration, as suggested by van Leeuwen (2005), in order to analyze how images and verbal language together contribute to creating the depictions in the book. For the sake of simplicity, we chose to analyze multimodal orchestration in relation to all three of the spreads as one unit, after analyzing the three spreads in terms of the first two categories (representation and interaction). This choice is supported by the fact that the same tendencies are found in the three spreads, as elaborated later in the text. The following table provides an overview of the elements examined in the selected spreads:

TABLE 1
THE ELEMENTS EXAMINED

Category	Sub-category	Element examined
Representation	Narrative vs conceptual representations	The people, places and things depicted by narratives. The presence of vectors, depicting actions and reactions.
Interaction	Demands and offers	The presence of gaze from the represented participants towards the viewer. The different manifestations of language (communication).
Multimodal orchestration	Elaboration Extension	Elaboration: One modality repeats or restates information for clarifications. Extension: One modality adds new information, linking it to the existing information.

We emphasize that picturebooks can be analyzed in different ways and that the present analysis presents one way only. Moreover, we find it important to clarify that we do not make a systematic and detailed analysis of the verbal language present in the spreads. Our focus is mainly on the images, but we also look at how the verbal language (e.g., text) contributes to depicting Svenn, along with other characters in the book.

---

[1] We find it important to mention that the page number of the spreads provided by the illustrator do not match the page number on the printed book.

V. ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANT SPREADS

Spread 6 – The relationship created between Svenn and the Children
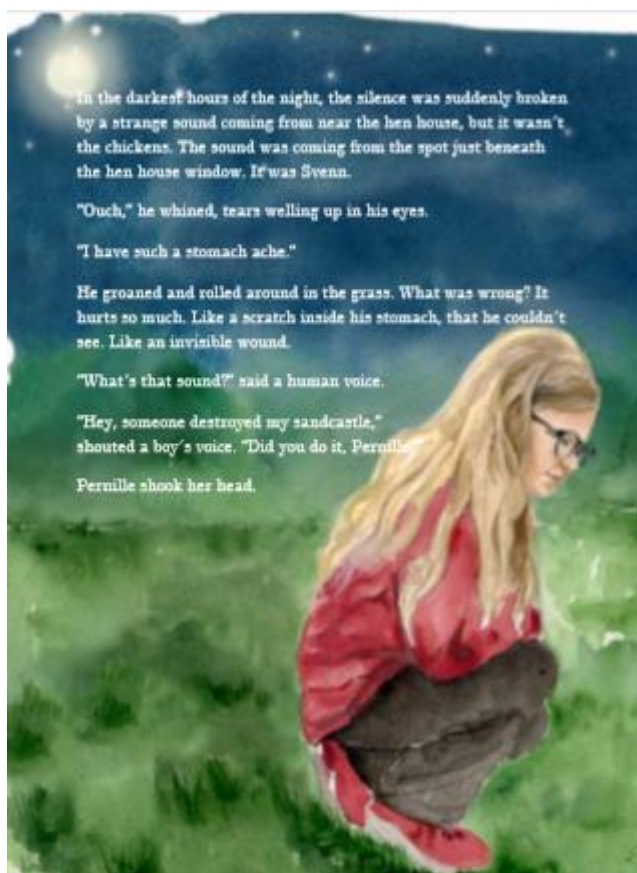
As our main goal is to analyze the sociocultural environments in which Svenn is depicted, it was natural to examine spreads which depict him both alone and/or in the company of the two children and Pernilla, the dog. In this regard, the relationship created between the otter Svenn and the children is a very interesting issue, as it encompasses a multiplicity of narratives, involving modes of representation that vary according to the specific culture and context. Again, our analysis looks at the ways in which the characters are represented, the interaction which is created between them and the reader, and at the way images and the verbal text interact in order to depict the main characters in a way that goes beyond just the linguistic representation.

Representation

In spread six, all four characters are portrayed together: Svenn, the two children, and Pernille. The two children are focusing their attention on Svenn, who seems to be looking for something. This is a narrative representation, as vectors are formed from the children's gaze towards Svenn. Similarly, Svenn seems to be moving as his head and nose are directed towards the grass. It is important to note the background of the spread. On the upper left-hand side, we see the moon. On the whole upper part of the spread, we also see stars. This is an indication of the time of day when the event takes place, namely, nighttime. This fact is confirmed by the verbal text in the spread: "In the darkest hours of the night". This statement can be interpreted as an indication of urgency, something that cannot wait and needs to be done.

As mentioned above, Svenn seems to be looking for something. At this point, the verbal text does not tell us what Svenn is looking for. However, it does describe Svenn's feelings and emotions by disclosing that Svenn has a stomachache, that he whines with tears welling up in his eyes, and that he tries to hide in the tall grass when he sees humans approaching him (Villseth & Sletten, 2020, p. 14). It also describes the children's attitude towards Svenn when they first see him: "Poor little thing! Look, there's an otter lying in the grass", "Maybe he's sick", "We have to help him" (Villseth & Sletten, 2020, p. 15). The verbal text in this spread also tells us that Pernilla is present in the event: "Woof, woof, barked Pernille". However, she is not visually depicted in the image.

In sum, both the images and verbal text depict Svenn as a fearful and sad animal in this spread, and the children as kind, caring and loving humans. Again, Pernille is not present in the image, but one can imply that she is helping Svenn look for what it is missing. Thus, she is also presented as a friend in the spread. Moreover, the contextual elements in the image (e.g., the moon and stars) together with the phrase "in the darkest hours of the night", creates tension and a sense of urgency.

In other words, in order to represent the experience of participants in this spread, images are both narrative and conceptual. Narrative representations build experience as an event that unfolds in space and time; that is, they portray the participants through the actions they perform related to other participants or through the events that they are involved in. The conceptual representations describe or classify the participants in the image in terms of their individual characteristics, evidencing their identity as part of their culture or those traits shared with other participants, which allow us to perceive them as members of a group.

Interaction

In terms of interaction, the sixth spread offers a revealing image to the viewer. There is no gaze between the represented participants and the viewer. The represented participants are positioned as objects of contemplation (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). However, there is a high degree of interaction between Svenn and the children. Again, the two children are gazing at him. This interaction shows that they are very interested in finding out what Svenn is looking for. The verbal text, as described above, also confirms this engagement, when it says that the children see that Svenn is crying, and that they decide to help him.

This image also establishes relationships between the represented participants and the reader in terms of what the image and the verbal text communicate. The proximity between Svenn and the children denotes a personal relationship between them. The visual resources, such as the kneeling of the children and their body language, also allow the reader to understand the power dynamics among the participants. In this case, the fact that the children are kneeling and in proximity to Svenn, may communicate a need for contact and closeness.

Spread 9 – Svenn's encounter with a flower vase and a pink basin

Representation

Another aspect of representation is the action process. In spread nine, the action process is not aimed at any participant or object. However, both participation and action take place. In the spread, this action process occurs involving only one participant and one vector. In the spread, the action performed involves only Svenn and the vector is represented by the body orientation of the participant and his physical interaction with nearby objects, which in this case are the flower vase and the pink basin. According to the text, there are other participants involved such as Pernille and Isak. However, the main visual focus is Svenn and his relationship with objects. In the image, both the vase and the basin work as mediating instruments in social negotiation activities and not as participants affected by any action. In other words, the instruments help negotiate meaning with the environment in which Svenn is now involved. For instance, Svenn interprets the vase as being a device to drink water and the basin as a private swimming pool. In

addition, these instruments represent new sources of information about the context and about their relationship with the participant.

By choosing to focus only on Svenn and his relationship with household objects, the illustrator is able to highlight for the reader the social system that is developed in such a household; thus, assigning an image of safety and pleasure. It is worth noting that this interpretation is just one among many, but we want to highlight that the choice to represent certain elements in the image with a focus on its parts, or on its whole, generally reflects the objectives of those who build images and text, and produce certain effects on those who consume them. By embracing the context in which images and texts are produced and consumed, we can have a better-informed idea of possible interpretations.

Interaction

The images in spread nine, in addition to building representations, also establish relationships between the represented participant and the reader. Such relationships can be achieved through different visual aids, one of them being 'contact'. When talking about contact, we are referring to the gaze between the participant represented in the images and the reader. This contact, or relationship between the participant and the reader, can be personal or impersonal. In spread nine, the relationship is impersonal since the represented participant – Svenn – does not establish a direct gaze with the reader. He is portrayed in the image for the observation of the reader, and it is up to the reader to determine what is happening to Svenn in each one of the images. In this case, it would be to figure out whether he is having fun or being curious.

Spread 11 – Svenn's encounter with the toilet

Suddenly, Svenn realised he urgently needed to pee. He stopped for a moment, and wondered why people went to the bathroom to pee. Surely it must be easier to pee in the garden?

Curious to know what mysteries awaited in that particular part of the house, Svenn went into the bathroom. He saw a shower and a sink. He also saw something that looked like a chair filled with water.

"Wow, it's a small bathtub!" he shouted.

Then Svenn peed on the floor.

"Finished!" he shouted. Then he climbed onto the seat of the water-filled chair and plunged into the water, splashing it all the way up to the ceiling.

"I love swimming!" he cried out in amusement.

"I'm hungry!" Svenn screamed while swimming in the toilet. "Pernille, can you get me some food? I want cakes and ice cream!"

"Svenn, that's a toilet!" Pernille barked. "You can't swim in it! Go and hide in my basket before you get up to any more mischief."

Representation

In spread eleven, as in spread nine, the action process is also not targeted at any participant or object. Nonetheless, both participation and action occur. The image involves Svenn and the action is performed by the body orientation of the participant; specifically, Svenn standing next to the toilet, with his hand gripping the toilet bowl. Even though, as in spread nine, there are other participants involved in the story, who are identified through the verbal language, the main visual focus is Svenn in his interaction with the toilet. It is worth noting that the illustration, in this spread, adds extra value to the overall representation of the experience of the participant. For instance, the toilet is represented with splashing water and water bubbles surrounding it, which gives to the image an added sense of playfulness. It is, therefore, a symbolic process. To put it another way, it is an image effect that adds symbolism to the representation, similar to the effect of using metaphors and analogies in verbal language.

The image in this particular spread helps us expand the written story; particularly, the way Svenn is processing the information related to his surroundings. It seems relevant to comment that the role of images, among others, is to help the reader establish the necessary connection between information modes. In this case, they help the reader make the connection between the verbal language and the image, and to create meaning by moving from one mode to the other. As commented previously, images and text are interpreted in a way that creates effects (e.g., emotional) on those who consume those modes of information – either being the context in which narratives occur or the interpretation gathered by the reader.

Interaction

In terms of interaction, spread eleven allows for the further development of the relationship between the participant and the reader. Just as in spread nine, this relationship is achieved through 'contact'. In this case, the relationship between the participant and the reader is personal. Svenn is represented with his gaze focused directly at the reader. By having the participant appear to be looking directly at the reader, Svenn is creating a demand relationship. That is, the participant's look suggests that he is asking for something, such as compassion. This request for compassion can be inferred by the text as a whole. For example, Svenn interprets the toilet bowl as a small bathtub, a place to swim. However, he is later scolded by Permille, who tells him to go and hide before he gets into more mischief.

Multimodal orchestration

Finally, the analysis of multimodal orquestration allows us to describe the interplay of the elements represented in the image, which consists of both the image and the verbal text. From our analysis above, it follows that the images and verbal text support and enrich each other in the three spreads. Firstly, the images show Svenn in movement. This information is elaborated on by the verbal text, as it says that Svenn has a stomachache, and that he tries to hide in the grass when he hears the humans walking nearby. Secondly, the images depict Svenn's feelings and emotions, which are elaborated on by the verbal text, too. Svenn tries to swim in the toilet and gets confused when he sees that humans put flowers in the flower vase. Thirdly, we only know that Pernilla is present in the spreads because the verbal text gives us this detail. She is never visually depicted in the spreads. As such, the visual images and the verbal text in combination play a key role in contributing to depicting actions, events and emotions in the picturebook.

VI. DISCUSSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

A. The Representation of Svenn in the Children's Picturebook

In this article, we sought to introduce basic concepts of Visual Grammar with a view to spreading this analytic approach and its categories in ELT, using picturebooks. Our intention was to add to the discussion of the value that texts composed of images can perform in addition to verbal language in language education. In order to analyze and discuss the value of picturebooks, and its implications for ELT, we explored categories in a holistic way as visualized within the NI approach, an approach in which narratives are framed within sociocultural perspectives, in terms of representation, language, and communication. Therefore, three categories were considered within the framework of multimodality: representation, interaction, and multimodal orchestration.

From the point of view of representation, the resources of an image allow us, among other things, to represent participants while involved in actions and events. For instance, Svenn's feelings and emotions are the central focus in the picturebook; those feelings and emotions manifest themselves in relation to others and in the new environment which he is part of. The value of this representation in the book lies in the importance of highlighting and understanding social systems, and the role of participants, their characteristics, identity, feelings or any other special attribute.

As for the function of interaction, typical features such as gaze are adopted to describe the type of relationship developed between the represented participants and the reader. By interacting with picturebooks, we can denote different degrees of interpellation between the reader and visual literacies. Also, the reader can sympathize with the participant (Svenn) in his discovery of objects and becoming familiar with his surroundings. Moreover, the reader is given an opportunity to react to some events in the story, e.g., to show compassion towards Svenn when Svenn gets confused.

Finally, multimodal orchestration allows us to gain insight into the value of presenting images and verbal text together. What do images show that the verbal text cannot tell us? For instance, why did the illustrator opt to depict Pernilla verbally and not visually? In other words, multimodal orchestration can increase our awareness of how the interplay of images and verbal text create depictions of situations in the picturebook.

B. The Book Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock in ELT

The framework of multimodality, combined with an approach to understanding the human use of narratives for meaning-making of the world, can, in our view, enrich the work of ELT classrooms. Based on our discussion, we consider that visual literacy – images and text – can be organized around some multimodal activities within the English language classroom. Some activities are as follows:

Context for meaning making through picturebooks: Different cultural conventions can be discussed, analyzed, or interpreted. Visual and semiotic resources with texts can help assist language learners to reflect on their own narration of the text, by incorporating their knowledge of the target language, their own home language, and their cultural background. For instance, we can encourage children to empathize with the characters in the story by reading visuals.

Teachers can point to images and ask children what in the images or in the verbal text is familiar or foreign to them. Teachers can direct their attention to visual or semiotic cues that can help children understand the context and interpret the actions in the story, in their own words. Context can help deepen understanding of specific situations and can impact what children learn in the classroom in the long run.

Interaction and relationship with others for meaning making: Images and verbal language can help readers understand different perspectives of participants of picturebooks and how they interact with objects and other participants. Equally, visual literacy can help readers understand better how they feel, based on what is illustrated in picturebooks. For instance, ELT learners can describe their feelings, supported by their knowledge of the target language, to make meaning of the emotions being portrayed in the story, based on their own knowledge of the world in a particular context. Language use, and its multiple variations (e.g., verbal, visual), is important for language learners to acquire abstract concepts such as emotional categories. For instance, teachers can help children understand the participants and their emotions from different perspectives. How do they think Svenn feels in his new home? How do they feel about seeing an otter live with people?

Verbal language for meaning making: Images accompanied by verbal text can help language learners understand the organization of the printed word in picturebooks. Each community or social group has its own written language conventions, or grammar conventions. The verbal language can help ELT learners understand how language varies according to context, and how language is organized in order to meet specific purposes and specific audiences. For instance, teachers can help children become aware of different elements in the text that can help them build meaning. Teachers can point to linguistic grammar conventions that children are familiar with, and they can use those conventions to either convey or retell Svenn's actions – or feelings – in the story.

It is important to note that these are some activities that can be implemented or considered in ELT using this picturebook, based on the spreads analyzed and discussed. More activities can be developed by using the whole book, such as addressing other visual metalanguage cues for meaning making; namely, color or framing. However, we hope that the analysis, and the sample activities, suggested for use in ELT, provide a comprehensive account of the potential that visual literacy, within multimodality, can have in language teaching. Specifically, they can support learners' conceptual knowledge of language, in its different representations, and support learners' abstract development of concepts related to emotions and cultural cues.

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this paper, the researchers have presented the children's picturebook *Svenn the Otter and the Magic Rock*, and analyzed three significant spreads. Our aim was to gain insight into the sociocultural environment where Svenn – along with other characters – is depicted in the picturebook. Moreover, we have provided a short discussion of how the picturebook may be used in ELT. Our work has limitations, as it did not cover all the categories within interaction (i.e., social distance and point of view) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In addition, we did not take into account the analysis of compositional meaning, i.e., information values, framing and salience (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Again, we aimed to make this text as reader-friendly and practical as possible for ELT classroom teachers. Further research could develop a more detailed analysis of the book in terms of these categories.

Another aspect for further research is the availability of additional resources related to Svenn, such as the YouTube channel, Instagram and Facebook accounts, as well as the TV series, all of which depict Svenn in different ways. It would be interesting to do some type of classroom research, to explore how learners and teachers use such available resources. We posit that critical issues such as climate change, immigration, and the interplay between nature and humans could be addressed on the basis of those resources.

Finally, we hope that our paper can add to the discussion of the value of picturebooks in ELT, and that ELT classroom teachers find it both practical and useful. We believe that multimodal texts can be an asset in foreign language education, and picturebooks can be a great starting point for meaningful language work.

REFERENCES

[1] Donaghy, K & Xerri, D. (2017). The Image in English Language Teaching. Floriana: Gutenberg Press.
[2] Ellis, G., & Brewster, J. (2014). Tell it again!: the storytelling handbook for primary english language teachers. London: British Council.
[3] Freire, M. M. (2020). Transmedia Storytelling: from Convergence to Transliteracy. *DELTA: Documentação de Estudos em Linguística Teórica e Aplicada*, *36*(3). DOI: https://doi.org/10.1590/1678-460x2020360309.
[4] Fuchs, C., Hauck, M., & Müller-Hartmann, A. (2012). Promoting learner autonomy through multiliteracy skills development in cross-institutional exchanges. *Language Learning & Technology*, *16*(3), 82-102.
[5] Gomez, M. N. (2020). The value of feedback in translanguaging: Students' insights from an English language course at Londrina State University. *Revista X*, 15(1), 115-135. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.5380/rvx.v15i1.69968.

[6]   Halliday, M.A.K., & Hasan, R. (1985). Language, context and text: Aspects of language from a social semiotic perspective. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[7]   Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). Language as social semiotic. The social interpretation of language and meaning. London: Edward Arnold.

[8]   Jakobsen, I. K. (2019). Inspired by image: A multimodal analysis of 10th grade English school-leaving written examinations set in Norway (2014-2018). *Acta Didactica Norge*, 13(1), 1-27. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5617/adno.6248.

[9]   Jewitt, C., Bezemer, J., & O'Halloran, K. L. (2016). Introducing Multimodality. London: Routledge.

[10]   Koss, M. D. (2015). Diversity in contemporary picturebooks: A content analysis. *Journal of Children's Literature*, *41*(1), 32.

[11]   Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). Reading images: The grammar of visual design. New York: Routledge.

[12]   Lehtonen, M. (2000). The cultural analysis of texts. London: Sage.

[13]   Lucarevschi, C. R. (2016). The role of storytelling on language learning: A literature review. *Working Papers of the Linguistics Circle*, *26*(1), 24-44.

[14]   Lund, R. (2016). Searching for the Indigenous: Urfolk i engelskverket Searching. In N. Askeland & B. Aamotsbakken (Eds.), *Folk uten land? Å gi stemme og status til urfolk og nasjonale minorieter*. Kristiansand: Portal Akademisk.

[15]   Maagerø, E., & Øines, M. (2019). Hvordan lages barn? Bildebøker for barn om hvordan barn blir til - How to make children? Picture books for children about how to make a baby. *Sakprosa* 11(3), 1-32. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5617/sakprosa.6549.

[16]   Maagerø, E. & Guri L. Ø. (2017). What a girl! Fighting gentleness in the picture book world. An analysis of the Norwegian picture book What a Girl! by Gro Dahle and Svein Nyhus. *Children's Literature in Education*, 48, 169-190. Heidelberg & New York: Springer Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-016-9276-4.

[17]   Maagerø, E., & Tønnessen, E. S. (2014). Multimodal tekstkompetanse. Kristiansand: Portal Akademisk.

[18]   Mateas, M., & Sengers, P. (Eds.). (2003). Narrative intelligence. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

[19]   Mourão, S. (2017). Picturebooks in instructed foreign language learning contexts. In C. Beauvais & M. Nikolajeva (Eds.) *The Edinburgh Companion to Children's Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

[20]   Painter, C., Martin, J. R. & Unsworth, L. (2013). Reading visual narratives. Image analysis of children's picture books. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing Ltd.

[21]   Pishghadam, R., Golparvar, E., Khajavi, G. H., & Iranrad, E. (2011). Narrative intelligence and pedagogical success in English. *Brazilian English Language Teaching Journal, 2*(2), 178-189.

[22]   Stafford, T. (2010). Teaching visual literacy in the primary classroom: comic books, film, television and picture narratives. London: Routledge.

[23]   Skulstad, A. S. (2018). Multimodality. In A.-B. Fenner & A. S. Skulstad (Eds.), *Teaching English in the 21st Century: Central Issues in English Didactics*. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

[24]   van Leeuwen, T. (2005). Introducing social semiotics. London: Routledge.

[25]   Song, H. (2013). Deconstruction of cultural dominance in Korean EFL textbooks. *Intercultural Education*, *24*(4), 382-390.

[26]   Villseth, E. & Sletten, A. (2020). Svenn the otter and the magic rock. Oslo: Nordic Wild.

[27]   Waallann-Brown, C., & Habegger-Conti, J. L. (2017). Visual representations of indigenous cultures in Norwegian EFL textbooks. *Nordic Journal of Modern Language Methodology*, 5(1), 16-34. DOI: https://doi.org/10.46364/njmlm.v5i1.369.

Nahúm M. Tórrez is a PhD candidate in ELT at the University of South-Eastern Norway. His main research interests include ELT textbooks, children's picture books and Digital Storytelling. He is also a lecturer at Tranby middle school in Lier, Norway. Email: nahum.m.torrez@usn.no, nahtorrez@gmail.com

Marjorie N. Gómez is an Associate Professor in ELT at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua. She holds a PhD in Linguistics from Londrina State University in Brazil. Her main research interests include translaguaging practices and Multicultural Education. Email: marjorie.gomez@unan.edu.ni, marjoriegt@gmail.com

The Effect of Teachers' Attitudes Towards Collaborative Instruction on Students' Writing and Speaking Skills

Tareq Murad
The Department of English Language and Literature, Sakhnin College, Israel

Yusra Ghadeer, Sakhnin
College for Teacher Education, Sakhnin College, Israel

Jamal Assadi
The Department of English Language and Literature, Sakhnin College, Israel

Abstract—The current study seeks to examine English teachers' attitudes towards using the collaborative teaching method to improve students' skills at writing and speaking English. The purpose is to test the main following hypotheses: first, English language teachers are mostly unfamiliar with collaborative learning. Second, these techniques are not regularly used in English lessons. Third, most students enjoy practicing them. Fourth, these techniques lead to better performance in the students` language skills. The study was conducted among 15 high school English teachers. A questionnaire was used as a practical part. Data were collected and the results were: English teachers know and support learning techniques; they agree on the importance of these methods in the teaching process especially in improving students` language skills. Students enjoy practicing them. Common suggestions were proposed by the teachers for improving writing and speaking skills such as involvement of students in planning the learning process and setting goals and allowing for self-expression and teamwork. The importance of using various learning tools in combination with the collaborative methods was also emphasized. Finally, the research recommends that this kind of learning should be part of the teachers' training program.

Index Terms—collaborative learning, speaking skill, writing skill, EFL

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is considered as a global communication tool that is used for different purposes such as personal and social communication, business exchange, politics, training and more (Wilson, 1997).

Recently, there has been a change in the learning models used in the English language; the learning models have become learner-centered models. This change indicates a development in the field of learning where English teaching should allow students to express themselves using the spoken language. Therefore, discourse is one of the most essential skills for continuity, progress and interpersonal communication (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

Communication and interaction skills in most classes should not be considered the solely tools that can provide students with the ability to conduct a conversation and develop questions, or with ways that can advance their thinking techniques, upgrade group communication, empower other abilities such as studying habits. Combining these abilities in the learning process will improve the ability of communications among the students. Teachers need to implement educational strategies that encourage the acquisition of important learning skills. Collaborative strategy may serve as an approach that provides this; it serves as an elective way of instructing discourse and social interaction between students and teachers. It also enables students to examine, think about, and draw conclusions on given subjects. Students are free to experience emotions, contemplations, or goals that have emerged during the lesson.

Speaking and writing skills are called productive skills. They are important as they give students the chance to practice real-life activities inside the classroom. Discourse in spoken or written language in a given context is intended to achieve communication among the target audience and is regarded as a major pedagogical tool used by the teacher. It has been noticed that learners who interact and speak are able to achieve better in oral skills in most cases than those who always keep silent (Namaziandost, Hashemifardnia, & Shafiee, 2019).

The organization of classroom teaching is derived from the teachers own pedagogical concept and influences the discourse and the rules of participation and interaction in the classroom. Therefore, teaching is an interactive process through which a classroom discourse takes place. It is important to expose teachers to a variety of existing and new pedagogical models around the world to ensure continuous development among them in such a way that can affect the education system in general and students in particular. Teachers must receive the training, support and security to change teaching methods at Israeli schools. Active and inclusive learning must be fostered. Teachers must teach

students to observe, know, and explore their environment. They also should encourage collaborative activities with peer students, which help in processing and analyzing information and implementing it in real-life situations. It is important to involve students in group work that develops mutual awareness and engagement, so that they can become accountable (Vygotsky, 1978).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is characterized as an educating strategy in which students are engaged to examine specific subjects of study, while teachers serve as guides or facilitators who share insights. As an instructive approach, it demonstrates the organization of classroom exercises in academic and social learning experiences (Siltala, 2010). According to Cooper (1990), collaborative learning is attributed to the act of giving students the chance to work with others, so they do some work in groups or pairs. Different names have been given to it such as collaborative learning, cooperative learning, collective learning, team learning, learning communities and reciprocal learning.

Many studies have examined the impact of using a collaborative learning method on speech skills. Much of the research indicates the contribution of the collaborative method to creating a positive attitude towards group learning and increased speech skills (Nasri & Biria, 2017).

Unlike traditional learning methods, collaborative learning has certain advantages that are mainly derived from social interaction between students (Tahmasbi, Hashemifardnia, & Namaziandost, 2019).

To improve student speaking skills, teachers most often adopt collaborative learning activities such as group discussions, or role-playing to help students learn phrases which they were exposed to while using this method (Li, 2015). The terms accompanying activities are arranged in such a manner that allows them to be easily implemented. These activities relied on the collaborative learning approach to improve students' academic ability during group learning (Kagan, 1994).

Students are satisfied with helping others and their participation in the group effort, their sense of increased control, and their responsibility for learning affect their motivation for learning. Johnson and Johnson (2009) note that the more students endorse collaborative attitudes, the more they consider themselves to be intrinsically motivated. This can increase their persistence in achieving their goals, shared efficacy, and desire to learn.

Dweck (2012) claimed that only teachers who adopt a positive attitude towards cooperative learning can promote and practice it within their classes. Researchers have concluded that teachers' negative attitude towards cooperative learning is an important obstacle for its implementation in schools (Gillies, 2014; Roseth, Johnson, & Johnson, 2008). Their attitude may be partly due to the demands imposed by institutions, as well as their lack of knowledge and proficiency (Gillies & Boyle, 2010; Kohn, 1992).

According to Hennessey & Dionigi (2013), teachers who had previous training and knowledge managed to guide their student's negative attitudes to some more positive ones on collaborative learning. Gillssies and Khan (2008) also found out that the schools whose teachers had already been trained to implement cooperative learning achieved better results than those who had not been trained in this instruction.

Thus, it seems important for teachers to know how to implement cooperative learning in their teaching process.

1. The strong points of cooperative learning in EFL classroom

With the growing emphasis on communicative language teaching, many benefits of collaborative learning have been brought into the context of the foreign language classroom. According to Crandall (1999), practicing speaking in groups helps students to explore different sides of language and allows them to develop new thought patterns. He also mentions the impact of collaborative language learning in reducing students' anxiety, enhancing positive attitudes toward language learning and improving self-esteem, and encouraging students' autonomy.

Grath (2000) showed the benefits of collaborative learning in four categories:

1. social benefits:
      - Cooperative learning develops social support system for students.
      - It builds a range of understanding among learners and educational staff.
      - It establishes a positive climate for practicing cooperation.
      - It develops learning communities.
2. Psychological advantages:
      - The collaborative instruction gives the learners a lot of attention and puts them at the center; in addition, it helps increase confidence and self-image.
      - Cooperation decreases anxiety
      - Collaborative learning develops positive attitudes towards teachers.
3. Academic merits:
      - It strengthens critical thinking skills.
      - It models appropriate problem-solving techniques.

2. Possible disadvantages of group learning in the foreign language context

Students' participation in collaborative activities may be uneven. Some students will be more responsible for the tasks assigned to them than others (Thornton, 1999). To prevent this, teachers should supervise students while performing

collaborative tasks regularly. The group assignment should be divided among the students so that each student will have to perform a particular part, and at the end of the assignment, each student will be required to submit a feedback and a personal assessment in which he explains the work process, learning experience, problems he encounters, solutions, feelings and preferences and more.

Pica (1994) added that students are less likely to pay attention to foreign language structures with a lack of teacher involvement, and then they tend to use the native language. Furthermore, Richards and Rodgers (2001) pointed out that collaborative learning puts an additional burden on teachers who are required to play different roles in the classroom.

Although the teacher is required to perform various roles alongside being a teacher, he must teach in a way that ensures proper learning for the students. The mother tongue is used only when explaining the instructions. In other cases, the teachers should encourage the exclusive use of the English language during the lesson. Technological and other learning tools can be used to expose students to the English language and enhance learning among them.

Teachers could talk about the way people use language in terms of language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. They are often divided into two kinds: "Receptive skills" is a term used for reading and listening skills where meaning is derived from the discourse, while "productive skills" is the term used for speaking and writing skills where students actually have to create language themselves (Harmer, 2007).

B. Speaking Skill

Speaking is the productive skill that refers to the production of speech sounds. It is defined as the literal use of language and the means of communication between humans. It is used to express some ideas, messages or emotions in a spoken language to make the other side understand the messages being delivered (Fulcher, 2003). According to Chastain (1998), speaking is a productive skill that involves many components, such as grammar, strategy, sociolinguistics and discourse. For him, speaking is more than simply making the right sounds, choosing the right utterances or getting the constructions correct.

According to Doff (1988), there are three kinds of speech modes:

- interactive: these situations include face to face interactions or phone calls, in which we listen and talk intermittently, and have a chance to ask for simplifications, repetition or slower speech from our counterparts.

- Partially interactive: giving a speech to a live people can serve as an example of a partially interactive conversational situation where the audience does not interfere with the speech. The speaker can see the audience and judge by the expression on their faces and body language whether the speech is understood or not.

- Non-interactive: some few speaking situations may be non-interactive, such as when recording a speech for a radio broadcast.

1. Speaking activities

Types of speaking activities (Byrne, 1987):

a. Groupings: Finding ties among other students, when creating groups, teacher and learners need to converse what they will discuss.

b. Picture stories: students interpret a story based on a picture sequences. They work collaboratively to put the story in the correct order.

c. Problem solving: Learners work together to come up with solutions to the problem.

d. Drama and Role-play: Students can explain themselves in a variety of ways and may be transported into a world of imagination. Using drama in the classroom setting provides a useful and enjoyable medium to discover language.

Although dialogues and conversations are used most often, a teacher can select activities from a variety of tasks. Brown (1994) lists six possible task categories:

a. Imitative-Drills in which the learner simply repeats a phrase or structure for clarity and accuracy.

b. Intensive-Drills or repetitions where the learner sheds light on specific phonological or grammatical points, such as minimal pairs or repetition of a series of imperative sentences.

c. Responsive: Short replies to teacher or learner questions or comments, such as a series of answers to yes/no questions.

d. Transactional: Dialogues conducted for the purpose of information exchange, such as information-gathering interviews, role plays, or debates.

e. Interpersonal: Dialogues to establish or maintain social relationships, such as personal interviews or casual conversation role plays.

f. Extensive: Extended monologues such as short speeches, oral reports, or oral summaries.

Certain requirements need to be met when using activities for better learning. To apply this to speech, some suggestions are given as follows:

1. Encourage students to talk a lot.

2. Allow students to participate equally.

3. Increase motivation among students.

4. Use an acceptable level of language (Byrne, 1987).

2. Problems with speaking activities

Students may encounter some difficulties during speaking activities that may affect the learning process. Here are some possible difficulties suggested by Park & Lee (2005):
1. Students are afraid to make mistakes in class, feel afraid of criticism and become shy and closed.
2. Students may feel unmotivated to express themselves and participate in speech when they are not interested in the lesson.
3. When all students share the same mother tongue, students tend to use it because it is easier.

3. Solving the problems

To solve the possible problems, Byrne (1987) suggested the following:
1. Conducting group work: This activity can encourage openness, acceptance of the other, cooperation, and partnership and increases self-confidence among students.
2. The use of easy language: A choice of a topic and language that suits the level of the students and does not make it difficult for them to understand or reduce the motivation to learn.

Both tasks require giving clear instructions.

English language has evolved and its use has increased in the world, leading it to a status higher than before. English has become important in various aspects of life. It has become associated with advancements in technology, commerce, tourism, science, politics and more. As a result, the speaking ability is necessary. Teachers must train students to develop their oral communication. According to Brown (2007), there are three components of oral communication. The first is defined as the ability to speak spontaneously and eloquently. Next comes accuracy, which is defined as the control of phonological, grammar, and discourse elements. It also refers to linguistic ability. The last element is pronunciation and is defined as the production and perception of the significant sounds of a particular language in order to achieve meaning. In summary, fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation are important and complementary elements in the development of student speech skills.

C. Writing Skill

Writing is one of the educating skills that include complex exercises such as developed thinking, interpreting thoughts and reflections. Writing requires a significant exposure to information about lexical, syntactic, and dialect standards to deliver precise work (David et al., 2015). In his social constructivist hypothesis, Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that dialect instructors require comprehensive preparations to increase students' dialectical ability during group learning, and to strengthen individual abilities during individual learning.

Writing skills are determined by the final product performance of the students in which they were required to create new work according to a predetermined standard (Richards and Rodgers, 1982).

In order to improve the writing skills of English language learners, teachers must consider new and innovative methods for their instruction as mentioned below:

1. Activating prior knowledge: Cooperative learning helps students gain more background knowledge. Students collect information as they work together with another student or a group of students. Through this strategy, students not only gain additional information needed to complete the writing assignment, but also obtain a great opportunity to develop language skills through peer-led conversations (Storch, 2007).

2. Using technology: The rise of technology integration has significantly contributed to the change in teaching methods in a second language. It motivates and encourages students to engage in reading and writing, and the various ways in which it is used prove beneficial in cultivating writing skills among this population of students (Lee, 2012).

3. Journal writing: the implementation of an interactive journal greatly benefits English language learners as it motivates them to write more in length and richer in content (Lee, 2012).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Objective

The main purpose of this study is to examine English teachers` attitudes towards collaborative teaching method and implementing writing and speaking students` skills in English lessons. The goal is to improve students` writing and speaking skills and to familiarize English teachers with collaborative learning techniques so that they can encourage learners to practice these techniques.

B. Research Method

The approach used for this study is a qualitative research method. This type of method focuses on obtaining data through open-ended and conversational communication. It also involves data collection of personal experiences, introspection, stories about life, interviews, observations, interactions and visual texts which are significant to people`s life. (Radu, 2019)

The current study attempts to uncover teachers' attitudes towards the collaborative school teaching method and the assimilation of reading and writing skills in an English lesson. It also examines the difficulties and recommendations that will lead to an improvement in the assimilation of these skills.

C. Research Participants

The research population of this study consisted of fifteen Arab English teachers who teach at Arab high schools in the north. Nine of them are females and six are males. Nine of them studied for a master's degree compared to six who studied for BA only. The age range was divided into two groups; in the first group the age was within the years 24-30, and in the second group the age was within 40-58. The seniority was divided accordingly; in the first age group, the seniority ranged from 1-5 years while in the older age groups the seniority was more than 15 years.

D. Research Tools

To collect the qualitative data of the present study, a questionnaire, including 10 items, was given to all participants. The questionnaire introduces the population and study sample showing some of their characteristics and education. Data were assembled and structured as a theoretical part. The advantages of such a tool are that it allows uniformity in the collection of information from the respondents; it does not take much time; the analysis of the data is relatively simple and objective, and there is a convenient option to compare the different respondents' answers.

E. Data Collection

The sample is small and unrepresentative but may be unique. Data were collected through written questioner. The researchers talked with them over phone and met them individually. The researchers explained the questionnaire and the objective of the study to the participants clearly. The teachers got time to think and answer the open-ended questions quite clearly.

The validity and reliability of the study were examined based on Maxwell's theoretical model (Maxwell, 1992). An optimal examination of the levels of validity requires a repetition of the interviews, but this possibility is not realistic, as argued in qualitative studies (Sabar Ben-Yehoshua, 2001). Therefore, factors that may interfere with validity, accuracy and the ability to generalize were examined. An effort has been made to prevent various factors to impair validity and reliability in order to testify indirectly (through negation) about high dimensions of validity and reliability of the research tool (Maxwell, 1992).

The characteristics of the used questionnaire:
1. The literature shows that a short questionnaire leaves only a "first impression" and indicates unreliability (Ben Simon and Nevo, 1986). The current research tool included demographic questions and ten open-ended questions.
2. Variety of topics in the questionnaire - a larger number of topics allows an examination of different and varied aspects of the personality of the research participants. In the present study each question addressed a different topic.
3. The questionnaire was conducted anonymously without the researcher's ability to intervene and influence the respondents.

F. Data Analysis

The process of analyzing data in qualitative research is a process of arranging and analyzing the information collected in order to interpret and understand the meanings of this data (Shakedi, 2004).

The examination of the information within the study can be done in a variety of strategies (by categories, selection instruments, and more), and the foremost common of which is categorized investigation. The product of the analysis is thematic categories. According to this and in accordance with the research questions, the main research identifies key categories that relate to the research concept.

In the analysis phase the researchers coded each interview separately. The coding unit was a sentence or paragraph that provided the context of the questions in the interview. For example, teachers' attitudes from the collaborative method, methods were applied to assimilate speaking skills and writing English were coded into unites for analyzing data.

Due to the global outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, it was not possible to distribute the questionnaires to some of the participants, so they were asked to write their answer using Microsoft Word and send via email.

A full and constant explanation of the questions was given to the participants in order to avoid possible deviation and misunderstanding.

IV. FINDINGS

The purpose of the current study was to examine English teachers' attitudes towards the Collaborative teaching method and implementing writing and speaking skills in English lessons.

The study also sought to explore the various skills or qualifications required to practice this method, problems that teachers face in the English teaching process, students` reactions to the method during English lessons, ways to enhance students' involvement in English lessons, and attitudes towards learning.

Research data were collected during June and July 2020. The qualitative findings were based on collecting the respondents' answers into categorization and classification for analysis. Fifteen teachers participated in the study. They are all teachers who teach English at high schools. Nine of them are females while six are males. 60% of them studied

for a master's degree compared to 40% who studied for BA only. The age range was divided into two groups; in the first group the age ranged from 24-30, and in the second group, the age ranged from 40-58. The seniority was divided accordingly; in the first age group, the seniority ranged from 1-5 years while in the older age groups the seniority was more than 15 years.

The researchers have chosen to present the data in the table below where the topics are presented by category in a way that facilitates understanding.

CATEGORIES RAISED FROM THE STUDY:

Category	
The attitude of teachers towards the Collaborative Method.	14 of the participants expressed a positive attitude towards the use of the collaborative learning method. They also supported their opinion in noting the mutual benefit between students and teachers and between students and themselves. The benefit was expressed in a variety of forms. Below are quotes from the respondents. **Positive** *"Weak pupils can learn from better ones"* (respondent 1) *"It strengthens the relationship between teacher and his students and among themselves."* (respondent 2) *"It improves teaching."* (respondent 3) *"It is the way to exchange ideas."* (respondent 5) *"It actively engages students through defending their opinions, reframing ideas, and listening to other viewpoints."* (respondent 14) **Negative** *"Each teacher has his/her own style. It doesn`t always work perfectly."* *(respondent 4)*
The attitude of students during English lessons.	Most teachers (60% = 9) reported a positive attitude of students to the collaborative method. Six teachers pointed out obstacles that caused a negative attitude among the students as quoted below. **Positive** *"Positively, it makes a change in a regular lesson."* (respondent 3) *"They are happy."* (respondent 7) *"They get more involved."* (respondent 15) **Negative** *"Loud noise."* (respondent 14) *"They don`t interact properly."* (respondent 2) *"They face problems with vocabulary and are afraid to be laughed at."* (respondent 8) *"They may face some problems due to lack of collaborative skills."* (respondent 9)
Skills / Qualifications required for practicing collaborative method in English lesson.	Reading and speaking skills, individual and social skills (like: Individual accountability, self-confidence, effective communication, team working, open-mindedness, tolerance), monitoring and management.
Ways to enhance students` involvement in English lessons.	Involve students in the planning of teaching process, create interest among students through their participation in setting goals, draw attention to students, initiate class discussions, and integrate technological tools.
Ways to foster positive attitudes towards learning English.	Facilitating the learning process, making the learning process accessible, developing an active exchange of ideas, exposing students to different styles of teaching, and providing a comfortable learning environment.
Contribution of collaborative teaching methods in motivating students to develop writing and speaking skills.	The collaborative method helps students accept the other and improve social and learning skills especially teamwork and exchanging opinions and ideas. It allows for personal expression as well.
Observed changes in speaking and writing English skills while practicing the collaborative method.	There is an improvement in the ability to speak and write and gain vocabulary. Students are more challenged to participate in discussions and teamwork.
Activities for improving speaking and writing in English lesson.	Role-playing, presentations, watching educational moves/videos, reporting daily diary, postcards, letters, practices games, problems-solve tasks.
New values	Team-work, mutual respect, decision making, haring, helping, problem-solving, accept different opinions, and competition.
Suggestions for improving speaking and writing skills.	Uniting summaries, exposure to new vocabulary items, constant supervision of teachers, and use of constantly enriching activities such as presentations, story creation, mini-scientific research, play and other individual and group activities.

The data indicate ten categories that reflect the attitudes, opinions and recommendations of teachers regarding the collaborative teaching method and implementing writing and speaking skills in English lessons.

A large majority of teachers (93%) expressed a positive attitude towards the collaborative method. They claimed that this method contributes to the improvement of the learning process and imparts social values such as mutual respect, cooperation, help and support as well as improvement in academic achievement. The students gain self-confidence, and they enjoy working in teams. When teachers were asked about their students' attitudes towards this teaching method during English lessons, nine teachers stated that the students' attitudes were positive and made similar claims to what they had among the students as well.

Students enjoyed the collaborative method because they felt they were part of the learning process and that it instilled self-confidence, teamwork and mutual respect. In contrast, six teachers noted that this method caused excess noise and

disorder. Students also demonstrated a lack of command of English language skills. Their vocabulary was poor which affected the individual and group communication during the lesson.

For practicing collaborative method in English lesson teachers agreed on the importance of reading and writing skills, individual and social skills, like individual accountability, self-confidence, effective communication, team working, open-mindedness, tolerance, monitoring and management. To enhance students` involvement in English lessons students must be involved in the teaching process` planning, setting goals and class discussions. Teachers should use integrating technological tools during lessons to motivate students.

Teachers suggested using a variety of technological tools such as Google Forum, online chat, video and projector and more in order to increase interest among students and facilitate the English learning process. To foster positive attitudes towards learning English they also agreed to facilitate the learning process, make the process accessible, develop an active exchange of ideas, expose students to different styles of teaching and provide a comfortable learning environment.

Observed changes in speaking and writing English skills while practicing collaborative method lead to an improvement in the ability to speak and write as well as vocabulary enrichment. Students are more challenged to participate in discussions and teamwork. Suggestions for improving speaking and writing skills include the following activities: Role-playing, presentations, watching educational moves/videos, reporting daily diaries, writing post-cards, and letters, playing games, conducting problems-solve tasks, writing summaries, dealing with new vocabulary items, presentations, story creation, mini-scientific research, and other individual and group activities. These activities must be performed under constant supervision of teachers.

Team-work, mutual respect, decision making, sharing, helping, problem-solving, accepting different opinions and competition are values that students gain when practicing collaborative method during English lessons.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of teachers' attitudes towards collaborative instruction on students' writing and speaking skills. In addition, it investigated the skills or qualifications entailed to perform this method, problems that teachers encounter in English teaching process, students` responses to the method during English lesson and techniques to boost students' engagement in English lesson and outlooks towards learning.

The findings were reminiscent to those reached by Nasri and Biria (2017), who indicated positive attitudes of teachers toward the collaborative method in the learning process, and the impact of using this method on speech skills. This current study also pointed at complete agreement on a positive attitude toward this method among teachers. The teachers agreed that this method helps in improving the speaking and writing skills in the English lesson.

The findings from the study also indicated that collaborative teaching method helps students to develop self-confidence and motivation, cooperation and mutual respect, tolerance and teamwork, gaining new vocabulary and more. These findings were also similar to those of a study done by Tahmasbi, Hashemifardnia and Namaziandost (2019), who declared that collaborative learning, unlike traditional learning methods, has certain advantages that are derived mainly from social interaction between students.

However, it is very important to relate to students as partners in the learning process through planning and setting goals. Most of the effective activities that help in the learning process and are integrated with collaborative learning necessitate a combination of smart methods such as role-playing, doing presentations, writing postcards and others that include technological tools such as Google Forum, online chat and video watching. The findings received from the current research are similar to the findings from the study of Li (2015). In his research Li suggested to improve student speaking skills by adopting collaborative learning activities such as group discussion and role-playing aimed at helping students learn phrases they were exposed to as a result of using this method (Li, 2015).

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study introduces some recommendations. These are:
1. The concepts of collaboration should be taught at the colleges for teacher education
2. EFL teacher education programs should be rebuilt by extending student teaching, and integrating field experience components into their coursework so that teaching methodology can reflect curriculum goals, and teachers' experience.
3. EFL teachers should motivate their students and show patience in order to train them and improve language production and use.
4. Syllabus designers have to devote enough time for collaboration supplemented with a variety of activities for practicing group and pair work.

REFERENCES

[1]   Brown, H. D. (2007). Teaching by principles. (3rd ed.). London: Longman.
[2]   Byrne, D. (1987). Techniques for class room interaction. London: Longman, pp 83-85.
[3]   Chastain, K. (1998). Developing second language skills (2nd Ed.). Chicago: Harcourt Brace Publishers.
[4]   Cooper, J. (1990). Cooperative learning and college instruction. State University: pp 6-7.

[5]   Crandall, J. (1999). Cooperative language learning and affective factors. In J. Arnold (Ed.). *Affect in language learning (pp. 226-245).* Beijing, China: Foreign Language Teaching and Researching Press.

[6]   David, A.R., Thang S.M. & Azman, H. (2015). Accommodating low proficiency ESL students' language learning needs through an online writing support system. *E-Bangi Journal*, 10(1): 118-126.

[7]   Doff, A. (1988). Teach English. A training course for teachers. Cambridge: University Press, pp 65-67.

[8]   Dweck, C.S. (2012). Mindsets and human nature: Promoting change in the Middle East, the schoolyard, the racial divide, and willpower. *American Psychologist*, 67(8), 64-622.

[9]   Fulcher, G. (2003). Testing second language speaking. London: Longman/Pearson Education.

[10] Gillies, R. M., & Boyle, M. (2010). Teachers` reflections on cooperative learning: Issues of implementation. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26(4)*, 933-940.

[11] Gillies, R. M. (2014). Cooperative learning: Developments in research. *International Journal of Educational Psychology*, 3(2), 125-140.

[12] Gillies, R. M., & Khan, A. (2008). The effects of teacher discourse on students` discourse, problem-solving and reasoning during cooperative learning. *International Journal of Educational Research,* 47(6), 323-34.

[13] Grath, Mc. (2000). Strengthening collaborative work. UK: project-based learning, pp 71-74.

[14] Harmer, Jeremy. (2007). The practice of English language teaching. 4th ed. London: Longman.

[15] Hennssey, A. & Dionigi, R. A. (2013). Implementing cooperative learning in Australian primary schools: Generalist teachers` perspectives. *Issues in Educational Research*, 23(1), 52-68.

[16] Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, F. (2009). Joining together: Group theory and group skills (10th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

[17] Kagan, S. (1994). Cooperative learning. San Clemente: Kagan Publishing.

[18] Kohn, A. (1992). Resistance to cooperative learning: Making sense of its deletion and dilution. *Journal of Education*, 174, 38-55.

[19] Lee, H. (2012). The reading response e-journal: An alternative way to engage low-achieving EFL students. *Language Teaching Research*, 17 (1), 111-131.

[20] Leong, L. M., & Ahmadi, S. M. (2017). An analysis of factors influencing learner's English speaking skill. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 2(1), 1-34.

[21] Li, L. (2015). Cooperative learning in the course of English listening and speaking in independent college: A case study of Bowen College of management (Master's thesis). Retrieved from CNKI Dissertations and Theses database.

[22] Maxwell, J. (1992). Constructive, interpretive approaches to human inquiry. In: N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 118-137). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[23] Namaziandost, E., Hashemifardnia, A., & Shafiee, S. (2019). The impact of opinion-gap, reasoning-gap, and information-gap tasks on EFL learners' speaking fluency. *Cogent Social Sciences, 5*, pp 57-59.

[24] Nasri, M., & Biria, R. (2017). Integrating multiple and focused strategies for improving reading comprehension and l2 lexical development of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature,* 6(1), 311–321.

[25] Park, H., & Lee, A. R. (2005). L2 Learners' anxiety, self-confidence, and oral performance. Proceedings of the 10th Conference of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics (pp. 107-208).

[26] Pica, T. (1994). Research on negotiation: What does it reveal about second language learning conditions, processes, and outcomes? *Language Learning,* 44, 493-527.

[27] Richards, J.C., & Rodgers T. (1982). Method: Approach, design, and procedure. *Tesol Quarterly*, 16(2): 153-168.

[28] Radu, V. (2019). Qualitative research: Definition, methodology, limitation, examples. Retrieved from Ecommerce Grouth: https://www.omniconvert.com/blog/qualitative-research-definition-methodology-limitation-examples.html#What_is_qualitative_research. May, 2020.

[29] Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). Approaches and methods in language teaching. Boston, MA: Cambridge University Press.

[30] Roseth, C. J., Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R., T. (2008). Promoting early adolescents` achievement and peer relationships: The effects of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic goal structures. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134(2), 223-227.

[31] Shkedi, A. (2004). Narrative survey: Methodology for studying multiple populations. *Narrative Inquiry*, 14 (1): 87-111.

[32] Siltala, R. (2010). Innovatively and cooperative learning in business life and teaching. Turko, Finland.

[33] Storch, N. (2007). Investigating the merits of pair work on a text editing task in ESL classes. *Language Teaching Research*, 11(2), 143-159.

[34] Tahmasbi, S., Hashemifardnia, A., & Namaziandost, E. (2019). Standard English or world Englishes: Issues of ownership and preference. *Journal of Teaching English Language Studies*, 7(3), 83–98.

[35] Thornton, P. (1999). Reading together. In D. Kluge & S. McGuire (Eds.), *JALT Applied Materials: Cooperative Learning* (pp. 23-36). Tokyo, Japan: Japan Association for Language Teaching.

[36] Vygotsky, L. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge: MA Harvard University Press.

[37] Wilson, Julie Anne. (1997). A program to develop the listening and speaking skills of children in a first grade classroom. Research Report, [ED415566]

Tareq M. Murad has been teaching English as a foreign language in high schools since 1990, and he has been teaching linguistic courses in Sakhnin College, Academic College for Teacher Education since 2001. Recently, he holds a position in the College: The head of the practicum department. Courses: Intro to linguistics, Semantics, pragmatics and teacher education. He has BA in English linguistic and literature from Ben-Gurion University, MA in English Linguistics from Haifa University, Pedagogical supervision from Machon- Mofet. TA and PhD in English curricula and Instructions from Yarmouk University.

Research interests: pragmatics: speech acts, second/foreign language acquisition and task-based language teaching (TBLT). The author has many publications in local and international Journals, the most recent of them are: Murad, T. (2011). The Effect of Task-Based Language Teaching on Developing Speaking Skills among the Palestinians Secondary EFL Students in Israel and Their Attitudes towards English. www.asian-efl-journal.com/Thesis/Thesis-murad pdf. Murad, T., & Shaalta, J. (2012). A contrastive Linguistic analysis between Arabic and English. In Arabic. Sakhnin college. Assadi,N.; Murad, T. and Khalil, M. (2019). Training teachers' perspectives of the effectiveness of the academy class training model on trainee's professional development. Journal of theory and practice in language studies, 9, (2), 137-145.

Yosra Ghader is an EFL for 15 years in different High schools in Israel. She recently got her second degree in English curriculum and instruction.
Research interests: teaching English as a second or foreign language and second language acquisition

Jamal Assadi, associate professor, chairs the Department of English (Mteach, Secondary & Elementary Tracks--Regular and Supplementary studies), coordinator of English for Academic Purposes at The College of Sakhnin, and a former lecturer at An-Najah National University, Nablus. He received his Ph.D. in English literature from the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne in England. In addition to numerous articles in professional journals, and children's stories. Prof Assadi is the author of *Acting, Rhetoric and Interpretation in Selected Novels by F. Scott Fitzgerald and Saul Bellow* (2006)*, co-editor of A Distant Drummer: Foreign Perspectives on F. Scott Fitzgerald* (2007), co-author of *The road to self-revival: Sufism, heritage, intertextuality and meta-poetry in modern Arabic poetry* (2011) and *Short fiction as a mirror of Palestinian life in Israel, 1944-1967: Critique and anthology.* (2016).
Prof. Assadi also translated a few volumes of Palestinain peorty and short fiction to English. See *Mohammad Ali Taha's "A Rose To Hafeeza's Eyes" And Other Stories* (2008*Loud Sounds from the Holy Land: Short Fiction by Palestinian Women (2011); The Story of a People: An Anthology of Palestinoan Poetry within the Green Line* (2012) and *Torn Body, One Soul: A Collection of Palestinian Short Fiction* (2012).

Vowel Elision in Ikhin, an Edoid Language in South-south Nigeria

Opoola Bolanle T.

Department of Linguistics and Languages, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

Olaide Oladimeji

Department of Linguistics and Languages, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

Abstract—In this paper, attention is on the basic factors that come into force in determining whether or not vowel will elide and which of the V_1 and V_2 in a sequence should disappear in any environment. This paper also examines the phonological, morphological and syntactic reasons behind vowel elision as a syllable structure process in Ikhin language. As in the case of related African languages that have been previously described by various scholars, this paper presents how vowel elision works in Ikhin and the problems arising from its analysis. In this study, the focus is on the explanation and analysis of factors such as boundary, morpheme structure and vowel quality which actually determine whether or not elision should take place in Ikhin. Apart from factors such as vowel quality and boundary, one other factor with respect to elision or glide formation is the syllable structure of the verbs and nouns in Ikhin. Ikhin nouns are either disyllabic i.e. V(C)V or trisyllabic, etc. It is argued that the operation of vowel elision is blocked in disyllabic nouns as /i/, /o/ and /u/ form glides when either of them occurs as V_1 whereas vowel elision rather than glide formation takes place in trisyllabic nouns. The study concludes based on data not previously discussed in the language that elision is driven by syllable-based and syntactic-based analyses and that a major strategy of discouraging vowel cluster in Ikhin is vowel elision because the syllable structure of the language prohibits cluster of vowels within word or across word boundary.

Index Terms—vowel elision, Ikhin language, boundary, morpheme structure, vowel quality

I. INTRODUCTION

Ikhin is one of the languages spoken in the Southern Nigeria. It belongs to Edoid language family. According Oladimeji (2013), it is a daughter language that belongs to the North-Central group of Edoid languages that was formerly known as Eastern Kwa. Categorically, Oladimeji (2010) states that the Ikhin language is spoken at Ikhin in Owan East Local Government Area of Edo State. For Blench (1989), the Eastern Kwa languages are recently classified as Benue-Congo (BC) and they form putative West Benue-Congo (WBC). However, the Edoid languages are majorly grouped into four. For Lewis (2013:160), they are North Central (NC), Northwestern (NW), Southwestern (SW) and Delta (D). Additionally, Elugbe (1989) recorded that the Edoid languages spread from the eastern Niger Delta in the Rivers and Bayelsa States through Delta State and Edo State into parts of Ondo and Kogi States (http://www.ling.mq.edu.au). This work is the first systematic exposition of the grammatical conditions for vowel elision in Ikhin language

II. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted an analytical and descriptive research design and on that, the data used for the study were gotten from seven selected native speakers in Ikhin town. The data were also collected from the Ibadan 1000 wordlist of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and finally, from the University of Ibadan 400 wordlist. More so, the information used for the study was collected from traditional stories, conversations, descriptive statements and isolated, unelicited utterances (Oladimeji, 2013). The data were analysed using the speech filing system of the computerised speech laboratory.

III. RELATED WORKS

In a number of studies on Edoid languages, there has not been any reference to vowel elision in Ikhin. The only linguistic study on this language before now was done by Folarin (1982). It dwells mainly on the phonetics of the language.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The adopted theoretical framework of the study is Goldsmith's Autosegmental Theory (1976a) which is in prolongation to the traditional work of generative phonology that is in Chomsky and Halle's study in *Sound Pattern of*

English (1968). Also, this theory was used in analysing and presenting the data used for the study. In generative phonology, a complete set of features was proposed and principles for writing phonological representation were also proposed. However, phonological representation was still linear in the sense that it was a single line of representation.

From the information above, the more parallel tiers of phonological segments were discovered in the work of John Goldsmith (1990) building on the work of Wil Leben Williams. For him, each tier of the phonological segments is made up of a string of segments although, the tiers for each segment are different due to their inherent features. Therefore, tonal features are represented on a separate tier independent of segmental tier, thus making tone autonomous in the sense that vowels can be deleted but the tone will retain its own tier of phonological segment and moves to a syllable that is adjacent to it in order to be in comformity with the maximal association in phonology.

Example:
1

<div style="text-align:center">

de +oruma   →   d + oruma   →doruma (buy sheep)

L   H H L   L   H H L   L HH L

</div>
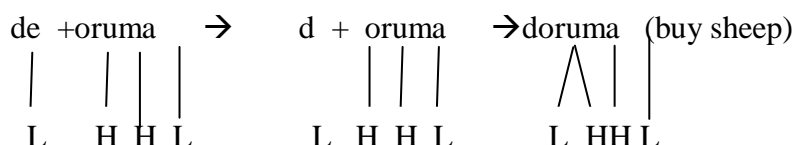
The most fundamental characteristic of autosegmental theory is that phonological representation is non-linear, that is, that a phonological representation is composed, not of a single sequence of entities but of several parallel sequences of entities arranged in two or more tiers, each of which is said to be independent of the others (Aziza 1997). Hierarchical model of this theory is used in presenting the data.

V. VOWEL ELISION

Vowel elision is a common phonological process in African languages in general and Edoid languages in particular. Vowel elision is found most commonly in kwa languages and that in such languages the syllable structure of verbs and nouns makes it possible for vowel sequences to occur across morpheme boundaries. (Welmers1973). In Ikhin and in such other Edoid languages like Urhobo (Aziza, 1997), Emai (Egbokhare, 1990) etc any of the vowel (V_1 or V_2) can elide at boundary depending on construction type. However, in Ngwo (Njwe, 2005), a western Grass field Bantu language, spoken in the North West province of Cameroon, when two morphemes or words are juxtaposed only the V_2 elides. This V_2 is actually the noun class prefix vowel of the second word.

Potential vowel cluster in Ikhin may be avoided by dropping one of the vowels when two morphemes or words, one of which ends in a vowel and the other which begins with a vowel are combined. This is also referred to as boundary deletion.

Here, the aim is to layout basic factors that come into force in determining whether or not vowel will elide and which of the V_1 and V_2 in a sequence should disappear in any environment and to explain the phonological, morphological or syntactic reasons behind such a process. We begin by showing how vowel elision works in Ikhin and the problems arising from its analysis, also by explaining factors such as boundary, morpheme structure and vowel quality which actually determine whether or not elision should take place. An understanding of the following situations would go a long way in assisting us to appreciate the various explanations later provided as solutions to the problems of vowel elision in Ikhin.

i) V_1 +V_2 sequence, the V_1 is sometimes elided
        òkɔ̀   + ɛ́dá⇢ okɔɛda⇢ okɛ̃da
        V_1 V_2 V_1V_2
        'motor' 'river'   'canoe or boat'

ii) V_2 may be elided in V_1 + V_2 sequence
        ɛ́wè+ɔ̀nà ⇢ ɛ́wè ɔna⇢   ɛ́wènà̃
          V_1 V_2 V_1V_2
        'goat' 'this'   'this goat'

iii)   Sometimes, no elision of either V_1 or V_2 when occurring in sequence across morpheme boundary.
        ɔ̀mɔ́hènì +éhù + ódè   ⇢ ɔ̀mɔ́hènì niéhù ódɛ ⇢ ɔ̀mɔ́hènì éhùódè
        V_1V_2 V_1V_2
        'man die yesterday'   'The man died yesterday'

d)   When high vowels /i/ and /u/ occur at V_1 position and are followed by an unidentical vowel across morpheme boundary, glide formation rather than vowel elision takes place (this situation also applies to /o/)

iv)   fì + ákà⇢fj + ăkà   ⇢   fjăkà
        V_1 V_2 CV_2
        'throw'   'basket' 'throw a basket'

v)   rò + ɔ̀kpòsò⇢rw+ ɔkposɔ⇢ rwɔ̀kpòsò
        V_1 V_2 CV_2

'take'   'woman'   'marry'
vi)   ètò   +   àgbā̄⇢ etw + agba⇢ètwàgbā̄
       V₁   V₂   CV₂
       'hair'   'jaw'   'bear'

There are however, situation when these high vowels are deleted in this same environment

vii)   o͡urù + àgbède⇢ouru + agbede⇢o͡urágbèdè
       V₁V₂   V₁V₂
       'thread' 'needle'   'needle's thread'

f)   The final vowel of a verb may be deleted in a construction and retained in another construction despite the fact that it is followed by the same vowel across word boundary.

viii)   mɛ́ +dɛ + ɔ̀pìa⇢ mɛ́ + dɛ + ɔ̀pìa   ⇢   mɛ́ dɔ̀pjà
       V₁V₂   V₁V₂
        I   buy   matchet   1 bought matchet

ix)   mɛ́ +dɛ + ɔ̀   ⇢   mɛ́ + dɛ + ɔ̀   ⇢   mɛ́dὲɔ̀
        I   buy   it   V₁V₂   I bought it

Besides, in a verb-noun object sequence, the final vowel of the verb sometimes stays and at other times it goes even when it is followed by the same object. This is more so when the main verb is preceded by the auxiliary. "Whenever there is a seeming contradiction in the operation of two rules, it is almost certain that the language will carefully delineate the kind of area in which the one or the other can operate" (Oyebade,1998).

Though, in Ikliin, vowel elision does not take place at boundary between syntactic categories such as auxiliary and the main verb, noun and a following verb, verb and adverb, noun and article, however, when these items occur in an adjacent position to other lexical items e.g verb-noun, verb-numeral, verb-qualifier elision takes place.

All that has been said so far is to generalise by describing the mode of vowel elision in Ikhin. Any factor or reason that may have been advanced for being responsible for vowel elision in this language must also account for why elision takes place in certain environment but is blocked in another environment, not only that it must also account for the reason why it is V₁ that elides in one environment and V₂ in another environment.

It is at this level that explanations on phonological and syntactic factors in addition to vowel quality and morpheme structure conditions are offered. Apart from factors such as vowel quality and boundary, one other factor with respect to elision or glide formation is syllable structure of the verbs and nouns in Ikhin. Ikhin nouns are either disyllabic i.e. V(C)V or trisyllabic etc. The operation of vowel elision is blocked in disyllabic nouns as /i/, /o/and /u/ form glides when either of them occurs as V₁ whereas vowel elision rather than glide formation takes place in trisyllabic nouns.

On the other hand, the minimal syllable structure of verbs in Ikhin is (C)V. A verb can either be monosyllabic or disyllabic, a situation that is true of most Edoid languages. Vowel elision takes place in disyllabic verbs, while monosyllabic verb laving /i/, /u/, /o/ as V₁, has its V₁ turned to glide when it is followed by a stronger V₂

The strength hierarchy presupposes mat the pronoun and verb categories would lose their vowels when in near adjacency to qualifier and noun categories. Having understood the foundation for the application or otherwise of vowel elision in Ikhin, we will now provide construction types where elision takes place and its effects on tones and nasality.

A. V₁ Elision

1. Compound words

Vowel elision takes place in the formation of compound words. When two words are juxtaposed to form a compound word, the final vowel of the first word is lost or dropped, provided the following word begins with another vowel.

(i)   òkò   +   ɛ́dá⇢   okɔɛda⇢ okɛ́da
       V₁   V₂   V₁V₂
       'motor' 'river'   'boat (canoe)'

(ii)   ɔmɔòkpòsò   ⇢   ɔ̀mɔ̀ òkpòsò   ⇢   ɔ̀mòkpòsò
        V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂
       'child' 'female'   'female child'

2. Transitive verb — object

So, V₁ elision occurs at the boundary between a transitive verb and its object.

        i)   gbè áwà   ⇢   gbeawa ⇢   gbáwà
               V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'kill dog'

        ii)   gbè òfè⇢   gbeawa ⇢   gbòfè
               V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'kill rat'
               'kill 'rat'

        iii)   dὲ úkò ⇢   dὲ úkò ⇢   dúkò
               V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'buy a container'
               'buy' 'container'

        iv)   dὲ úsó ⇢   dὲ úsó ⇢   dúsò
               V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'buy a head'

'buy' 'head'

v) fà̰ ɔmɔ̌ká → fà̰ ɔmɔ̌ka → fɔ̰̌mɔ̌ká

   V₁V₂   V₁ V₂   'pluck orange'

   'pluck' 'orange'

vi) dɛ̀ órúmà → dɛ̀ órúmà → dǒrúmà

   V₁V₂   V₁ V₂   'buy sheap'

   'buy' 'sheep'

vii) kù àmɛ̀ → kù àmɛ̀ → kwàmɛ̀

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'pourwater'

   'pour' 'water'

3. Numeral construction

V₁elision has equally been observed in the numeral constructions as shown below:

i) ìgbè ɔ̀kpá → igbeɔkpa → ìgbɔ̀kpá

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'eleven'

   'ten' 'one'

ii) ìgbè éhà → igbeeha → ìgbèhà

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'thirteen'

   'ten' 'three'

4. Article - Noun Construction

In the noun phrase construction involving article, the word order in this language is for the article to come before the noun it modifies. In this construction, the stem vowel of the article which is V₁ at word boundary is deleted as shown below:

i) ɔ̀lì ɔ́bò → ɔliɔbo → ɔ̀lɔ́bò

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'the doctor'

   'the' 'doctor'

ii) ɔ̀lì ɔ́kpòsò → ɔliɔkposo → ɔ́lɔ̀kpòsò

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'the woman'

   'the' 'woman'

iii) ɔ̀lì ɛ́wè → ɔliɛwe → ɔ́lɛ̀wè

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'the goat'

   'the' 'goat'

iv) èlì òì → elioi → èlòì

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'the thieves'

   'the' 'thief'

v) èlì ódì → eliodi → èlódì

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'the walls'

   'the' 'wall'

Under normal condition [i] does not delete but it deletes here because it belongs to a modifier (article).

B. V₂ Elision

1. Noun — Demonstrative Construction

In Ikhin and perhaps in most African languages, the word-order in noun phrase is for the demonstratives to follow the nouns they qualify. In this case, the prefix vowel of this demonstrative (V₂) is dropped when it is in an adjacent position to the V₁ of a head noun e.g. the vowel of the modifier is dropped because the demonstrative is a modifier. It is a concord marker prefix not a class prefix.

i) àβè +ɔ̀nà → aβe ɔɲa → áβènà

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'this house'

   'house' 'this'

ii) òfè +ɔni → ofeɔɲi → ófènì̋

   V₁V₂   V₁ V₂   'that rat'

   'rat' 'that'

iii) ɛ̀wé +ɔ̀nà → ɛweɔnɣ → ɛ̀wénà̋

   V₁V₂   V₁ V₂   'this goat'

   'goat' 'this'

iv) áwà +ɔni → awaɔɲi → áwànì̋

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'that dog'

   'dog' 'that'

v) òè +ɔnà̋ → oɛɔɲi → óɛ́nà̋

   V₁ V₂   V₁ V₂   'this leg'

   'leg' 'this'

vi) ɔbò +ɔ̀nì̋ → ɔbò ɔ̀ɲi → ɔbònì̋

| | V₁V₂ | V₁V₂ | | 'that doctor' |

'doctor' 'that'

2. Noun Associative Construction

In the noun-associative constructions, however, the associative marker /isὲ/ which intervenes between the two nominals has its two vowels (prefix and suffix) deleted. In this elision process, the prefix vowel /i/ is V₂ elision while the suffix vowel /ɛ/ is Vi elision.

Examples:

i)   ɛ́kpà ísὲ ɔbà   ⟶   ɛ́kpà ísὲ ɔbà   ⟶   ɛ́kpàsɔ̀bà
     V₁V₂V₁V₂   V₁V₂V₁V₂   'king's bag'
     'bag' 'am' 'king'

ii) áwà ísὲ òhùà   ⟶   áwà ísὲ òhùà   ⟶   áwàsɔhwà
     V₁ V₂V₁V₂   V₁V₂V₁V₂   'hunter's dog'
     'dog' 'am' 'hunter'

iii) úsó ísὲ òkpòsò   ⟶ úsó ísὲ òkpòsò   ⟶ úsósòkpòsò
     V₁ V₂V₁V₂   V₁V₂V₁V₂   'head of woman'
     'head' 'am' 'woman'

In the above examples, the associative marker /isɛ/ (V- CV) has its initial and final vowels dropped while the vowels of the nouns being fused together are retained. This is borne out of the fact that the marker is weaker in strength than the nouns and as such loses its vowels when in juxtaposition with the stronger constituents such as nouns. Though in fast speech, the whole associative marker may go.

However, this process does not occur as claimed earlier if V₁ is a close vowel i.e. /i/ and /u/ therefore, it is blocked by another process called glide formation. Also syntactic rules such as word order rule block vowel elision within primary constituents because such constituents have undergone verb movement as in the following examples:

i)   N   Aux   V   Adv
     ɔmɔ́hὲ   è   h<u>u</u>   ɔ́dὲ
     man   die   yesterday
     The man died yesterday

ii) ìjà̀   xé   lùm<u>ɔ̀</u>   ákùὲ
     mother will   travel   tomorrow
     The mother will travel tomorrow

iii) áwà   gbὲ   óf<u>ὲ</u>   ɔ́dὲ
     dog   kill   rat   yesterday
     The dog killed rat yesterday

The vowel elision processes discussed above affect the status of other segments such as tone and nasality. The reason for this is that all the affected vowels are tone bearing units while only a few of the affected vowels bear nasality. In autosegmental phonology, the features of the segments (vowels and consonants) and those of the tones are contained in separate tiers. The relation of tones to the vowels with which they are associated is simultaneous in time.

The sample derivations for autosegmental representation of vowel elision processes will also include the effects of these processes on tones. When vowels are deleted, their tones are automatically set afloat and later relinked by an association convention for tones which is a set of requirements on phonological representation to be linked to the other parts of the phonological structure.

According to Goldsmith (1976), the value of autosegmental analysis was explicit in the analysis of tone in African languages. He then maintains that there are phonological rules that apply independently to tonal and segmental levels during an autosegmental representation and finally states clearly that there are rules that delete a segment but can leave a tone that is associated with the segment unaffected (http://www.ling.mq.edu.au).

Examples from Ikhin

(i)   òkɔ̀   +   ɛ́dà   →   òkɛ́dà
      v₁ v₂
      L L   H L   'boat'
      'motor'   'river'

Rule 1:   Delete V₁, but do not delete its low tone

(ii) òk`   +   ɛ́dà

From the above example, one can actually understand and see the presence of an unattached low tone which, in other words, means a tone that is left after the vowel [ɔ] has been deleted. Based on this, there is need to have a rule that will mandate unattached tones to be attached to the nearest vowel. In line with the following, it can be said that the tone on the prefix vowel of the second noun [ɛ́dà] in the above example is high [H] while the unattached tone is low [L]. Again, in combining the low tone and high tone, it brings about a low tone ensued by a high tone [L then H]. In other words, it can be called a rising tone or contour tone. However, on the part of rule changes in an autosegmental representation where tones and segments appear on separate levels, phonologists are at work in this regard (http://www.ling.mq.edu.au).

For example, the UR for okò + έdà would be

iii)

tonal tier	L		L	H		L
CV tier	V	C	V	V	C	V
Segmental tieR	ò	k	ò	έ	d	à
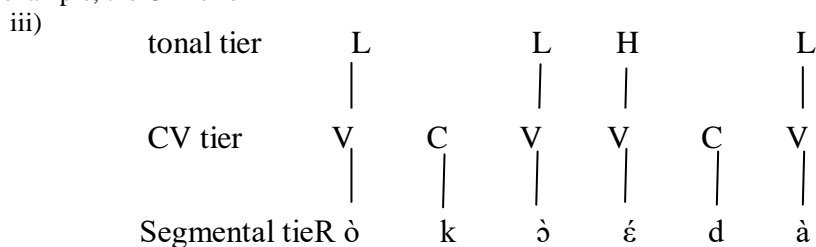
From the above example, it can be seen that at the segmental level, there is a rule that postulates the deletion of the final vowel of the first word when it is succeeded by another vowel at word boundary (http://www.ling.mq.edu.au).

iv)

tonal tier	L		L	H		L
CV tier	V	C	V	V	C	V
Segmental tier	o	k	ø	ε	d	a
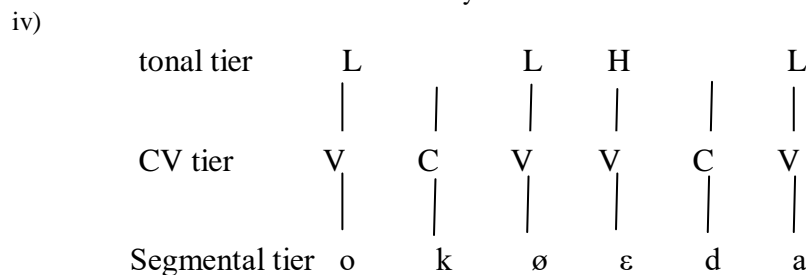
We now have a floating low tone which is attached to the nearest vowel.

(v)

tonal tier	L		L	H		L
CV tier	V	C		V	C	V
Segmental tier	o	k		ε	d	a	òkἔdà
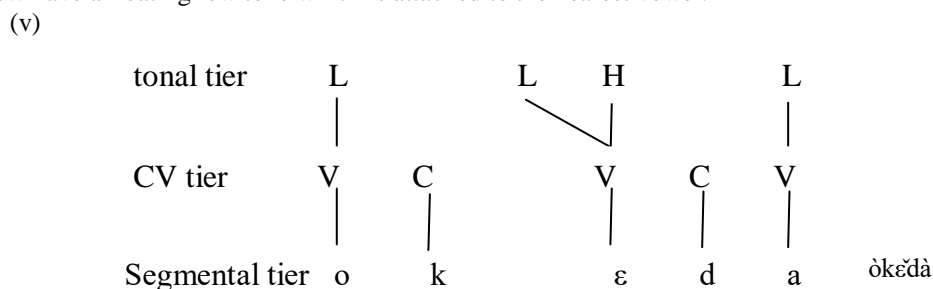
In other words, we have an LH (=rising) tone attached to vowel [ε], that is V$_2$ at word boundary.

Furthermore, these unattached (floating) tones result in various tonal modifications. When V$_1$ which bears a high tone [H] elides and V$_2$ which bears a low tone [L] remains, the high tone on the elided V$_1$ is set afloat and later relinks. This relinking of high tone [H] results in the automatic delinking (and deletion) of low tone. This is so in verb-noun object and demonstrative constructions.

Examples:

i) rómú + òkpòsò ⟶ rómókpósò
    H H   L LL
    'marry' 'woman'   'marry wife'

ii) òkpá + ɔnà ⟶ ɔ̀ɔ̀kpánà
    L H   L L
    'cock' 'this'   'this cock'
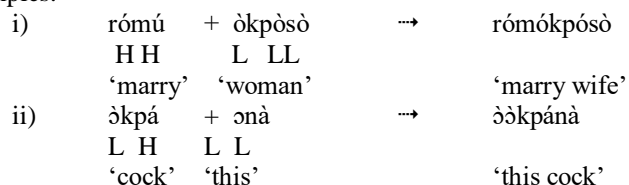
This can be illustrated with the following sample derivations:

iii)   Underlying representation

H	H		L		L		L
C	V	C	V	+ V	C	V	C	V
r	ó	m	ú	ò	kp	ò	s	ò

iv)

```
        H        (H)    L      L      L                By vowel elision
        |               |      |      |
    C   V   C    ø  +   V   C  V   C  V
    |   |   |           |   |  |   |  |
    r   ó   m           o   kp o   s  o
```

v)

```
        H        (H)    L      L      L                By relinking of (H) and delinking
        |          \   =‖                              of (L)
    C   V   C        +  V   C  V   C  V
    |   |   |           |   |  |   |  |
    r   ó   m           o   kp o   s  o
```

vi)
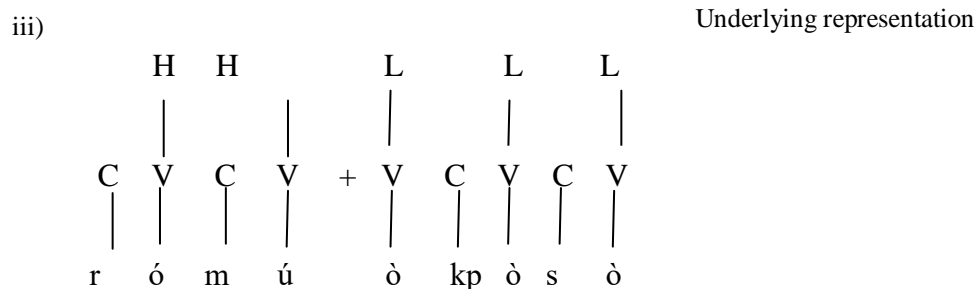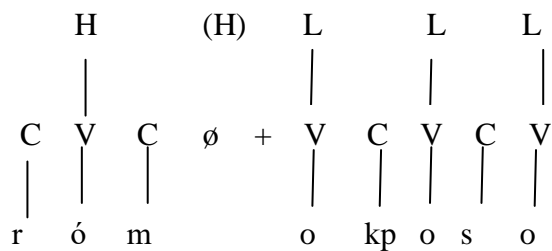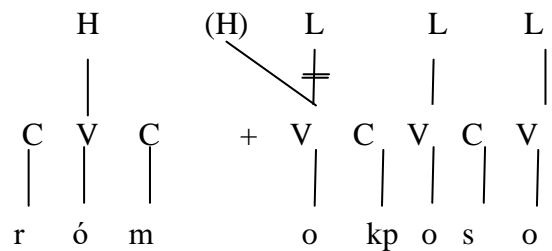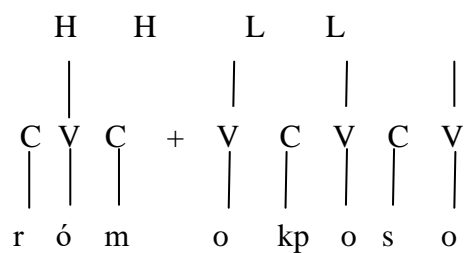
```
        H    H      L      L                           Surface representation (following
        |    |      |      |                           deletion of L)
    C   V   C  +   V   C  V   C  V
    |   |   |      |   |  |   |  |
    r   ó   m      o   kp o   s  o
```

[rómókpòsò] 'marry wife'

i)
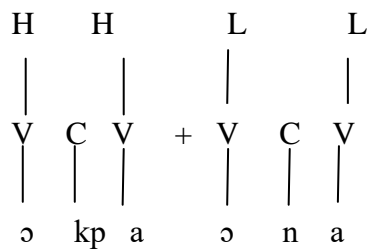
```
        H    H      L      L                           Underlying representations
        |    |      |      |
    V   C   V  +   V   C  V
    |   |   |      |   |  |
    ɔ   kp  a      ɔ   n  a
```

ii)

```
        H        (H)    L      L                        By vowel elision
        |               |      |
    V   C    ø  +   V   C  V
    |   |           |   |  |
    ɔ   kp          ɔ   n  a
```

iii)

```
        H    H  ↘    L      L                           By relinking of (H) and delinking
        |       \   =‖                                  of (L)
    V   C    +     V   C  V
    |   |          |   |  |
    ɔ   kp         ɔ   n  a
```

iv)

```
  H            H    L
  |            |    |
  V   C    +   V  C V                    [ɔ̀kpɔ́nǎ]  'This cock'
  |   |        |  | |
  ɔ   kp       ɔ  n a
```
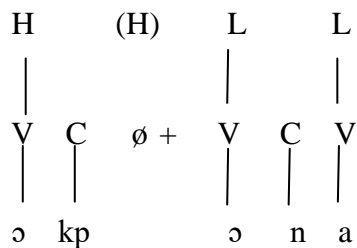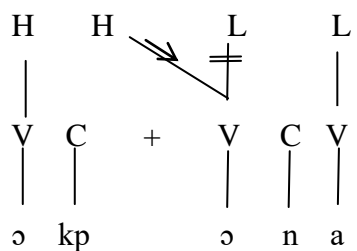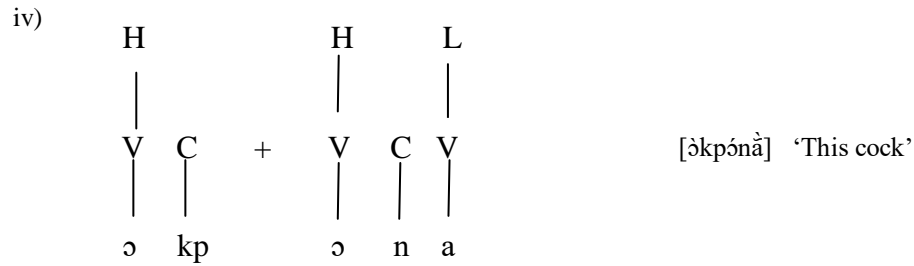
When at boundaries in the formation of compound words, numeral constructions verb – noun objects, V_1 and V_2 bear identical tones, there is vacuous relinking (that is, redundant) thus, no tonal modification occurs.

Examples:

i)   ɔ̀mɔ̀   +   ɔ̀kpòsò ⟶   ɔ̀mòkpòsò
        L L   LLL
        'child' 'female' 'female child'

ii)   ìgbè   +   ɔ̀kpá   ⟶   ìgbòkpà
        L L   LL
        'ten'   'one'   'eleven'

iii)   gbè   +   òfè   ⟶   gbòfè
         L   LL
        'kill   'rat'   'kill rat'

These are some sample derivations of the above:

```
  L     L     L       L          Underlying representation
  |     |     |       |
  V  C  V  +  V   C   V
  |  |  |     |   |   |
  Ì  gb e     ɔ   kp  a
```

```
  L      (L)   L       L          By vowel elision
  |            |       |
  V  C   ø  +  V   C   V
  |  |         |   |   |
  ì  gb        ɔ   kp  a
```

```
  L       (L)  L       L          By vacuous relinking
  |         ╲  |       |
  |          ╲ |       |
  V  C    +    V   C   V
  |  |         |   |   |
  ì  gb        ɔ   kp  a
```

```
  L            L       L          Surface representation
  |            |       |
  V  C    +    V       V
  |  |         |       |
  ì  gb        ɔ   kp  a
```

                                           [ìgbòkpà] 'eleven'
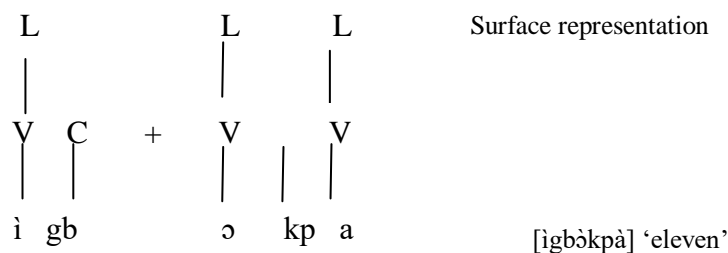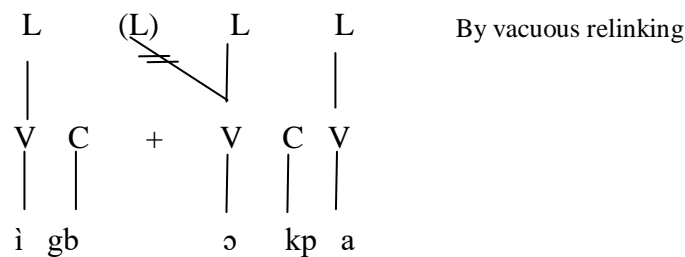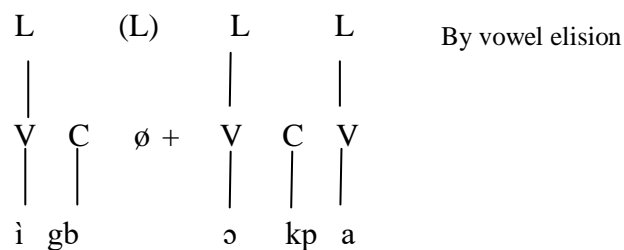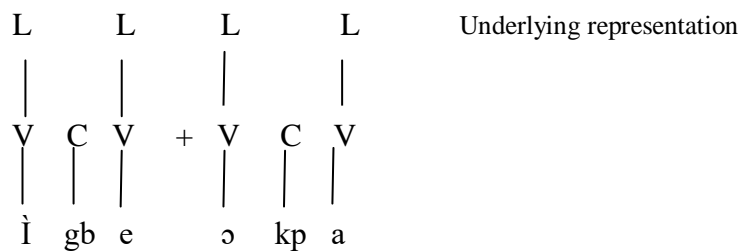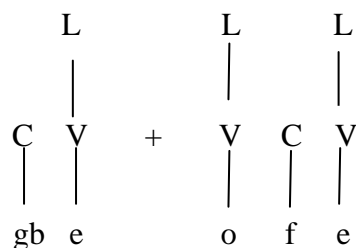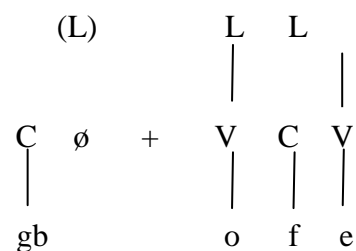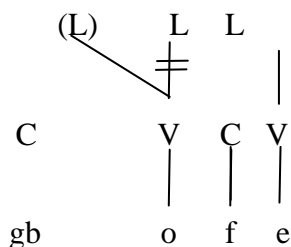
```
        L           L       L                          Underlying representation
        |           |       |
   C    V    +      V   C   V
   |    |           |   |   |
   gb   e           o   f   e


       (L)          L   L                              By vowel elision
                    |       |
   C    ø    +      V   C   V
   |                |   |   |
   gb               o   f   e


       (L)    L   L                                    By (L) vacuous delinking
                =
   C           V   C   V                               Surface representation
               |   |   |
   gb          o   f   e


           L       L                                   [gbòfè] 'kill rat'
           |       |
       C   V   C   V
       |   |   |   |
       gb  o   f   e
```
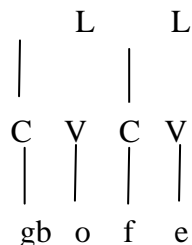
VI. Conclusion

One of the common strategies for eliminating vowel clusters in most African languages is vowel elision. This paper has confirmed vowel elision as a syllable structure process in Ikhin. It was established that the syllable structure of verb and noun in Ikhin language makes it possible for vowel sequence to occur across morpheme boundaries. The study shows how vowel elision works in Ikhin and the problems arising from its analysis. In this paper, factors such as boundary, morpheme structure and vowel quality which actually determine whether or not elision should take place were explained. Vowel elision process and its effects on tone were presented through autosegmental representation confirming tone stability after the deletion of vowel on which it was grounded.

REFERENCES

[1]   Aziza, R. (1997). "Urhobo Tone System". Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ibadan.
[2]   Blench, R. (1989). New Benue – Congo. A Definition and Proposed Internal Classification. *ArbeitsPapiere.* 17: 115 – 147.
[3]   Chomsky, N and Halle, M. (1968). The Sound Pattern of English. New York: Harper & Row
[4]   Egbokhare, F. (1985). "Vowel Elision in Emai' Unpublished M.A Project, University of Ibadan
[5]   Egbokhare, F. (1990). "A Phonology of Emai". Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Ibadan.
[6]   Elugbe, B. (1989). Edoid. In J.T. Bendor-Samuel (ed.). *The Niger-Congo Languages,* 291-304. New York: University Press of America.
[7]   Folarin, Y. (1982). Aspects of the Phonetics and Phonology of Ikhin. An unpublished M.A. Dissertation, University of Ibadan.
[8]   Goldsmith, J. (1976a). "Autosegmental Phonology". Unpublished PhD. Thesis. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
[9]   Goldsmith, J. (1990). Autosegmental and Metrical Phonology. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
[10] http://www.ling.mq.edu.au.

[11] Kenstowicz, M. (1994). Phonology in Generative Grammar. Oxford, UK Blackwell.

[12] Kiparsky, F. (1968). "How abstract is Phonology?" Bloomington. Indiana: Indiana University Linguistics Club.

[13] Leben, W. (1973). The Role of Tone in Segmental Phonology. In L. Hyman (ed.) *Consonant Types and Tones* southern California: Occasional papers in Linguistic No. 1: 117 – 149.

[14] Lewis, A. A. (2013). North Edoid relations and roots. Doctoral dissertation, University of Ibadan.

[15] Njwe, A. (2005). "Tone Analysis of Ngwo in Cameroon". Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Ibadan.

[16] Oladimeji, O. (2010). A Phonology of Ikhin, an Edoid Language in South-South, Nigeria. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Ibadan.

[17] Oladimeji, O. (2013). The Tone System of Ikhin. Open Science Repository Language and Linguistics. www.open-science-repository.com.

[18] Ostendorp, M. (2005). Autosegmental Phonology. An Overview of some of the basic principles of Autosegmental Phonology. http://en.wikipedia org./wiki:21:4:05.

[19] Oyebade, F. (1998). A Course in Phonology. Ijebu-Ode Sebiotimo Publication. Website of the Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University. http://www.ling.mq.edu.au.

[20] Welmers, W. (1973). African Language Structures. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Tajudeen Bolanle Opoola was born in Oyo, Nigeria in 1959. He received his PhD degree in Linguistics from University of Calabar, Nigeria in 2001.

He is currently a Professor in the Department of Linguistics and Languages, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria. His research interests include Applied Linguistics and African languages.

Professor Opoola is a member of Linguistics Association of Nigeria and Patron, Association of Nigerian Authors, Oyo State branch, Nigeria.

Olaide Abduwaheed Oladimeji was born in Ibadan, Nigeria 1969. He received his PhD degree in Linguistics from University of Ibadan in 2010.

He is a Lecturer 1 in the Department of Linguistics and Languages, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria. His research interests include Phonology and Syntax of African languages.

Dr. Oladimeji is member of Linguistics Association of Nigeria.

Current Perspectives on the Influence of Setting and Audience on Language Choices in Multilingual Cameroon

Colvis Niba Ngwa
University of Yaounde I, Cameroon

Abstract—**Cameroon is a dense multilingual setting in which many languages co-exist. Most of these languages are learned and are readily available for use by Cameroonians. This study probed into the complex notion of language use in a bid to ascertain in what ways context and audience influence language choice in a dense multilingual context like Cameroon. The analysis of data obtained from 100 informants in the city of Yaounde revealed that setting and audience significantly influence the language choice of a speaker and that the choice of a language reveals certain aspects of a speaker's character, attitudes and perception of the world around them.**

Index Terms—**language choice, multilingualism, setting, audience, current perspectives**

I. INTRODUCTION

The multilingual nature of Cameroon has often received a lot of attention from scholars, given its rare linguistic composition. Cameroon is a Tower of Babel (Mforteh, 2007) and thus, linguistically, lives up to its name as Africa in miniature (Ngwa, 2021, p. 248). In fact, Todd (1982, p. 7) asserts that "Cameroon is among the most multilingual nations of the world", suggesting that the linguistic situation of Cameroon is immensely dense. The resultant effect of this multilingual situation of Cameroon is that many Cameroonians speak three languages, on average. In fact, sociolinguistic investigations on language choice in Cameroon (Simo Bobda, 2001; Echu, 2003; Ngefac, 2010 and Ngwa, 2021) tend to suggest that Cameroonians are at liberty to code switch from one language to another, depending on the setting and reason for speaking. Thus, linguistic borrowing, interference, code switching, loan translation, and other manifestations of language contact characterise this particularly dense multilingual context (Echu, 2003, p. 1). Literature on language use in Cameroon has noted that the language policy is notoriously poor, at the provisions laid down by the 1996 Constitution (the latest) are the stipulations that 'the Republic of Cameroon shall adopt English and French as the official languages with equal status' and that the state 'shall guarantee the promotion of bilingualism all over the territory and shall work towards the protection and promotion of national languages (Simo Bobda, 2010, p. 676).

However, as a result of the poor language policy evident in the country at the moment, most of the choices of language use are made at the individual level, depending on a number of sociolinguistic variables. This is because the complex multilingual landscape serves Cameroonians with a wide variety of languages which they use, most at times, indiscriminately. Cameroon boasts of a wealth of languages, including more than 250 indigenous languages, two official languages- English and French, Cameroon Pidgin English (also known as Kamtok in the literature) and Camfranglais. The presence of this number of languages brings out the fact that Cameroon is a multilingual context in which many languages, with different statuses and functions, co-exist. Language choice is a very important aspect of language use, especially because it not only shapes listeners' perception of the speaker, but also contributes immensely to communication and self-expression. Thus, many sociolinguistic variables, such as occupation, gender and ethnicity, may have a significant influence on the speakers' choices, but the scope of this paper is limited to setting and audience.

II. THE LINGUISTIC SITUATION OF MULTILINGUAL CAMEROON

Cameroon is a bilingual country, with English and French as its official languages. This suggests that, ideally, every Cameroonian is expected to have a thorough mastery of these two languages in order to be linguistically apt in any area in which they find themselves in the country. However, it is worth pointing out that this is not the case as French wields some considerable power over the English language and this disproportion in the use of the language has often led to some discontentment within the Anglophone community. In fact, as Simo Bobda (2001) puts it, "Anglophones have often complained about accumulated injustice perpetrated against their language, themselves and their culture". No matter the weight that is given to one language at the expense of the other, it is worth noting that both are official languages and Cameroonians are expected to learn and use them. Even though the English language seems to occupy such a marginal position in Cameroon, it is a global language (see, for instance, Graddol, 1997; Crystal, 2003 and Bolton, 2015) and recent studies (Anchimbe, 2007 and Ngefac, 2010) have underscored the fact that most Francophones

now attend English-medium schools so as to benefit from the advantages English offers, as a global language. Added to this, it is an official language in Cameroon. English is thus a language which Cameroonians are expected to learn and use, not only because they will use it in Cameroon on a day-to-day basis, but also because it is the language of globalisation. Hence, English and French are the two languages mentioned in the country's constitution and which have made Cameroon acquire its bilingual status. Although the two languages are supposed to the equal in status, at least, as stated in the constitution, the glaring dominance of French over English today cannot be overemphasized, as French dominates in administration, in the military and in other official domains. Needless to point out that this exaggerated domination of French in a country that is supposedly bilingual has often received a lot of disgruntlement from the Anglophone community.

One major language to reckon with in multilingual Cameroon is Pidgin English, also known as Kamtok. The language has an incredible communicative potential, given that it has served communicative needs of Cameroonians for more than five hundred years (Kouega, 2003) and, today, it remains one of the most widely spoken languages in the country (Ngefac, 2010). Lexically, Cameroon Pidgin English draws its features from the colonial languages spoken in Cameroon and the indigenous languages, and many other foreign languages, given that the existence of the language dates as far back as the pre-colonial era. Thus, it has adapted itself significantly to the ecological and sociocultural and pragmatic realities of Cameroon. Functionally, it is a dominant language of wider communication in the English-speaking part of the country. However, it is worth pointing out that it is also used in the West and Littoral Regions, especially in Douala, Nkongsamba, Bafang, Bafoussam and Dschang (Atechi, 2006). Although the language has such a wide range of use, it is still stigmatised against in official and educational circles, as it is often seen as a deterrent to the acquisition of the English language. In fact, Alobwede (1998) insinuates that pidgin is being banned. Pidgin is thus one of the languages which are widely spoken in Cameroon.

Worthy of mention here is the fact that on the heels of CPE comes Camfranglais, a language which has been developed as a result of the contact between local languages, Pidgin English and the two official languages- English and French. According to Biloa (2004), it is a hybrid slang spoken by hawkers, blue-collar workers, unemployed Cameroonians, pupils and students. Lexically, it is constituted of words from the local Cameroonian languages, Cameroon Pidgin English, French and English. For more information on Camfranglais, see Zé Amvela (1982); Chia (1990); Echu (2001) and Kouega (2003). Although Cameroon Pidgin English is still to be generally accepted within official milieus, it has started receiving scholarly attention and it is likely to attract more scholarly attention in the near future, given its creative potential.

With regard to indigenous languages, it has been widely documented that, among the four language families in Africa, three of them are found in Cameroon. They include the Afro-Asiatic language family, the Nilo-Saharan language family and the Niger Kordofanian language family. The Niger-Kordofanian family is the most highly represented in Cameroon, while the Khoisan family is not represented at all (see Chia, 1983; Breton and Fohtung, 1991; Wolf, 2001 and Echu, 2004). They are the most used medium of oral communication. Used in homes, village meetings and traditional councils, these indigenous languages are as many and varied as the number of ethnic groups that make up Cameroon. Linguists are still to agree on the exact number of indigenous languages found in Cameroon for a number of reasons. However, in the literature the number has been placed between 250 and 300 languages (see Rosendal, 2008, p. 16). The communicative potential of these indigenous languages is pointed out in Rosendal's (2008, p. 13) assertion that "German and American missionaries preferred Cameroonian languages as Basaa, Bulu, Duala, Ewondo and Mungaka for evangelism and teaching. Bamum and Fulfulde were used for propagating Muslim faith." Following this line of thought, Mforteh (2007, p. 94), quoting SIL's (2004) report, reveals that 166 of these languages have already been standardised; 36 are being taught in some primary schools; 18 of them now have the translated version of the Holy Bible; 30 of them have the translated version of the New Testament and 30 have translated portions of the Scriptures. The knowledge of the dominant role of indigenous languages in daily communication is relevant to this study in that the indigenous language is one of the languages found in the linguistic repertoire of most, if not, all Cameroonians. In this light, they can freely combine it with other languages in the course of speaking.

III. Language Choice in Multilingual Cameroon

Cameroon has often been referred to in the literature as having a complex sociolinguistic situation, where English co-exists with French, Pidgin English, the indigenous languages and some emerging hybrid idioms such as Camfranglais and Mbokotok (Simo Bobda, 2001 and Ngefac, 2010). According to Simo Bobda (2001, p. 653), the country offers a particularly fertile ground for the study of patterns of language use and language choices, and the linguistic, social and educational problems that they generate. The choice of language, to begin with, can be made at the level of the state, individual, parental and other levels, and divergences and conflicts may occur between levels (Simo Bobda, 2001, p. 658). In this light, it is worth noting that, at the state level, it is known that Cameroon is a bilingual country with English as French as its official languages. In fact, in spite of the numerous languages, these are the two languages enshrined in the country's constitution. The state is thus responsible for the promotion of these languages (see Section 1(3)). Correspondingly, an individual may choose to learn or use a particular language based on the numerous advantages, mostly economic, which come with the learning of a language. In terms of language choice at the level of the individual, the motivation to learn a language is usually very high and is likely that, given that an average Cameroonian speaks at

least three languages, the choice of a particular language would depend on the context of use and the motive for speaking. It is worth pointing out that parents equally have an invaluable role to play in the linguistic choice of their children. This mostly occurs when parents from one linguistic background send their children to study in the other subsystem of education, for instance, francophone parents sending their children to study in the Anglophone subsystem of education. Within the Cameroonian setting, such a choice made by parents for their children is usually as a result of the advantages that come with speaking English in our globalised world today (see Kouega, 1999; Anchimbe, 2007; Mforteh, 2007).

Ngefac's (2010) investigation accurately explores the linguistic choices which are made in Cameroon and explains the factors which favour or hamper the choice of use of a particular language in Cameroon, pointing out that the choice of a language has significant sociolinguistic implications (p. 160ff). With the use of Camfranglais, it was discovered that the language was mostly used among youths and the older generation had no interest in the language. This implies that the older generation may not only be conservative, as they are not open to changes or innovations, but may also consider the language childish and the language of irresponsible children. Thus, age plays a significant role in the choice of the use of Camfranglais in the Cameroon setting, as it is mostly fashionable among youths. The youths use this as an in-group language to assert their identity.

With regard to Cameroon Pidgin English, the findings reveal that, most of the informants would choose this language in order to express themselves in different areas and with close allies. As for those who were against, they noted that they do not speak Cameroon Pidgin English because it can contaminate their English. It was also revealed that Pidgin English is spoken by people across the different official language backgrounds and across other social boundaries. This implies that the language can seriously unite Cameroonians. This is because as "high as 80% of French-speaking informants and 100% of English-speaking informants above the age of 40 indicated that they use this language as a medium of communication" (Ngefac, 2010, p. 162). In this light, it can be noted that the choice of pidgin as a medium of communication among Cameroonians is widespread. As concerns the indigenous languages, Ngefac (ibid) reports that only 73% of the informants speak their indigenous language. It is worth pointing out that the choice of the indigenous languages is usually associated with ethnic groups. However, Simo Bobda (2001, p. 654) points out that a series of factors such as demographic weight, political dominance and prestige may also influence the choice of a particular mother tongue.

English and French, the two official languages, are often associated with the two and eight regions respectively where Anglophones and Francophones live. With regard to language choice, those who live in English-speaking regions would speak English, while those who live in French-speaking regions would speak French. This is because the two languages are equal in status, at least, as stated in the constitution. From the plethora of languages, language choice and use in Cameroon is often replete with phenomena such as code-switching, code mixing and interference. Language choice thus gives a researcher the opportunity to see how and in what circumstances people use a particular language. Studies such as Ngefac (2010) and Simo Bobda (2001) have greatly pointed out the circumstances which prompt languages users in Cameroon to choose or acquire a given language. These investigations into the complex phenomenon of language within the Cameroonian context have equally explained the reasons behind the choice of a particular language by users.

Sociolinguistic investigations on language choice in Cameroon (Simo Bobda, 2001; Echu, 2003 and Ngefac, 2010) tend to suggest that Cameroonians are very close to their languages and, consequently, readily use them when the need arises. These studies abound and, fortunately, are quite complementary. For instance, Ngefac (2010) focuses on two sociolinguistic variables which inform language choice- age and linguistic background- with very interesting findings, especially that most of the different, irrespective of age and linguistic background, had different motives for choosing languages. This current research endeavour builds on this to investigate the extent to which audience and setting influence the language choice of some Cameroonians. The specific focus is thus on the various choices informants make when they find themselves with specific listeners and in specific settings such as when they are at work/class with their colleagues/classmates during working hours, when they are with their colleagues/classmates out of work place or school, when they are with strangers, when they are at home and when they are at socio-cultural events.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out in the city of Yaounde. This area was purposively chosen given that Yaounde is a metropolitan city which, even though found in the French-speaking part of the country, attracts a lot of people who come there for business or administrative purposes. Equally, with the persistence of the crisis in the English-speaking part of the country, most Anglophones seek refuge in Yaounde. After a series of methodological considerations, a total of 100 informants from different walks of life, official language background and age groups served as informants for the study. The choice of the informants was motivated by considerations linked to profession, linguistic background, profession and age, especially because these sociolinguistic variables often have a significant influence on a speaker's linguistic output.

A questionnaire was carefully designed to find out the different languages used by the informants in the various instances listed above. The questionnaire was administered to 130 informants to enter the required information. Out of the total number of questionnaires administered, 115 of them were returned by the informants. It should be noted that

some were not completely filled in. Thus, 100 informants were considered for the investigation because of the need to have a uniform number for easy analysis. The informants considered were thus representative of the different age groups, ranging from 15 to 45 years and above; different walks for life, drawn from both the formal and informal sectors and different levels of education. Upon return of the answered questionnaires, we quantified the informants' responses and expressed them as percentages for eventual analysis under the different subheadings. Through this method, it was possible to have ample data which enabled us ascertain the influence of setting and audience on language choice.

V. SETTING, AUDIENCE AND LANGUAGE CHOICE

A. Language Choice and Setting

In this study, we sought to find out the informants' choice of language with regard to the different locations in which they are likely to find themselves. Some of these locations include: language choice at work or school, at home and at sociocultural events. The results got from the informants are presented subsequently.

1. Choice of language at work/school

We sought to find out the choice of language(s) of the informants when they are at work or school, depending on the location in which they find themselves. Work and school were selected because they are settings which are most likely to impact language choice and covered two broad domains of the informants' daily activities; this is to say that they were either students or workers. The results got are presented on the following table.

TABLE ONE
CHOICE OF LANGUAGE USED AT WORK/SCHOOL

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
English	35	35
English and French	21	21
French	15	15
English and Pidgin	15	15
Pidgin	07	07
French, English and Pidgin	05	05
Null	02	02
Total	100	100

From the table above, we have a clue as to the various choices of language use by the informants when they are at work or in school. In fact, as seen on the table, the most dominant language the informants choose with regard to school or work is the English language. This view is revealed in the fact that 35% of the informants attest to this. This is quite evident because English is one of the official languages and most of the informants are likely to aspire to it. Furthermore, it was noticed that 21% of the informants use both English and French. This applies to bilingual informants who use language in such settings and their choice of the language depends largely on their audience or listener(s). Equally, it was discovered that 15% of the informants speak only French, while at work or in school. 15% of the informants also pointed out that they use English and Pidgin and 7% agreed to using only pidgin while at work or in school. Surprisingly, a percentage of the informants, that is 5%, pointed out that they use three different languages, French, English and Pidgin, while at school or at work. In this light, it is worth noting that, while some professions would require workers to use even pidgin to get to a wider majority of their clients or service users, pidgin is strictly forbidden as a language to use in schools, especially in a classroom setting. On a whole, the findings in this section have revealed that the informants considered in this study often choose mostly the official languages, especially the English language, while in school or at work.

2. Informants' language choice(s) at home

The home is also one of the contexts in which language is used. However, it is free from some of the constraints of language choice imposed by school or work. Thus, speakers are likely to choose language more freely, compared to when they are in a formal context. It is in this light that we aimed at eliciting the language the informants use at home. Consequently, they were expected to say whether they use their indigenous language, French, English or Pidgin exclusively, or they combine it with another language or other languages. The language choice(s) of the informants is presented on the table that follows.

TABLE TWO
CHOICE(S) OF LANGUAGE USED AT HOME BY INFORMANTS

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Indigenous language	25	25
Pidgin	17	17
English and indigenous language	12	12
English and Pidgin	12	12
English	10	10
French	10	10
English and French	07	07
French, English and indigenous language	04	04
French and indigenous language	03	03
Total	100	100

The table above reveals that the most preferred language at home is the mother tongue. This is evident in the fact that 25% of the informants acknowledged using the mother tongue at home. This is followed by Pidgin with 17%. The first two languages that the informants acknowledged using at home, unfortunately, are not official languages. This suggests that speakers are more likely to choose these languages in more relaxed informal settings. That notwithstanding, we note that some of the informants in question have also use official languages at home, as revealed by 10% for English and 10% for French. Equally, we noted that some of the informants tended to combine more than one language as home. In this light we note the combination of English and indigenous language by 12% of the informants, English and pidgin by 12% of them, English and French by 7% of the informants and 3% of them accepted using both French and their mother tongue at home. Interestingly, 4% of the informants pointed out that they use English, French and the mother tongue at home. Broadly speaking, with regard to language choice at home, we note that some informants acknowledged that they may use even up to three languages at home. However, the most used language at home remains the mother tongue.

3. Informants' language choice at socio-cultural events

In our attempt to find out how informants use language in different settings, we also elicited the language choice(s) they are likely to make in social and cultural events. This is because, unlike school, for example, which may require strictly formal language and the home which is an informal setting in which an unofficial language may be used as seen in above, socio-cultural events, on the other hand, may require both formal and informal language. It is against this backdrop that we sought out to know the language(s) which informants use in socio-cultural events. The table below presents the results of the various language choices informants make during socio-cultural events.

TABLE THREE
LANGUAGE USED BY INFORMANTS AT SOCIO-CULTURAL EVENTS

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
English and indigenous language	40	40
English	17	17
Indigenous language	13	13
Pidgin	11	11
English and French	10	10
French	09	09
Total	100	100

True to the postulation above, most socio-cultural events as revealed in the table above are both formal and informal, we go by the view that official languages are chosen for formal settings and the indigenous language for informal settings. This is supported by the fact that 40% of the informants were of the opinion that they use both the indigenous language and the English language in socio-cultural events. This is closely followed by 17% of the informants who pointed out that they use on the English language during socio-cultural events. Correspondingly, 13% of the informants acknowledged using their indigenous language during socio-cultural events, suggesting that this group of informants usually make such choices during village meetings or in other events involving members of the same tribe. From these statistics, it can be inferred that about 70% of language choices in socio-cultural events revolve around the English language and the indigenous language. Furthermore, pidgin was chosen by 13% of the informants, while English and French was chosen by 10% of the informants. Finally, 9% of the informants intimated that they use French in socio-cultural events.

B. Language Choice and Audience

In terms of language choice and the audience, we sought to find out the various languages the informants use when they are with their colleagues out of working hours, may be relaxing somewhere, and with strangers. Each of this will be taken up in turns below, with the results presented on a table, followed by a brief analysis.

1. Informants' choice of language with colleagues out of working hours

In conformity with the preoccupations of the current investigation, we also sought to elicit the language choice of the informants with their colleagues or classmates out of working hours. In other words, we sought to find out informants' language choices in informal situations. They were thus expected to say whether their preferred language in such a

situation was Pidgin, English, French or a combination of two or more languages like English and French, English and Pidgin or English, French and Pidgin. The data got for this aspect of the questionnaire are presented on the table below.

TABLE FOUR
LANGUAGE USE WITH COLLEAGUES OUT OF WORKING HOURS

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Pidgin	35	35
English and Pidgin	30	30
English	15	15
French	12	12
English and French	05	05
French, English and Pidgin	03	03
Total	100	100

From the table above, we note that the informants make a series of language choices when they are out of a highly formal context such as the workplace or school. In this light, we note especially the dominance of Pidgin as 35% of the informants acknowledge using it when they are not at their jobsites or in class. This is followed by the group of informants, who, depending on the classmate or colleague they are discussing with, would choose to use either English or Pidgin, as illustrated by 30% of the informants. This points to the dominance of Pidgin in informal settings. Furthermore, while 15% of the informants acknowledge using only English, 12% of them say they use only French. To this group of informants thus, formality or informality does not really impact on their language choice, as they use the official languages with their colleagues or classmates even out of their jobsites or school. Finally, 5% of the informants point out that they use English and French and 3% of them note that they use English, French and pidgin with colleagues or classmates out of working hours or class respectively. Thus, language choice with colleagues or classmates out of the classroom or workplace is often characterised, perhaps depending on the interlocutor, by one, two or even three languages.

2. Language choice of informants when they meet with strangers

The last aspect of language choice we elicited from the informants was the language choice with strangers. In everyday language use, we do not predetermine the people we use language with. This is because we meet new people every day and when this happens, we use language to communicate with them. It is for this reason that we sought to elicit from the informants the language they use when communicating with strangers. The results got are presented on the following table.

TABLE FIVE
LANGUAGE CHOICE OF INFORMANTS WHEN THEY MEET WITH STRANGERS

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
English	33	33
English and French	25	25
French	13	13
English and Pidgin	12	12
Pidgin	11	11
French, English and Pidgin	03	03
Null	03	03
Total	100	100

The table above shows that the informants mostly use official languages when they meet with strangers. This is evident the fact that 33% of them acknowledged using only English when they meet strangers, 25% of them use English and French and 13% of the informants under study use French only. This suggests that the informants tend to meet new people in formal settings or where some degree of formality is required. Furthermore, while 12% of the informants acknowledged using both English and Pidgin when they discuss with strangers, 11% of them acknowledged using only pidgin when they discuss with strangers. Finally, 3% of the informants use French, pidgin and English when they communicate with strangers. It is worth noting that this group of informants are multilingual and can therefore choose any language, depending on that which they interlocutor is comfortable with. It was also noted that 3% of the informants did not fill in this aspect of the questionnaire.

On a whole, with regard to language choice in a multilingual setting like Cameroon, the language the informants use depends largely on the context of language use, that is the setting and the audience. As concerns the setting, we surveyed the language choices of informants at work or school, at home and at socio-cultural events.

VI. IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The above analysis gives a clue as to the various choices of language use by the informants when they find themselves within specific locations or are in front of a particular group of interlocutors. In this light, as seen in the analysis, the most dominant language the informants choose with regard to school or work is the English language. This view is supported by 35% of the informants who attest to this. Broadly speaking, with regard to language choice at home, we note that some informants acknowledged that they may use even up to three languages at home. However, the

most used language at home remains the mother tongue. Most socio-cultural events, as revealed in the analysis, are both formal and informal. Consequently, official languages are chosen for formal settings and the indigenous language for informal ones. This is supported by the fact that 40% of the informants were of the opinion that they use both the indigenous language and the English language in socio-cultural events. From these statistics, it can be inferred that about 70% of language choices in socio-cultural events revolve around the English language and the indigenous languages. The informants make a series of language choices when they are out of a highly formal context such as the workplace or school. In this light, we note, especially, the dominance of Pidgin as 35% of the informants acknowledge using it when they are not at their jobsites or in class. Thus, language choices of the informants with their colleagues or classmates out of the classroom or workplace are often characterised, perhaps depending on the interlocutor, by one, two or even three languages. The informants mostly use official languages when they meet with strangers. This is evident the fact that 33% of them acknowledged using only English when they meet strangers, 25% of them use English and French and 13% of the informants under study use French only.

In the light of the above, speaker's location plays a major role in determining their language choices. This is especially because the setting can either be formal or informal. It is commonplace knowledge that formal settings would require a speaker to adopt not only the official language, but also the formal forms of that language, given that language choice is often governed by rules related to appropriateness in speech and style. The use of formal language in formal settings also has some metalinguistic implications, especially the fact that it commands respect from the listener(s). On the other hand, informal settings would also entail that a speaker use a language of phatic communion or more casual forms of a language in order to appeal to the listeners' sense of togetherness or hospitality. Whatever the case may be, every setting demands the choice of a particular language in order for the speaker to be 'linguistically appropriate' in that setting.

Equally, another factor which is most likely to determine language choice in multilingual Cameroon is the audience or interlocutor(s). This is more so because, as revealed by the analysis, people would use familiar or an unofficial language more with friends than with strangers. In this light, it is thus worth pointing out that a particular speaker may tend to choose different languages or groups of languages, depending on the person to whom the message is destined. Such alternation in language choice is mostly because, first, the goal of every speaker is to be understood; thus, they use any code through which the communicative function of language can be fulfilled. Second, speakers also need to appeal to the listener(s) sense of togetherness. That is, they need to show that they are one with their listeners. In this light, language choice becomes very important.

From the findings of the study, one can observe that, in a multilingual setting like Cameroon, language choices transcend linguistic considerations such as speaking and listening or mere communication. They reveal aspects of a speaker's character, their perception of the interlocutor and the attitude they want their interlocutors to develop towards them. Given such importance accorded to language choice by language users, the choice a language by a user within a given setting or with a particular interlocutor is often guided by a series of considerations. This explains why, within a given setting, most language users tend to make different choices.

REFERENCES

[1] Alobwede d'Epie, C. (1998). "Banning Pidgin English in Cameroon?" *English Today* 14(1): 54–60.
[2] Anchimbe, E. (2007). "Linguabridity: Redefining linguistic identities among children in urban areas." In: Anchimbe, A.E. (ed.), *Linguistic Identity in Postcolonial Multilingual Spaces,* pp. 66–86.
[3] Atechi, S. N. (2006). The Intelligibility of Native and Non-Native English Speech. Gottingen:Cuvillier Verlag.
[4] Biloa, E. (2004). "Loans from European Languages in African Languages: Intercultural Relationship and Necessity". http://www.inst.at/trans/15Nr/07-2/echu 15.htm. retrieved on August 15, 2015.
[5] Bolton, K. (2006). "World Englishes Today." In Kachru, B. et al. (eds.) *The Handbook of World Englishes.* Oxford: Blackwell, 240-270.
[6] Breton, R. and B. Fohtung. (1991). Atlas Administratif des Langues Nationales du *Cameroun*. Yaoundé, Paris: CERDOTOLA, CREA - ACCT..
[7] Chia, E. (1990). "The New Speech Forms of a Rapidly Growing City: Pidgin French and Camfranglais in Yaounde" in *Annales de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Université de Yaoundé*, vol. VI, nos. 1 et 2, pp. 102-127.
[8] Chia, E. (1983). "Cameroon Home Languages," In Kofele-Kale, Ndiva (ed.). *An African Experience in Nation building: The Bilingual Cameroon Republic Since Reunification,* 281-311.Boulder, Co: Westview.
[9] Crystal, D. (2003). English as a Global Language. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[10] Echu, G. (2003). "Multilingualism as a resource: The lexical Appropriation of Cameroon Indigenous Languages by English and French." TRA0S. Internet-Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften. No. 13/2003. www.inst.at/trans/13Nr/echu13.htm. Consulted on November 2, 2019.
[11] Echu, G. (2004). The language question in Cameroon. *Linguistik Online*, *18* (1).http://www.linguistik-online.de/18_04/echu.html. Consulted on November 2, 2019.
[12] Graddol, D. (1997). The Future of English. London: British Council.
[13] Kouega, J. P. (1999) Forty years of official bilingualism in Cameroon: An appraisal. *English Today* 15(4): 38–43.
[14] Kouega, J. P. (2003). "Word Formative Processes in Camfranglais." *World Englishes*, 22(4): 511–538.
[15] Mforteh, S. (2007). "In search of new identities in multilingual Cameroon." In: Anchimbe, A.E. (ed.), *Linguistic Identity in Postcolonial Multilingual Spaces*, pp. 87–101.

[16] Ngefac, A. (2010). *"Linguistic Choices in Postcolonial Multilingual Cameroon." Nordic Journal of African Studies, 19(3): 149–164.*

[17] Ngwa, C. N. (2021). "An Investigation into Patterns of Linguistic Combinations in Multilingual Cameroon." *Revue Della/Afrique*, 3(7): 248-265.

[18] Rosendal, T. (2008). Multilingual Cameroon: Policy, Practice, Problems and Solutions. Gothenburg: Africana Informal Series.

[19] SIL (2004). http://www.silcam.org/folder030401/page.php. Consulted on September 2, 2015.

[20] Simo Bobda, A. (2001). Varying Statuses and Perceptions of English in Cameroon: A diachronic and synchronic analysis. TRANS11. (http://www.inst.at/trans/11Nr/bobda11.htm). Retrieved on February 15, 2014.

[21] Simo Bobda, A. (2010). "Cameroon: Which Language, when and why?" In Kirkpatrick, A. (ed). *The Routledge Handbook of World Englishes*. London: Routledge.

[22] Todd, L. (1982). "Language Options for Education in a Multilingual Society: Cameroon". In: Kennedy, Chris (ed): *Language Planning and Language Education*. London: 160-171.

[23] Wolf, H.-G. (2001). "English in Cameroon". Contributions to the Sociology of Language 85. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

[24] Ze Amvela, E. (1983). "The Franglais Phenomenon: Lexical Interference and Language Mixing in the United Cameroon" in *Bulletin de l'A.E.L.I.A,* No 6, pp. 419-429.

Ngwa Colvis Niba holds a Master's Degree in English Language and a professional certificate in ELT from the University of Yaounde 1, Cameroon, where he is currently completing a thesis on the mutual intelligibility of non-native Englishes, with focus on Cameroon English and Tanzanian English. He is a graduate assistant in English at the Higher Teacher Training College, Bertoua under the University of Ngaoundere where he has been teaching many language and research-related courses for the past four years. He has presented papers at different conferences organised by the Universities of Yaounde and Bamenda. He is author of many scholarly articles, some of which have appeared in the *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* and *Revue Della/Afrique.*

Exploring the Necessity for Students to Exercise Digital Minimalism While Studying Online: Case of 35 Master Students at the Department of English of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Algeria

Dallel Sarnou
The Department of English, Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Algeria

Abstract—This study aimed at exploring the philosophy of digital minimalism, and put forward its importance for an effective online learning in higher education during the lockdown. The long quarantine that the COVID 19 pandemic imposed on most countries of the world has brought radical changes in the way schools, colleges and universities operate. In Algerian higher education, creating online platforms for students was the only solution to move on. However, ignoring that most Algerian students often go online for self-entertainment may lead to a failure or an incomplete success of online teaching during this critical period. To investigate this issue, a questionnaire with only open-ended questions was designed and distributed to 35 students of Language and Communication master, at the English department of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University. The 35 participants were the researcher's students in the classes of e-learning. Results showed that most participants were distracted by social media notifications. Also, it turned out that the 35 students had no idea of what digital minimalism or digital maximalism is. As a matter of fact, it is suggested that before launching online lectures and webinars for our students, it is of paramount importance to guide them during their online existence and to show them how to be digital minimalists.

Index Terms—digital minimalism, digital maximalism, higher education, Algeria, social media

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID 19 pandemic has changed the lives of millions of people around the world in an unprecedented way. The extended period of quarantine and lockdown has caused radical alterations in the lifestyle of human beings. Staying at home for long days, isolated from the outer world, has made people think of the online world as an alternative space where they could stay connected with their friends, relatives and life on the outside. As universities, schools and many workplaces closed, teachers, students and workers were asked to carry on teaching, learning and working from their houses through various online platforms. This sudden shift into the virtual space for hours to realize new purposes that were not meant to be linked with the world of internet has brought on new phenomena in various life arenas, including more importantly digital maximalism and internet addiction. The first one refers to the philosophy of accumulating as many advantages as possible from digital technology while the second one might often be the ultimate consequence of digital maximalism if dependence on new technologies and internet is exaggerated.

In less technologically developed countries, this transition has not been easy for people. For instance, in Algeria, Baccalaureate pupils of 2019-2020 class had to watch YouTube videos where teachers, selected by the ministry of education, gave lessons on the parts of the program that remained after schools were closed. As they were not used to this method of teaching, most pupils around the national territory did not follow these lessons on TV or on YouTube, and if they did, they often were distracted by entertainment videos, Facebook notifications or Instagram new posts. Also, most of them preferred to attend private courses.

At the level of higher education, all universities of Algeria had to create online platforms, which were MOODLES, so as teachers upload the remaining lectures of the second semester. However, for Algerian university students, downloading lectures in PDF format was/is as similar as searching the lectures on GOOGLE or on other research engines. Moreover, most Algerian students are more familiar with social media platforms than with educational platforms. The major purpose of most Algerian students' existence online is for self-entertaining. Facebook Instagram, Youtube and TIKTOK, on top of social media networking sites, represent the main virtual spaces where Algerian young people dwell whenever they go online.

In fact, since a decade or so social media has become an integral part of young people's everyday life, and Algerian youths are no exceptions. In the words of J.B. Doshi, social media is remarkably pervasive and most would argue ubiquitous among college students (Doshi, 2011). Nonetheless, the popularity of social media among young people, and

college or university students must be questioned and deconstructed by educators and teachers. Because young people are often glued to their mobile phones and constantly online for self-entertainment purpose, this frequently causes distraction whenever they want to use internet and their electronic devices for academic reasons. In this regard, and as a university lecturer of blended learning at the English department of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University (Algeria), the researcher noticed that teaching our students different units through the university's MOODLE only by uploading our lectures in PDF or PPT formats has not been successful. The complaints of many students about the inutility of the university's MOODLE have triggered one's curiosity to question the viability and effectiveness of online learning during the long quarantine of COVID 19 and how social media platforms have taken over other useful and unentertaining virtual spaces, more particularly educational websites. Furthermore, as a teacher of blended learning and online teaching who spends most of her time online, the researcher started learning about and practicing digital minimalism to reduce the negative effects of being online for long hours. As a matter of fact, one has conceived it as imperative to introduce this notion to the students so as to help them overcome being distracted when they have an online class, and to raise their awareness regarding the risks to becoming internet addicts if they are extremely internet and social media dependent.

A. The Statement of the Problem

The COVID 19 pandemic has imposed new conditions on teachers and their students in Algerian higher education. Creating online platforms for both teachers and students was the only solution to carry on the academic year. However, no consideration was given to the maturity and readiness of our students to learn online. Knowing that most of our students are to a great extent internet-addicts, i.e. they spend long hours surfing the internet without getting bored, must set alarm bells ringing regarding their attentiveness while studying online. Moreover, phenomena like internet distraction and internet addiction must be thought of while proceeding with online teaching/learning during the pandemic.

B. Research Questions

The following questions were formulated to investigate the issue tackled in this article:
1- Are our students well-focused during an online lesson?
2- Would social media platforms represent a distraction for students whenever they go online to attend an online class?
3- Must our students be introduced to digital minimalism before attending online courses?

C. Hypotheses

The present paper probes into the importance of practicing digital minimalism for students while learning online. To answer the aforementioned questions, the researcher theorizes that our students are often not well-focused while attending an online lesson because of the distraction that social media notifications cause. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to introduce the notion of digital minimalism and guide them toward a minimalist effective online existence.

D. The Significance of the Research

This study aims at employing a newly explored philosophy, which is 'digital minimalism', and puts forward its importance during a total reliance on online learning in higher education while on a quarantine. Moreover, a major concern in this article is to orientate our students toward a wise, straightforward and austere use of online platforms.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital minimalism as a countercurrent in a technology-dependent world

The word "minimalism" has gained exceptional attention in the past decade. At the origin of this attention lies the growing capitalist world where the idea of 'more luxuries' has become importunate and persistent. Similarly, the increasing dependence on internet and new technologies has become overwhelming mainly in technology-driven societies of the most developed countries. This has caused a rise of voices calling for reducing this dependence on new technologies in the way we live on a daily basis. Calvin Newport is one among these voices. For Newport, his feelings about minimalism started to form in a 2016 blog post where he expressed his concern on his relationship with technology. The young computer science professor at George Town University believes that the recent unprecedented developments of the Internet Era, including the over-dependence on social media and communication tools, have become risky. However, Newport asserts that finding a balance in using new technologies could be the only way for people to stay safe. In his opinion, digital minimalism, as a philosophy, can be one solution to reduce the negative effects of extensive use of new technologies. In fact, minimalists often believe in the desire not just for *less stuff*, but also for more control and intention in how we spend our time and energy: *"Minimalists tend to spend much less money and own many fewer things than their peers. They also tend to be much more intentional and often quite radical in shaping their lives around things that matter to them."* This intention is completely missed in our use of technology. In his 2019 bestselling book, *Digital Minimalism Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World*, Newport argues that our culture's relationship with these tools is

complicated by the fact that they mix harm with benefits. Smartphones, ubiquitous wireless internet, digital platforms that connect billions of people—these are triumphant innovations. (p10)

Newport adds in the next page: "*there are the Neo-Luddites, who advocate the abandonment of most new technologies. On another extreme, you have the Quantified Self enthusiasts, who carefully integrate digital devices into all aspects of their life with the goal of optimizing their existence. Of the different philosophies I studied, however, there was one in particular that stood out as a superior answer for those looking to thrive in our current moment of technological overload. I call it digital minimalism, and it applies the belief that less can be more to our relationship with digital tools.*" (p11) Therefore, for Newport, neither technophobia nor technophilia would make new technologies more useful and people's life more comfortable. Moderation in using internet and modern technologies is, in Newport's opinion, the best way of existing in an extremely technology-driven world.

Taking for granted that new technologies such as social media (SM) and smartphones have massively changed how we live in the twenty-first century, we should, instead of thinking about the unease with new technologies and about if they are useful or not, reconsider our autonomy from total dependence on new technologies and internet. Newport interestingly notices that we signed up for social media services (like Facebook and Instagram) and bought electronic devices (like Androids and IPhones) for minor reasons—to look up friends' relationship statuses or eliminate the need to carry a separate iPod and phone—and then found ourselves, years later, increasingly dominated by their influence, allowing them to control more and more of how we spend our time, how we feel, and how we behave. (p 30) In the second chapter of his book, Newport puts forward that digital minimalism, as a philosophy, is the best way to defeat internet addiction and technology-dependence. He argues that digital minimalism is a philosophy of technology use in which netizens focus their online time on a small number of carefully selected and optimized activities that strongly support things they value, and then happily miss out on everything else. (p 31) In other words, the idea behind digital minimalism is to help create a strategy for sustainable technology use, starting with a rapid digital discard process, where all optional technologies are avoided for 30 days. Afterwards, each technology is evaluated for the value it serves before introducing it back into one's life, if at all.

The major dilemma caused by the use of new technologies and being a digital maximalist is related to studies and students. In fact, a myriad of recent researches argue that the extensive use and the strong attachment to new technologies and internet definitely cause distraction, losing focus and less concentration mainly for young people. For instance, in a research conducted by Affleck (2007) as cited by Sigman (2007, 176), the researcher contends that today's youth have become fragmented in the sense that their attention is drawn by myriad demands on their sensory systems. It is the excessive access to technology and the amount of time which today's learners spend on their electronic devices and in online platforms and to which they have become accustomed, that contribute to these learners not being able to pay attention in the classrooms. (Lindsay Mary Brand, 2010)

In one of the most important books tackling the effect of internet and new technologies on people's thinking and focusing, Nicholas Carr's 2010 book entitled *The Shallows – What the Internet is Doing to our Brain*, Carr demonstrates that our brains change with every new technology, and he argues that this is not a positive change. He backs up his viewpoint by referring to "dozens of studies by psychologists, neurobiologists, educators, and Web designers [which] point to the same conclusion: when we go online, we enter an environment that promotes cursory reading, hurried and distracted thinking, and superficial learning".(Carr, 2010). Carr, therefore, argues that this conclusion is threatening our ability to engage in "meditative thinking".

In a similar vein, other researchers, like Alison Purvis and Helen Rodger, consider social media as a distraction, a platform which has so much content linked to so many different connections that it quickly distracts users away from their original purpose of visiting or taking the user into a number of unfruitful channels. (Andersson et al., 2013). Purvis, Rodger and Beckingham (2016), in another research, argue that social media often absorbs valuable time (p 02). Therefore, one can contend that different social media platforms rather distract their users even if the latter visit a given social networking sites for studying or looking for information. In this regard,

On another hand, a learner's capacity for attention leading to their ability to concentrate depends on factors which include commitment and enthusiasm for the task, skills at doing the task, emotional and physical state, psychological state, and the learner's educational and home environments. Taking these factors into account during lessons, the teacher needs to ensure that the learner is motivated to attend to the lessons. Learners of today spend many hours making use of technology. This needs to be kept in mind while preparing lessons in order to ensure that the learner's attention is captured and maintained in order for sufficient learning to take place. (Brester and Brand, 2013)

In fact, Algerian students are no exception. With more accessibility to internet 24/7 with the 3G and 4G and with more advanced mobile phones and other electronic devices, most of them are glued to their mobile phones. This fact has provoked the researcher's consideration of questioning the extent to which our students would stay focused in our online classes. Therefore, in the paragraphs that follow, a detailed description of the research methodology of this investigation will be presented.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. The Design of the Study

This research work is exploratory since it investigates the cruciality of introducing the notion of digital minimalism to university students to prepare them to spending long hours of online learning during the Covid19 pandemic without being distracted or at least while being focused for longer time. After a two-months experience of teaching via EDMODO –which is a full-featured social learning platform designed to connect and collaborate within the educational environment –35 first year master students of language and communication at the English department of Andelhamid Ibn Badis, the researcher detected that most students were distracted by FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM notifications and by other alluring applications they have on their electronic devices, most of which are mobile phones. To authenticate what one has noticed, a questionnaire was designed and distributed to the 35 selected students to get their viewpoints. In the next section, more details about the participants and the research tools will be given.

B. Participants and Research Context

35 first year students of master degree, language and communication specialty were the participants in this investigation. There were 32 female students and only 3 male students. The average age of these students is 21. The researcher chose this group of students because they are her students and because she teaches them blended learning, a course that required online lectures via a virtual classroom through EDMODO. Moreover, the researcher knows that her students have different social media accounts: INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK, VIBER, WHATSAPP, SNAPCHAT and other SM platforms. In this sense, these students may represent the majority of university students in Algeria.

During a period of two months, the research was teaching the selected students online via the EDMODO platform. The latter is, to a great extent, like the FACEBOOK in its design. The researcher had to meet the students twice a week to discuss via texting only the topic of each lecture. The time of the online meeting always started at 3 pm, and lasted for an hour and a half.

C. Research Instruments

The present research is exploratory since it investigates an issue that has not been tackled in previous researches in the Algerian context. Hence, the main research tool that the researcher found most relevant to collect the required data was a questionnaire constituted of 10 questions. All questions of the designed questionnaire were open-ended questions. More details are displayed in the next section.

D. The Questionnaire: Why Open-ended Questions

The present research is qualitative since it is primarily exploratory. It essentially relies on data obtained from a first-hand questionnaire sent to my students via Google questionnaires. For the specificity and newness of the issue under investigation, and the necessity to allow the participants to self-express, only open-ended questions were used while designing the questionnaire. This type of questions allows respondents to answer in open text format so that they can answer based on their complete knowledge, feeling, and understanding. It means that the response to every question is not limited to a set of options (Popping, 2015). Because open-ended questions require respondents to formulate a response in their own words and to express it verbally or in writings, the researcher could easily probe deep into the respondent's answers, gaining valuable information about the subject at hand. Moreover, open-ended questions are more suitable than closed-ended questions for measuring knowledge, because they not only minimize the likelihood that respondents will try to guess the right answer but also often yield more reliable and valid information. However, when respondents cannot immediately recall the correct answer, open-ended questions also elicit more "don't know" responses or refusals than closed questions do (see Krosnick & Presser, 2010)

So, the following are the ten questions that were asked to the students:

Question1: How many social media accounts do you have? And what are they?
Question2: How much time do you spend on the different social media platforms you are subscribed to?
Question3: Have you enjoyed studying online during the quarantine period?
Question4: Do you feel distracted by the social media notifications while you are studying online? Explain.
Question5: Do you prefer checking your social media accounts or the virtual classroom created by your teacher?
Question6: Do you know what digital maximalism is?
Question7: Do you know what digital minimalism is?
Question 8: Have you ever tried to log out from or deactivate your Facebook or Instagram accounts? If yes, how did you feel afterward?
Question9: Have you ever tried to limit your screen time for a specific purpose?
Question10: Have you ever tried to stay disconnected from the online world for a long period of time?

IV. FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Unlike closed questions, answers to open-ended questions are more difficult to analyze and interpret. However, content analysis is the most used method of analyzing responses to open-ended questions. In fact, content analysis is a research method that is used for analyzing and making inferences from a given text and other forms of qualitative information such as open-ended questions. It uses a variety of analytic strategies to categorize, compare and contrast a

corpus of data. After receiving the answers of the 35 students, they were categorized them into five sections. In the following chart, the students' answers are displayed into five categories:

Social media in the life of the students	Social media vs. academic platforms: what do students prefer?	Internet distraction during students' online activities	The students and digital maximalism	The necessity of introducing students to digital minimalism
Questions 1 and 2	Questions 3 and 5	Question 4	Question 6	Questions 7,8,9,10

The chart above represents the different themes that the questions and the students' answer were categorized into. In the next lines, we will present the students' answers upon which conclusions and recommendations will be built in the last section.

A. Social Media in the Life of the Students

The students' answers were categorized into five themes: the role of social media the life of the students, what students prefer, internet distraction, students' acquaintance with digital minimalism and digital maximalism. From question 1, the researcher confirmed that all students have more than one social media account. Most students have four accounts, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Whatsapp more particularly. Only one student, who is the oldest among this group of students, revealed that she has only a Facebook account through which she stays informed on news related to her studies. As for the students' answers to question 2 concerning the amount of time they spend checking their social media timelines, the average duration was 4 hours a day. One student said she spent 7 hours online on a daily basis. The most common fact that was deduced from the students' answers is that during the quarantine, their screen time increased to more than 8 hours a day mainly during the period of partial lockdown.

B. Social Media vs. Academic Platforms: What Do Students Prefer?

All students said that they enjoyed studying online through the EDMODO platform. This may go back to the design of this platform, the boredom of the quarantine they wanted to break or to the interesting topics that were discussed throughout the virtual meetings. For question 5, the answers of the students were varied. While ten students said they prefer checking the virtual classroom created by their teacher over checking their social media account(s), fifteen students disclosed that their social media timelines are more appealing and entertaining than the virtual classroom. The remaining students said that they do not have a preference regarding these different platforms since one is educational and the others are personal and for self-entertainment.

C. Internet Distraction during Students' Online Activities

The researcher expected that all students would reveal that they feel distracted by social media notifications while studying online; however, there where students who asserted that they do not get distracted by these notifications. Eight students stated that they muted these notifications whenever they went online to attend a virtual meeting with the teacher. For the rest of the students, i.e. 25 students, social media notifications are distracting.

D. The Students and Digital Maximalism

Question 6 was tricky and complicated for the students. All students said that they had to type the words 'digital maximalism' on Google to understand the notion to be able to understand it. All the students, after they read different definitions of the aforementioned idea, admitted that they had no idea on what digital maximalism is. This clearly reveals that my students go online anarchically and without predetermined goals.

E. The Necessity of Introducing Students to Digital Minimalism

Questions 7, 8, 9 and 10 aimed at grabbing the students' attention to the idea of purposeful online existence. By asking them what digital minimalism is, the researcher anticipated that all students would search for this notion on Google as it was known beforehand that the students had no idea regarding this concept. Indeed, all responses to question 7 were negative, i.e. students indicated through their different answers that this was a new notion for them as much as digital maximalism is. Answers for question 8 were miscellaneous; 12 students said that they did deactivate their social media accounts every now and then. 3 students said they did not see this necessary to do, and they never deactivated their accounts. The other students declared that they knew they had to deactivate their social media accounts from time to time mainly during exams; however, they were not able to do it when necessary. The students who said they deactivated their accounts whenever they went online for studying explained that they felt independent and more in control of their online activities.

Answers for question 9 and 10 were surprising and unexpected since 30 students out 35 said that they have never tried to limit their screen time for a specific purpose, and two students confessed that they do not know how to do it. For the other 5 students, they stated that limiting screen time was something they often did mainly during the exam period. One student added that she limited her screen time by uninstalling Facebook and Instagram applications. She explained that by doing so, she felt relieved and self-controlled. Moreover, no student affirmed that they have ever tried to stay disconnected from the online world for a long period of time. Most answers highlighted the importance of the world of internet for their studies. However, one student said that he tried to stay disconnected during two weeks while on a

quarantine, and yet he could not do it for a longer period. He argued that staying away from the world of internet made his days so boring.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The previous section presented the students' answers to the questionnaire. Building upon the content analysis of these answers, research results of the present study suggested that introducing the students to the notion of digital minimalism and its tips is required during this period of quarantine. Explaining this philosophy to the students who are digital immigrants is of paramount importance considering the amount of time students spend scrolling down and up in their social media timelines. From the researcher's own experience teaching her students in class, one noticed that many of them get easily distracted by Facebook or Instagram notifications. Therefore, one can infer that they are more distracted by these notifications at home when studying online, and being by their own without the instructor. To help the students control their online time without being distracted and to maximize the benefits of online lectures during this critical period, the following suggestions and tips could be given and explained to the students:

-The students must know how to build a habit of decluttering, i.e. organizing, their devices, and mainly mobile phones: this can be done by eliminating useless applications like those of games.

-Teachers and instructors should advise their students to uninstall social media applications on the device with which they go online to attend virtual classes. For instance, if they are using their mobile phones to study online, they have to delete Facebook and Instagram applications. These can be checked on their computers or laptops.

-An important tip to recommend the students to do is to minimalize their social media accounts. For example, from the students' answers to question 1, it was obvious that most students spend long time on social media because they have more than four social media accounts. In such a case, these students waste much time on checking these accounts instead of studying. As a matter of fact, it is necessary to suggest for students that they would have two social media accounts maximum.

-Another crucial advice to give to the students is to turn off all kinds of notifications whenever they go online to study. This also has to do with reducing one's screen time. For the latter, the teacher can show the students applications and techniques to limit their screen time.

-A last suggestion is for teachers themselves. Teaching online should not prevent teachers to recommend extra readings and offline activities for their students. The teacher must help his/her students to find offline alternatives for the students. For instance teachers of literature can recommend hardcopies of novels to read. For teachers of applied sciences, they ought to recommend real life experiments done by the students who can film themselves doing these experiments and send the videos or podcasts to their instructors.

To conclude, the COVID 19 pandemic and the crises that it has caused could not impede the educational process in most countries of the globe. It is thanks to technology and the world of internet that teachers could continue teaching and that students could carry on learning. However, a total reliance on online teaching may have negative consequences as well. In this paper, the researcher highlighted a major issue related to online teaching during the quarantine, which is social media distraction. This research, therefore, suggested that introducing the students to the notion of digital minimalism could be a crucial solution to help students overcome internet discussion during online classes.

REFERENCES

[1] Andersson, A., Hatakka, M., Grönlund, Å, and Wiklund, M. (2013). Reclaiming the students – coping with social media in 1:1 schools. *Learning, Media and Technology*. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2012.756518.
[2] Purvis, A., Rodger, H. and Beckingham, S. (2016). Engagement or distraction: the use of social media for learning in higher education. *Student Engagement and Experience Journal*, 5 (1).
[3] Bester, B., & Brand, L. (2013). The effect of technology on learner attention and achievement in the classroom. *South African Journal of Education*, 33 (2), 1-15.
[4] Brand L. M. (2010). The effect of technology on attention and concentration within the classroom context. MA dissertation. University of South Africa.
[5] Carr, N. G. (2011). The shallows: what the Internet is doing to our brains. Norton pbk. [ed.] New York: W.W. Norton.
[6] Doshi, J. B. (2011). Asking the right questions: A critique of Facebook, social media and libraries. Public Services Quarterly, 102-110.
[7] Krosnick, J. A., Presser, S. (2010). Question and questionnaire design. In Marsden, P. V., Wright, J. D. (Eds.), *Handbook of survey research* (2nd ed., pp. 263-313). Bingley, UK: Emerald.
[8] Popping, R. (2015). Bulletin de méthodologie sociologique. BMS 128(1):23-39
[9] Sigman A. (2007). Remotely controlled. How television is damaging our lives. Random House, UK.

Dallel Sarnou is an associate professor at the department of English (Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Algeria). She is specialized in various fields including educational technology, Arab women narratives, Posthumanism, Transhumanism and critical theory. Sarnou has published an important number of academic papers, many poems and two monographs.

Moderating Effects of Self-efficacy on Chinese Language Achievement for Minority Students

Qiuling Zhang
Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China

Ningning Zhao[*]
Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China

Xiangying Han
Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China

Li Cheng
Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China

Yufei Zheng
Shan Xi University, Taiyuan, China

Abstract—**The purpose of this article was to explore the effect of the contextual variables and individual variables on the language achievement for the minority students in Chinese primary school. There were 9,102 students from grade 2 to grade 6 who participated in the investigation, including 578 minority and 4731 girls from five regions with different developing levels. Firstly, the results show that the ethnicity does not have a direct effect on the language achievement and the self-efficacy has moderating effect for ethnicity on language achievement. Secondly, the gender and parents' career have a direct and indirect effect on the language achievement. Male minority students with lower parents' careers level would have a high probability to fall in the language achievement. But, all these effects are moderated by the students' self-efficacy. Finally, it implied that the early efforts to promote the students' self-efficacy beliefs would enhance the future language achievement for the minority students in the primary school.**

Index Terms—**self-efficacy, parents' career, language achievement, minority**

I. INTRODUCTION

Minority students are the disadvantaged group in one country who might face the problem of the language. The different language would affect their communication with the major groups. The situation is the same in China. Bilingual education policy is one of the important policies for the minority students in China. After Year 1949, Chinese government set up a set of policies minority groups. There were officially recognized 56 "nationalities" (ethnic groups) in contemporary mainland China, including the Han majority and 55 minority groups. There were 55 minority groups in China who used more than 80 ethnic languages belonging to Sino-Tibetan, Indoeuropen, Altaic, South Asian and South Island. And in Year 2019, minority occupied 8.5% population in China. Thus, the bilingual education was a good choice for the minority people to develop and merge into the mainstream life.

In order to support for these ethnics students, Chinese government carried out two sets of policies for the students. In the one hand, government guaranteed the legislation of the right of minority language in China in all versions of the Constitutions (Zhou, 2000).In the autonomous area of different ethnic minorities, the minorities group can use and develop their own languages as official working language in administration, election, courts, broadcasting, publication and schools (Ma, 1981). In the other hand, Chinese government provided education on national common spoken language (Mandarin Chinese) as to create an environment of equal intercourse with other ethnics from Year 1956 (Central Committee and the State Council, CPC, 1956). So, there was a parallel school system for minority: one is ordinary mainstream school system using the Mandarin as teaching language while teaching English as second language; another is ethnic school system, using the local minority language as the medium of instruction and Mandarin as a second language (National People's Congress, NPC, 1995). In this paper, Chinese language education refers to the official language education in first school system. In 2004, The Ministry of Education issued "Interim measures for the examination and approval of textbooks for ethnic minorities in Primary and Middle Schools", in order to ensure the quality of teaching materials for ethnic minorities and promote the construction of teaching materials (MOE, 2004).

---

[*] Correspondent author: Ningning Zhao, Department of Chinese language Education, School of Chinese language and literature education, Beijing Normal University-Beijing 100875, P.R. China. Email: tintinning@gmail.com

From 2017, the Chinese government stipulated that students in compulsory education would use unified Chinese teaching materials, including ethnic minority areas. Starting from 2019, unified Chinese teaching materials will also be gradually used in senior high schools. National coverage is expected to be achieved by 2022. The minority students should have to take the same Chinese language education in order to make students in ethnic minority areas enjoy fair and quality education, and improve the spoken and written language level of minority students in mandarin (MOE, 2017).

In China, Chinese language education was an important language course. Minority students also have to take the language courses of Mandarin Chinese during the primary schooling in order to merge in the mainstream life. Disadvantaged students who are low SES, minority and girls have drawn greater attention in China in recent years. It is necessary to check for the language achievement result for the minority students. But, there were limited studies on the Mandarin Chinese achievement considering the ethnicity. Thus, the purpose of the present paper aims to describe further explore the linkage in the elementary schools:

(1) Which kinds of the variables contributing to the language achievement for students, especially for the minority students? Do different ethnicity, parents' career and gender affect the language achievement?

(2) Do social and emotional beliefs (self-efficacy) enable children to succeed in the language learning?

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A. Effect of Ethnicity, Gender, Parents' Career, And Self-efficacy on Language Achievement

Minority student was supported to learn Mandarin Chinese. But, there are a lot of pressures for the minority schools and mainstream schools, including the diverse student backgrounds.

Gender. In most countries, girls were expected to perform better than boys in the language learning (Marks, 2008). One explanation for gender gaps in student performance is the gender difference in students' educational and occupational expectations (Teachman & Paasch, 1998). Another explanation is school system and social system's equality (Marks, 2008). Recently, some studies revealed that girls do perform better than boys in language subjects, probably because of teachers' stereotype that language is considered to be a somewhat feminine subject (Achtziger, Bayer, 2020). Girls were rated more enthusiastic and more gifted than boys (McLellan, Forbes & Li, 2021). Some studies further explained that stereotypes lead to significant variance in self-concept among girls and boys, resulting in differences in language performance (Espinoza, Strasser, 2020).

Ethnicity. The ethnicity was an important factor for the language learning. Studies reveal that in American, the gap on the language achievement between the minority students and mainstream students grows larger as the children progress through school (Garcia & Zimmerman, 1972). Black first-graders scored lower in language and literacy than students of other ethnicities, which indicates that teachers' ratings are influenced by their more negative perceptions on academic behavior of black students (Irizarry, Cohen, 2019). But few studies were done in China. Recently, a study in Hong Kong revealed that the early support from immersion courses may help ethnic minority students to achieve higher achievements in Chinese (Li, Li & Hua, 2020).

SES. Students from low SES family were expected to attain the lower achievement in language compared to their peers from high SES family (Marvin & Mirenda, 1993). The reason might be referred to the parents from lower SES who were busy and lack of the early care to their children (Anderson-Yockel, & Haynes, 1994; Marvin & Mirenda, 1993).Some studies revealed that the performance of low-SES children in Chinese word reading and dictation is not as good as that of middle-SES children (Fung, Chung, 2020). One possible explanation is that low-SES parents less able to provide adequate linguistic mediation, literacy instruction for their children (Cabell, Justice, Logan & Konold, 2013).

Self-efficacy. But, more and more researches show individual emotional competencies moderated the students' family background and academic achievement (Raver & Knitzer, 2002). Evidences on effect of socioemotional skills on the students' academic success were emerged which implies that the teachers should emphasize the development of the socioemotional skills during the courses (Raver & Knitzer, 2002). Results supported that academic self-efficacy beliefs were positively correlated with reading achievement. Self-efficacy may impact student's achievement scores by subject (Louis & Mistele, 2012). It was believed that early efforts to promote children's self-regulatory skills would enhance future academic self-beliefs and achievement, particularly in literacy (Liew, McTigue, Barrois, Hughes, 2008). Self-efficacy seems to be an important variable for writing also. Students' confidence in their writing capabilities influences their writing motivation as well as various writing outcomes in school (Pajares, 2003). In an Asian Confucian cultural context, self-efficacy is strongly related to self-regulated learning writing strategies and students' confidence in completing tasks, which can explain why self-efficacy can improve writing skills (Bai, Wang & Nie, 2021).

B. Effect of Ethnicity, Gender and Parents' Career, on Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy was defined as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura, 1997, p. 391). Self-efficacy was affected by a lot of variables.

Gender. The previous study showed that the effect size between boys and girls in self-efficacy for reading was 19 . Girls have higher self-efficacy than boys (Smith, Smith, Gilmore and Jameson, 2012). But compared to the effect size of gender on reading achievement, the effect of self-efficacy was rather small (Smith, Smith, Gilmore and Jameson,

2012). Girls were considered to have higher levels of writing self-efficacy beliefs (Pajares & Valiante, 2001), and self-efficacy beliefs in learning French is higher than boys (Mills, Pajares & Herron, 2007). However, there is not much difference in self-efficacy between boys and girls among English learners, which may indicates that the gender differences in self-efficacy vary in different language and cultures (Iwaniec, 2019).

Ethnicity. Gender differences in role attitudes and their impact on self-efficacy is moderated by culture (Buchanan, & Selmon, 2008). The research results showed that self-efficacy was impacted by the cultural variables (Oettingen, 1995). It was reviewed that moderate group differences were found on the self-efficacy (Johnson, Kim, Johnson-Pynn & Schulenberg, 2012).A study reveled that African American and Caucasian students had more academic self-efficacy than Asian American students at the beginning of semester. But the ethnic differences are no longer obvious at the end of the semester (D'Lima, Winsler & Kitsantas, 2014).

SES. SES had an important effect on general self-efficacy and well-being (Tong & Song, 2004). The parents' achievement in the workplace contributed to children's self-efficacy. The research results reviewed that low SES students scored significantly lower than their peers on general self-efficacy and subjective well-being (Tong, & Song, 2004).

To summarize, the literature on ethnicity, gender, parents' career and self-efficacy beliefs in relationship to reading clearly suggests that they are strong and potentially instructionally relevant variables on language achievement (See Figure 1).
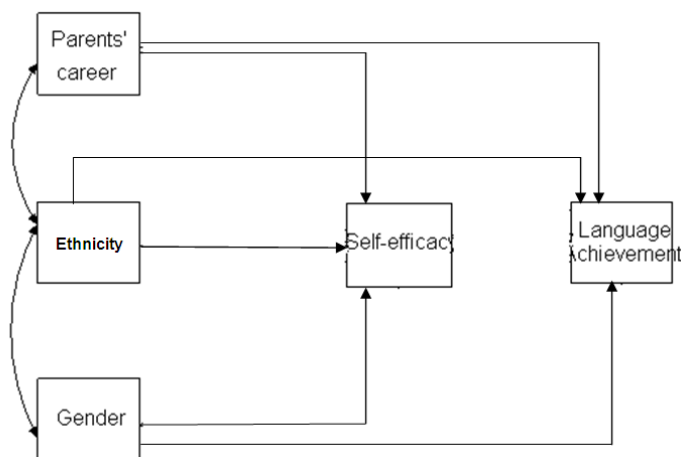
Figure 1. Hypothesis of the model

III METHODOLOGY

A. *Samples*

Multi-stages stratified method was used to select the samples considering about the economic development levels, rural/urban. A total of 9,102 students and their parents participated from grade 2 to grade 6 in 20 primary schools of five regions with different economic development level. There were 578 minority students and 4731 girls. The background of the students on gender, ethnicity and parents' career were gathered which was supported by the teachers and parents.

TABLE I.
SAMPLES DESCRIPTIVE (N)

Grade	Gender	Majority	Minority	Total
Grade 2	Boys	813	70	883
	Girls	907	65	972
Grade 3	Boys	800	72	872
	Girls	863	70	933
Grade 4	Boys	784	70	854
	Girls	916	61	977
Grade 5	Boys	788	57	845
	Girls	848	58	906
Grade 6	Boys	883	34	917
	Girls	922	21	943
Total		578	8524	9102

B. *Measures*

Chinese achievement

In China, objectives of the course of Chinese were to improve the reading, writing and speaking which were two of the "3 R's of school" (Freeman & Hatch, 1989). The measurement of the Chinese includes vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and writing in the area. The students' Chinese language achievement in the Mid-term examination were collected from the teachers and standardized in the school in order to avoid the biases between schools.

C. Family Contextual Variables

Family contextual variables include parents' career and ethnicity.

Ethnicity: Minority people was coded 1.

Parents Career: Father and mother's job level (ranging from 1=highest to 27 lowest). The Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) by SPSS on the father and mother' job level reveals to be one factor for Parent's Career. Satisfactory goodness-of-fit indexes are observed (x^2=265.80, df=8, p<.00, CFI=.98, TLI=.96, RMSEA=.048) by the confirmatory factory analysis (CFA).

D. Individual Variables

Gender: Boys was coded 1.

Self-efficacy: A 5-point Likert Self-efficacy scale (MSC) by Marat (2005) was revised into scale on language and used to estimate the students' self-efficacy. There were seven sub-scales including self-beliefs on motivation, cognitive strategies, resource management, self-regulation learning, leisure time skills, self-assertiveness and meeting others expectation. For example, the item asks "How well do you believe you can set goals for yourself to direct your activities?"*Not Well at all* (coded 1) to *very well* (coded 5). Cronbach's alpha reliability of the final version was .97 which reflected high goodness-of-fit indices.

E. Data Analysis

Firstly, the correlation analysis was used to test the associations between the different variables. Secondly, structural equation model (AMOS 7.0) was used to test the complex relationships between the variables and the language performance. The indices of the comparative fit index (CFI), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were used to present the model of goodness-of-fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

IV. RESULTS

A. Descriptive Results

The correlation was carried out to present the relationships between the variables (See Table 2). The results suggest positive and significant interrelationships between language performance and other individual variables. Also, significant correlations can be observed between the different variables. None of the correlation values reflect problematic collinearity.

The results suggest a strong interrelation between language achievement and the individual variables. Language achievement is strongly correlated with Gender (r =- .091, p< .01). Other important correlations are found between parents' career and language achievement (r = .015, .01 < p < .05), between self-efficacy and language achievement (r = .09, p< .01). In addition, self-efficacy was strongly correlated with gender(r =- .079, p < .01), ethnicity(r =- .058, p < .01) and parents' career (r = .068, p < .01).

TABLE II.
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VARIABLES AND LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT

	Ethnicity	Parents' Career	Self-efficacy	Language Achievement
Gender	-.023*	-.013	-.079**	-.091**
Ethnicity		-.130**	-.058**	.003
Parents' Career			.068**	.015*
Self-efficacy				.090**

Note: **: p<.01; *: p<.05.

B. Structure Equation Models

Structure equation model was applied to test the hypothesis between the individual variables and the language performance. As we can check in the Table 2, there was no significant correlation between ethnicity and language achievement. Thus, in order to pursue for the parsimony model to explain the language achievement without losing the predictive power, we tried to delete the direct effect from ethnicity to language achievement and compared for the model A and model B (See Table 3). The deviance of model A and model B was 1.754 (df=1, p>.05) which means when the direct effect of ethnicity on language achievement could be removed from model A without any impacts. All

the goodness-of-fit indices for model B are in line with recommended benchmarks for acceptable fit: chi-square = 4.93 (df = 2; p =.086 > .05), GFI = 1.000, AGFI = .998, NFI= .993, RMSEA = .031. The total proportion of explained variance in prospective computer use amounts to 3% (R^2= .03).

TABLE III.
MODEL SELECTION

	Language	Achievement
	Model A	Model B
Gender	-.09**	-.09**
Ethnicity	.01	-
Parents' Career	.03*	.03*
Self-efficacy	.15**	.15**
Adjusted R^2	.03	.03
x^2	3.176	4.93
df (p-value)	1(.075)	2 (.086)
$\triangle x^2$		1.754
$\triangle$ df		1
GFI	1.000	1.000
AGFI	.998	.998
NFI	.995	.993
RMSEA	.015	.031
AIC	31.176	30.930

Note. – not included in model, n.s. not significant; *p<.05, **p<.01

Figure 2 shows the resulting path coefficients in the model B. Only significant effects have been retained in the model. There were correlations between the predictor variable of ethnicity and parents' career (r = -.13, p<.01), between ethnicity and gender (r =- .03, p<.01).

The direct and indirect effects of the predictor variables on the endogenous variables were calculated as standardized beta-weight (path coefficients or β's). Language achievement was directly predicted by gender (β = -.09, p < .01), parents' careers (β = .03, .01<p < .05) and self-efficacy (β = .15, p < .01). Girls outperform boys in language achievement. The student whose parents have higher level job gets good achievement in language learning than the students whose parents have lower level job. Students with higher self-efficacy achieved higher in the language achievement. These results seem to be line with the previous studies (Louis, & Mistele, 2012; Marks, 2008; Marvin & Mirenda, 1993).

All relationships between these exogenous variables and language achievement were indirect relationships, considering the role played by the mediating variables: self-efficacy. The mediating role of the self-efficacy was presented when we consider the path from ethnicity (β=- .07, p < .001) via self-efficacy to language achievement. In a comparable weaker way, gender (β=.08, p < .001) and parents' career (β= .10, p < .001) had an indirect effect on language achievement mediating by self-efficacy (β = .09, p < .01).
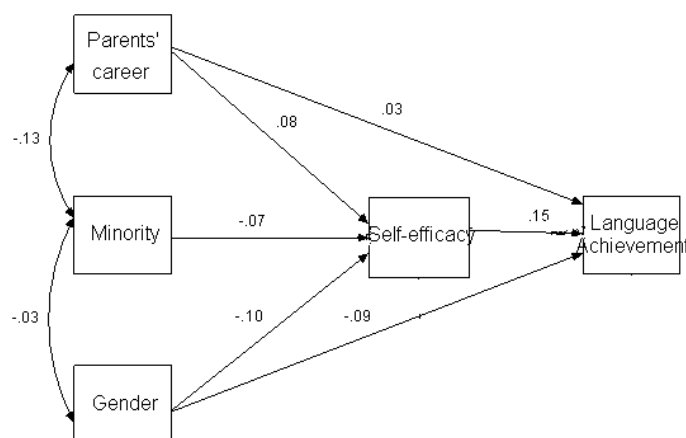

Figure 2. Path of the variables on the language achievement.

V. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

The vital research question in this article focused on the minority student and aimed to explore the demographic variables (such as gender) and the SES variables which might explain for the students' language achievement. There were two important results which might raise our attention: firstly, the minority student achieved the same language performance as majority students in the mainstream schools; secondly, the difference of the language performance was moderated by the students' self-efficacy in the schools.

A. *The Minority Students Have the Same Achievement in Language Achievement*

The results of this study confirmed that at the student level, there were many factors influencing language achievement. In the present study, gender, parents' career and students' self-efficacy were largely confirmed except for the ethnicity. The ethnicity of the students did not have direct impact on the language achievement. The result was not the same as the previous studies in the other countries (Garcia, & Zimmerman, 1972). Although there was correlation between the ethnicity of the students and the parents' career of the students, the gap of language achievement between the majority and minority students was filled by the schools in developing countries.

This situation could be related to the education policy in China. Firstly, although the minority student lived in the minority area, the Chinese language replaced minority language as the official one. Thus, the change of the official language caused more and more minority families started to speak Chinese at home. Chinese was a whole group integrated by lots of peoples. After Year 1949，thousands of Han people migrated to the minority area. And there were four types of language education approaches: the first one is for the minority persons who live alone and communicate by their own language, for example, Tibetan, Mongolian, Uygur, Kazak(MOE, 1956). For these students, the Chinese language was the second language for the minority students. The second one is for the minority persons who live with Han people and have few communications with Han people in the same Provinces (MOE, 1953). The minority persons adopted their own living habits and language. Their children speak the minority language from birth and taught by their own language during Grade 1 and Grade 3. After Grade 3, the Chinese language should be added as a course and students have to adapt to the two languages. The third one is for the minority persons who live with Han people and there was no difference between the living styles. In this study, the samples were selected from the third one. From Year 1982, the syllabus for the Chinese language for minority students was set up which implied that the standard of the language education started (MOE, 1982). The forth one is for the special students who can participate in the class (call "minzuban", means minority class) in the schools where are in the developed provinces. These minority students are selected from the minority area and enjoy the free education (MOE, 1980). In 2000, The Law of National Language and Writing System of Wider Communication was promulgated, advocating bilingual education (standard Mandarin and minority languages) for ethnic minorities. As a result, the mixed schools of Han and ethnic minorities in minority areas had gradually replaced the separate schools. And the national common language had become the main teaching language in bilingual education. At the same time, the bilingual classes in preschool were widely popularized (Standing Committee of NPC, 2000). In 2017, the Chinese government proposed to carry out bilingual education scientifically and steadily. It's essential unswervingly carry out national common language education, while protecting minority languages (NEAC, 2017). The minority students should have to take the same Chinese language education (MOE, 2017).

Secondly, in our study, all of the schools were from the mainstream schools. Since Year 1953, the Chinese government agreed to set up the mainstream schools if the minority area could not teach in the school by their own language (Ministry of Education, MOE, 1953; p.195). The minority students enrolled in the mainstream schools and were taught by the Chinese language. And the study confirmed whether majority and minority student could achieve the same performance in the Chinese language. Then, the minority student enrolled in the mainstream schools could have the same opportunity as the majority students in the same school. This was an effort of the Chinese government to improve the educational equity. Also, for the minority students who enrolled in the minority schools, there were some special education policies to enhance their opportunity in the further schooling. For example, in Year 1962, Ministry of Education (MOE, 1962, p.1114) launched an education policy of "Announcement on the priority of the minority students to enroll in the high school". The policy allowed that, when the minority students and majority students had the same score, the minority students had the priority to enroll in the high school. And, minority students were exempt from the examination related to Chinese language. In 2004, the Chinese government had issued a Training Program for High-level Professionals of Ethnic Minority Origins, which enrolled master's and doctoral students from ethnic minorities in a number of key universities. Students enjoined a special preferential score policy, and tuition fees are borne by the government (MOE, 2005).

B. *Students' Self-efficacy Moderated the Effect of the Family Contextual Variables*

Our findings underpin the direct and indirect relationship between students' variables and student language achievement (See Figure 2). Although the minority was not the variables which affected the language achievement directly, the variable of students' self-efficacy moderated the effect of the students' demographic variables and the SES variables on the language achievement which was in line with the previous studies (Liew, McTigue, Barrois, Hughes, 2008; Louis & Mistele, 2012). Thus, it implied that early efforts to promote children's social and emotional learning

positively influence their concurrent and future academic success (e.g., Rimm-Kaufman, Fan, Chiu, & You, 2007; Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004).

The traditional emphasis in schools has been on academic instruction alone. In the past few decades, there have been growing efforts toward a more holistic approach. The emotional development was assumed to be related with academic achievement (Caprara, Bararanelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 2000; Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Frey, Greenberg, Haynes, et al., 1997). Some studies have revealed that the growth in the reading ability is related to the growth in self-efficacy (Caprara et al., 2008).Thus, the disadvantaged students who were female minority with lower parents' career could be supported by the emotional development in the schools. The effective project of the emotional development, such as the project on the students' self-efficacy, could improve the disadvantaged students' academic achievement. The self-efficacy in the school could make up for the students' disadvantaged background in the primary school, as we can see from the Figure 2. Thus, in the future, more training projects should be done for the teacher to pay attention for the students' emotional development and the academic development at the same time, such as Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). Improving self-efficacy may help narrow the gap of language achievement (Caprara et al., 2008). Further studies revealed that more vulnerable students rarely increase self-efficacy during the middle school years, indicating that this period may a crucial time for teachers to emphasize and develop positive academic self-concept (Soland & Sandilos, 2021). Real emotional development is most likely to occur in an encouraged learning environment (Sakiz, Pape, & Hoy, 2012).

Under the holistic model, Chinese equal people relationship contributed to the students' language achievement in China. The equal people relationship was set up in the educational policy. The minority students were respected equally as the Han students. All of the students in the class were respected equally. No discrimination was allowed in the class. Even more, the government set up some policy which benefited for the minority students, for example, the priority entrance for the university policy in the minority area (MOE, 1962), the extra opportunity for the minority students to immerse in the language learning, and the support from the teacher and their peers. The Chinese government not only emphasized the equality of all ethnic groups and the construction of a national community, but also paid attention to the all-round development of students. In 2017, the report of the 19th CPC National Congress pointed out that it is necessary to implement the fundamental task of Moral Education and People Cultivation, developing socialist successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physique, beauty and labor (CPC National Congress, 2017). Moral Education and People Cultivation means that education should achieve people's all-round development, rather than just emphasizing intellectual education. The ultimate goal of education is to realize people's own happiness, free and all-round development.

VI. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

The studies explored the effects of the environmental variables and individual variables on the Chinese language achievement. The results from this study are generally supportive of what has been found in the research literature, but provide additional information. For the ethnicity, it was showed that the minority students were at risk of the language achievement which might affect the students' opportunity in the further schooling. The ethnicity does not affect the language achievement directly but through the self-efficacy. In china, the minority students and Han people students were respected as Han people students in education. All of the students at the same class were regarded as equality. On the contrary, the minority students would have more advantaged policies in language education.

However, there are some limitations which should be improved for the further studies.

First, though a large sample from 20 schools in five provinces in China, the sample was still small to reflect the Chinese population. Secondly, the individual variables were the only variables which predicted the language achievement (van Braak et al., 2004). School level factors (leadership, school culture, teacher variables etc.) and province level factors may also influence the students' language achievement. In the future studies, there would be more variables involved in the model. And a multilevel analysis would be helpful to integrate the above levels. Thirdly, the adoption of a longitudinal approach could be recommended to track changes in language achievement considering the students' ethnicity. Lastly, the sample in this study was selected from the mainstream school in the minority area. In the further studies, students from the minority school will be explored.

Despite these limitations, the current study contributes to the literature about minority and language achievement in a number of ways. Firstly, form a theoretical perspective, more insight has been obtained in the complex interplay of students' demographic variables, individual emotional variables and language achievement. Second, emotional processes affect how and what we learn, schools and families must effectively address these aspects of the educational process for the benefit of all students. Minority was not the predictor for the language achievement while the students' self-efficacy moderated the effect of the ethnicity. Thus, the teachers and the schools should be involved in the students' emotion development. Especially, the essential role of students' self-efficacy should be paid more attention in the minority area. Thirdly, the equality of the minority students in language achievement can support for the students' further development. And these related minority education policy could be recommended to the other countries. For example the differentiation of the education policy for different kinds of the minority students.

REFERENCES

[1] Anderson-Yockel, J., & Haynes, W. (1994). Joint book-reading strategies in working-class African American and White mother-toddler dyads. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Research, 37*, 583–593.
[2] Achtziger, A., Bayer, U.C. (2020). Self-control mediates the link between gender and academic achievement in sex-stereotyped school subjects in elementary and in higher secondary schools. *Current Psychology, 39*, 1683–1695.
[3] Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.
[4] Bai, B., Wang, J., & Nie, Y. (2021). Self-efficacy, task values and growth mindset: what has the most predictive power for primary school students' self-regulated learning in English writing and writing competence in an Asian Confucian cultural context?. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 51*(1), 65–84.
[5] Buchanan, T. & Selmon, N. (2008). Race and gender differences in self-efficacy: Assessing the role of gender role attitudes and family background. *Sex Roles, 58*(11-12), 822–836.
[6] Cabell, S. Q., Justice, L. M., Logan, J. R., & Konold, T. R. (2013). Emergent literacy profiles among prekindergarten children from low-SES backgrounds: Longitudinal considerations. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 28*(3), 608–620.
[7] Caprara, G.V., Barbaranelli, C., Pastorelli, C., Bandura, A., & Zimbardo, P.G. (2000). Pro-social foundations of children's academic achievement. *Psychological Science, 11*, 302–306.
[8] Caprara, G. V., Fida, R., Vecchione, M., Del Bove, G., Vecchio, G. M., Barbaranelli, C., et al. (2008). Longitudinal analysis of the role of perceived self-efficacy for self-regulated learning in academic continuance and achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 100*(3), 525–534.
[9] Central Committee and the State Council (CPC). (1956). The recommendation for Mandarin Chinese popularization. In He, D. (ed.), *Important Education Document From Year 1949-1975 in P.R. China*. Haikou: Hainan publisher, 572–573.
[10] CPC National Congress. (2017). Report on the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. http://www.12371.cn/2017/10/27/ARTI1509103656574313.shtml (accessed 03/2/2021).
[11] D'Lima, G. M., Winsler, A., & Kitsantas, A. (2014). Ethnic and Gender Differences in First-Year College Students' Goal Orientation, Self-Efficacy, and Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation. *The Journal of Educational Research, 107*(5), 341–356.
[12] Duncan, G. J., Dowsett, C. J., Claessens, A., Magnuson, K., Huston, A.C., Klevanov, P, et al. (2007). School readiness and later achievement. *Development Psychology, 43*(6), 1428–1446.
[13] Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. (2011). The impact of enhancing students social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development. 82*(1), 405–432.
[14] Elias, M. J., Zins, J. E., Weissberg, R. P., Frey, K. S., Greenberg, M. T., Haynes, N. M., et al. (1997). Promoting social and emotional learning: Guidelines for educators. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
[15] Espinoza, A.M., Strasser, K. (2020). Is reading a feminine domain? The role of gender identity and stereotypes in reading motivation in Chile. *Social Psychology of Education, 23*(4), 861–890.
[16] Fung, Wk., Chung, K.K. (2020). The role of socioeconomic status in Chinese word reading and writing among Chinese kindergarten children. *Reading and Writing, 33*, 377–397
[17] Garcia, A. B., & Zimmerman, B. J. (1972). The effect of examiner ethnicity and language on the performance of Bilingual Mexican-American First grade. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 87*, 5–11.
[18] Hu, L., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling, 6*, 1–55.
[19] Irizarry, Y., Cohen, E.D. (2019). Of Promise and Penalties: How Student Racial-Cultural Markers Shape Teacher Perceptions. *Race and Social Problems, 11*(2), 93–111.
[20] Iwaniec, J. (2019). Language learning motivation and gender: The case of Poland. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 29(1)*, 130–143.
[21] Johnson, L. R., Kim, E.H., Johnson-Pynn, J.S. & Schulenberg, S.E. (2012). African and U.S. Youth ethnic identity, self-efficacy, and intercultural attitudes in east. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 27*(2), 256–289.
[22] Liew, J., McTigue, E.M., Barrois, L., & Hughes, J. (2008). Adaptive and effortful control and academic self-efficacy beliefs on achievement: A longitudinal study of 1st through 3rd graders. *Early Child Research Quarterly, 23*(4), 515–526.
[23] Louis, R. A. & Mistele, J. M. (2012). The differences in scores and self-efficacy by student gender in mathematics and science. *International journal of science and mathematical education, 10*, 1163–1190.
[24] Ma Yin. (1981). China's Minorities. Beijing: People's Press.
[25] Marat, D. (2005). Assessing mathematics self-efficacy of diverse students from secondary schools in Auckland: Implications for academic achievement. *Issues in Educational Research, 15*, 37–68.
[26] Marks, G. N. (2008). Accounting for the gender gaps in student performance in reading and mathematics: Evidence from 31 countries. *Oxford Review of Education, 34*(1), 89–109.
[27] Marvin, C., & Mirenda, P. (1993). Home literacy experiences of preschoolers enrolled in Head Start and special education programs. *Journal of Early Intervention, 17*, 351–367.
[28] McLellan, Ros, Forbes, Karen, & Li, J. (2021). Investigating EFL teachers' gender-stereotypical beliefs about learners: A mixed-methods study. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 51*(1), 19–44.
[29] Mills, N., Pajares, F. & Herron, C. (2007). Self-efficacy of College Intermediate French Students: Relation to Achievement and Motivation. *Language Learning, 57*(3), 417–442.
[30] Ministry of Education. (1953). Suggestions for problem of what kind of the language should be used in the minority area schools. In He, D. (ed.), *Important Education Document From Year 1949-1975 in P.R. China*. Haikou: Hainan publisher, 195.

[31] Ministry of Education. (1956). About the problem of using the minority language in the Mongolian school. In He, D. (ed.), *Important Education Document From Year 1949-1975 in P.R. China*. Haikou: Hainan publisher, 195.

[32] Ministry of Education. (1962). Announcement on the priority of the minority students to enroll in the high school. In He, D. (ed.), *Important Education Document From Year 1949-1975 in P.R. China*. Haikou: Hainan publisher, 1114.

[33] Ministry of Education. (1980). Announcement on the minority class in Key high school in Year 1980. In He, D. (ed.), *Important Education Document From Year 1949-1975 in P.R. China*. Haikou: Hainan publisher, 411–412.

[34] Ministry of Education. (1982). Syllabus for the Chinese language education for whole day school (draft). In He, D. (ed.), *Important Education Document From Year 1949-1975 in P.R. China*. Haikou: Hainan publisher, 415.

[35] Ministry of Education. (2004). Interim measures for the examination and approval of textbooks for ethnic minorities in Primary and Middle Schools. http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A09/moe_750/200405/t20040517_77844.html (accessed 02/2/2021).

[36] Ministry of Education. (2005). The implementation Plan of training program for high-level professionals of ethnic minority Origins. http://www.moe.gov.cn/s78/A09/mzs_left/moe_763/tnull_8651.html (accessed 02/2/2021).

[37] Ministry of Education. (2017). Circular on matters related to the morality of compulsory Education and the Rule of Law, Chinese, History and Science Teaching Books in Primary Schools in 2017. http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A26/moe_714/201707/t20170703_308452.html (accessed 02/2/2021).

[38] National People's Congress. (1995). The education law of the people's Republic of China. http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/moe_619/200407/1316.html (accessed 28/1/2021).

[39] National Ethnic Affairs Commission. (2017). The plan of ethnic minority languages during the 13th five-year Plan of NEAC. https://www.neac.gov.cn/seac/zcfg/201704/1074196.shtml (accessed 02/2/2021).

[40] Oettingen, G. (1995). Cross-cultural perspectives on self-efficacy beliefs. In A. Bandura (Ed.), *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 149–176.

[41] Pajares, K. (2003). Self-efficacy beliefs, motivation, and achievement in writing: A review of the literature. *Reading & Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties, 19* (2), 139–158.

[42] Pajares, Frank, & Valiante, Giovanni. (2001). Gender Differences in Writing Motivation and Achievement of Middle School Students: A Function of Gender Orientation?. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 26*(3), 366–381.

[43] Raver CC, & Knitzer, J. (2002). Ready to enter: What research tells policymakers about strategies to promote social and emotional school readiness among three- and four-year-old children. New York: National Center for Children in Poverty, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University.

[44] Rimm-Kaufman, S. E., Fan, X., Chiu, Y–J., & You, W. (2007). The contribution of the Responsive Classroom approach on children's academic achievement: Results from a three-year longitudinal study. *Journal of School Psychology, 45*, 401–421.

[45] Sakiz, G., Pape, S. J., & Hoy, A. W. (2012). Does perceived teacher affective support matter for middle school students in mathematics classrooms?. *Journal of School Psychology, 50*(2), 235–255.

[46] Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. (2000). The Law of National Language and Writing System of Wider Communication. http://www.gov.cn/ziliao/flfg/2005-08/31/content_27920.htm (accessed 02/2/2021).

[47] Soland, J., & Sandilos, L. E. (2021). English language learners, self-efficacy, and the achievement gap: Understanding the relationship between academic and social-emotional growth. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 26*(1), 20–44.

[48] Smith,J. K., Smith, L. F., Gilmore, A. & Jameson, M. (2012). Students' self-perception of reading ability, enjoyment of reading and reading achievement. *Learning and Individual Differences, 22*(2), 202–206.

[49] Teachman, J. D. & Paasch, K. (1998). The family and educational aspirations. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 60*, 704–714.

[50] Tong, Y., & Song, S. (2004). A study on general self-efficacy and subjective well-Being of low SES-College students in a Chinese university. *College Student Journal, 38* (4), 637–642.

[51] Van Braak, J. P. (2004). Domains and determinants of university students' self-perceived computer competence. *Computers and Education, 43*(3), 299–312.

[52] Zhou, Minglang. (2000). Language policy and illiteracy in ethnic minority communities in China. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 21* (2): 129–148.

[53] Zins, J., Bloodworth, M., Weissberg, R., & Walberg, H. (2004). The scientific base linking social and emotional learning to school success. In J. Zins, R. Weissberg, M. Wang, & H. J. Walberg (eds.), *Building academic success on social and emotional learning: What does the research say?*. New York: Teachers Press, Columbia University, 1–22.

[54] Li, B., Li, Y. N., & Hua, C. (2020). Early experience and later multilingual attainments by ethnic minority students in Hong Kong. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02188791.2020.1820312 (accessed 01/2/2021).

Qiuling Zhang was born in Shizuishan, Ning Xia of China in 1966. She obtained her PH.D. degree in pedagogy from Beijing Normal University, China. She is currently a Professor in the Department of Chinese language Education at School of Chinese language and Literature, Beijing Normal University. Her research interests focus on Chinese curriculum and instruction.

Ningning Zhao was born in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province of China in 1980. She obtained her two PH.D. degrees in University of Gent of Belgium in 2011 and Beijing Normal University of China in 2007. She is currently an associate Professor in the Department of Chinese language Education at School of Chinese language and Literature, Beijing Normal University. Her research interests focus on education assessment, curriculum and instruction. Ningning Zhao is the correspondent author for the present paper.

Xiangying Han was born in Zibo, Shandong Province of China in 1998. She is currently studying at the School of Chinese Language and Literature of Beijing Normal University with a master's degree. Her research interest is education of Chinese subject.

Li Cheng was born in Zhejiang, China in 1978. She received her PH.D. degree in Psychology from Institute of Psychology, CAS in 2008. She is currently an associate professor in the Faculty of Education, Beijing Normal University, Beijng, China. Her research interests include gifted and talented children and creativity.

Yufei Zheng was born in Changzhi, Shanxi Province of China in 1976. He received his PH.D. degree in education from Beijing Normal University, China in 2010. He is currently an associate professor in the School of education science, Shanxi University, Taiyuan, China. His research interests include curriculum and instruction.

Correctness of the Subtitled Expressions in Context: The Translator in Film Making Process

Christopher Chinedu Nwike
Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Christopher Uchenna Agbedo
Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Abstract—This paper hinges on the correctness of the subtitled expressions in context: The translator in film making process. The objective of the study is to ascertain the correctness of subtitled expressions in context, in the movie used for the study. It focuses on fishing out the wrong subtitled expressions in context of discourses in the movie *Onye Bụ Nna M*. The study sees subtitle as substituting the vocal utterances in a filmic material to a written equivalence on the screen of the television. The discredit of subtitle in the Nollywood touches the areas of wrong expression of a particular utterance in a movie into another language through subtitle and non alignment of the spoken utterances with its subtitled equivalences. However, all these formed the problem of the study. This study adopts the formal and dynamic equivalence of Nida as well as Gottlieb's strategies of subtitle as the frameworks of the study in order to effectively carry out this research. This research adopts the emergent design approach in its methodology. The study reveals that if information is subtitled well with the correct tenses in context, there will be no misinterpretation of ideas or information by the target audience.

Index Terms—subtitles, subtitle strategy, Nollywood and correct expressions in context

I. INTRODUCTION

Before and after the invention of subtitle, both the actors and the producers of home movies as well as musical videos have been working seriously, towards making their products familiarized to the foreign and the local viewers. This process is what Uchenna (2007) says that it is done in a local way. He further added that Nigerians have a particular way of approaching their movies, and this is done by seeking not to translate the content and context of the movie but to comment on the important moments, thereby facilitating viewers' understanding. According to Nwatu (2017), in the act of running the commentary in the viewers' language, it is not always suitable for mixed audiences because, those who have the knowledge of the original language can actually see those live commentaries as distraction, and in the process, the essence of bridging the language gap is cut off. This breach in relating the information to the target audience will be obvious because, some diasporic Nigerians do not patronise films produced only in Nigerian languages. So, due to the widening circulation of Nollywood Igbo films and to avoid much decline in the use of the Igbo language among the diasporic communities, the need for another solution came – subtitles, in order to enhance patronage and audience's reception of audiovisual materials with correct expressions in context, in the Nollywood movies, the Igbo example. In subtitles, different languages are used throughout the world to communicate ideas, beliefs, intentions, actions and feelings. According to Nwike (2019), with the mass media and internet, this interaction is occurring faster and more frequently with every passing second. For specialized areas like linguistics, mathematics or computer programming, languages are used more often in an effort to create much desire and need in order to come up with new processes and systems towards educating people. However, the adopted target language in this study is the English language where its tenses and grammar use in the selected movie are the focus of this study - subtitling the correct expression in context. Based on this, the study is involved with the elements of a sentence which are the subject, verb, object, complement and adverbials. From the forgoing, the problems of poor transfer of the subtitles are greatly hinged on the past mentioned outlines as the expressions in the target language is rendered through them at different points. However, Christopher (2014) is of the view that one who lacks the knowledge of the grammar of the target language will actually find it hard transferring the original meaning of the vocalized utterances, as the translator who is not competent in the target language according to Bilal (2016) will produce wrong subtitles that will not be functional in the target language as original. The transferring exercise is supposed to be done by the translator(s) that knows the culture and the language of the both languages, as the one who is not readily available in the languages competence and performance will find the process of rendition tasking.

During the transferring exercise, the translator who renders meaning from one language to another should understand the possible rules of the target language (Nwike, 2015). For Tim, Wilfried, Fred and Nadira (2017), they believed that subtitle is spoken and written based. In this study, let us call it *spoken-written* because, it is involved with the spoken utterance of an actor or the source speaker while its target equivalence will be written on the below part of the television or cinema alongside with the spoken utterances. Based on this, one who subtitles from a particular language of any

filmic type should be able to understand all the things that make up a language structure of the target language. Since focus is on wrong expressions that are subtitled in the English, it is pertinent that the translator, who subtitles, understands the basic grammatical units of the English language as it will help him or her to clearly transpose the original information in the target language because the sentences will be meaningful ones. The translator who subtitles from Igbo to English should understand the letters of the English language, and the vowels. Based on this, in trying to subtitle well into the English language, the translator should understand that words functions pertinently in the units of the English language. However, a word converts the group of letters into a meaningful one because; words are group of letters with a meaning. For instance, in the word of English language, a word like 'chair' is having five letters c-h-a-i-r and with this, the word is formed with collective forms of few letters. Based on this, it is important that a translator who subtitles from the Igbo to the English language should know at least 30,000 words to become a good communicator in the English language, as it will help the translator to flow well during the subtitle exercises. Till a translator masters that much of words and the basics of the English language, he or she have to keep on learning so that the translator's language skill will get sharpened day by day and fall alongside with the active vocabulary of the target language. This is to say that becoming thorough with the basics of the English language is a matter of practice and performance.

In line with the above information, the knowledge therein will assist the translator during the information transfer. The words can be used in different forms as it can be used to form a phrase which is another important unit in the English language. A phrase can be called a group of words without a subject and a verb. A subject is what the sentence is about, while the verb tells something about the action of the subject in a sentence. Some of the phrases of the English language go thus: *the fair police man, the yellow dress, to dress well,* etc. Again, there are nominal or noun phrases. For instance, the phrases have nouns as the most important words in the used examples thus *the fair police man,* where the noun "police" is the most important word in that phrase. Another example is 'the yellow dress.' More so, there is a verb phrase and it is exemplified as thus, '*to dress well'* performs the function of a verb phrase as the both examples occupy the position of the subject in a sentence and also their grammatical functions in a sentence. Based on this, a translator should understand what a phrase is as it will help him to transfer better during the process of rendition. A good translator should be able to differentiate between phrases and a clause. A clause can be called a group of words with a subject and a predicate having a meaning. For instance, *you are my worst enemy, when the car arrived, etc.* In the same line with this, a good translator should understand clearly that when a clause suggests a complete meaning, it will be a main clause, as '*you are my worst enemy'* suggests a complete meaning and it is a main clause. In line with the following, it is clear that all languages have its own phonotactics and mechanics. When a translator lacks the basic knowledge of the rule that guides a particular language and culture, his subtitles in the target language will be faulty. Upon this discourse based on the focus of the study, it is pertinent to state clearly that the wrong expressions in context that this exercise is studying are hinged on the sentence structures. A sentence is the form which carries all the units of the English since it is a group of clauses that conveys a complete meaning. For instance, '*when you come to our house, please, bring that dress.* In this sentence, there exist of one main clause and one subordinate clause. Again, *she is smart but she gossips.* From this sentence, it can be discovered that it has only two main clauses. However, the wrong expression in the context of a particular usage has posed lots of challenges in the Igbo subtitled movies of the Nollywood industry owned by the Nigerians.

From the above, Nigerians became enthusiastically moved and equally fascinated by the cinema after the first film entitled *The coronation of King Edward VII* at Westminster which was shown in Lagos in 1903 and eventually became a welcome relief to the dull monotony of the town. By 1935, Aderinokun (2005) states that the Edgar Rice Burroughs film *Sanders of the River,* which was partly shot in Nigeria featured the Nigerian Orlando Martins of 1899 - 1985, who acted alongside with Paul Robeson from America and therefore began to create the sensitivity around film making in Nigeria. Based on this, Aderinokun (2005) says that in the 1950s and 1960s, there were more than one hundred theatre troupes in the Yoruba region alone, travelling from village to village for evening entertainments. Some of the troupes include Wole Soyinka's Mbari Mbayo cultural group and Hubert Ogunde's troupe. Within the period of 1980s, some of the stage presentations began to use short film projections to portray the *Splendor of kingly courts, magical transformations, The intrigue of good and evil spirits*, and *The outrageous wealthy living of the new Nigerian rich.* However, by the middle of 1980s, when every State has gotten their own television and radio broadcasting stations, laws then limited foreign television contents on the media schedules, and on this, the producers of television programmes started featuring local popular theatrical arts more than their foreign alternatives. So, in line with the success attained so far, the broadcast later lead to the inexpensive video technology of the late 1980s that transformed the practice of producing and consuming films, and the stage presentations moved totally into video film production. Based on this, people loved filming to live theatres and so, Nollywood was created with the application of subtitles after few years of emergence in order to help a non speaker of a particular native language to follow up with any movie made available by the entertainment industry. Due to no experts and lack of competent hand or what I will call *over-sabi* by some of the staff of the entertainment house, there abound lots of discredits to much of the produce of the Nollywood house, the Igbo example. Herein, *over-sabi* is used in the sense of assuming to know much while you actually don't know anything. This discredit touches the areas of wrong expression of a particular utterance in a particular movie into another language through subtitle, lack of proper punctuations, capitalization, and finally, a non alignment of spoken utterances with its subtitled equivalences. However, all these formed the problem of the study, although, the essence of

this research aims at studying the correctness of subtitled expressions in context: The translator in film making process in the selected Igbo movie, and providing solutions on how to go about the encountered problems during subtitle processes. Supposedly, information transfers are done by translators, and this very transfer can be textual or paratextual. Textual transfers are the book form of renditions while paratextual in this study is taking to be a non book transfer such as media or audio visual translation which subtitle is one. However, subtitles are done in the process of filming and so, the translator acts out the function of subtitling in the film making process. His roles in subtitling correct expression in context make the target information original in the target language. The role of a translator is encompassing in the sense that he aids in bringing out the authenticity of the spoken source information in the target language (Magdalene and Agnieszka, 2020). Also, it makes the subtitle original as well as making the intended information to be properly passed, especially, in the context in which it is used. Most times, it is discovered that some subtitled movies loses its taste because of wrong transfer of expression in context, and this on the contrary, will not allow a foreign language learner of Igbo, or those who suffer hard of hearing or hearing impaired patients to follow up the intended message of the home made movies. This will in other words make the essence of the subtitle to be lost and misappropriated in the process. However, by the end of this study, the exercise shall be of help to the Igbo media house of Nollywood industry as it will expose them with the right methodologies to adopt in order to have good rendition in their subtitles. While in academics, it will add to the existing literatures in scholarship as it will assist future researchers during their studies.

II. THEORETICAL STUDIES

The study of Nida (1964) came up with the formal and dynamic equivalence in translation. The formal equivalence of translation tries to remain as close to the original text as possible without adding the translator`s ideas and thoughts into the transferred information. This type of translation is more literal in nature and so, the more literal the translation seems, the less danger there is of corrupting the original message, hence, it can be called a word for word translation. However, there is a unique feature that is attached with this form of translation. The uniqueness assumes a moderate degree of familiarity with the subject matter on the part of the reader. However, a clear excerpt can be gotten from the translation done in the *King James Bible Version* and the *English Standard Bible Version*. On the other hand, the dynamic equivalence is an approach to translation where the original language is rendered thought for thought instead of word for word as it appeared in a formal equivalence. Based on this ground, a dynamic equivalence is involved with taking each sentence thought for thought from the original text and renders it into a sentence in the target language in a way that it conveys sameness in meaning, but does not necessarily use the exact phrasing of the original. The idea behind this dynamic equivalence is to improve readability by rephrasing constructions that could be confusing when literally translated. This is to say that it retains some faithfulness to the original text rather than creating a complete paraphrase. Again, the dynamic equivalence sacrifices faithfulness to the original text in order to achieve a more natural translation. It is equally formed in order to be used when the readability of the translation is more important than preserving the original wording. A dynamic equivalence is useful when the original language is very different from the target language because, it helps in understanding better the literal translation. Categorically, dynamic equivalence is almost used in the context of Bible translations. This instance can be seen in the *New Living Translation Bible* while in the *New International Version*, its translation tries to strike a balance between dynamic and formal equivalence. In accordance with this, in some places, it will adopt a dynamic equivalence translation while at some point, it uses a formal equivalence. Based on this, Nida (1964) definitions of formal and dynamic equivalence are involved with the cultural implications for translation. Upon this, Nida states that a gloss translation is typified a formal equivalence where form and content are reproduced as faithfully as possible and the target language audience is able to comprehend very well as much as he can of the customs, manner of thought and means of expression of the source language context. On the contrast, a dynamic equivalence works towards relating the receptor to modes of behaviour that is relevant within the context of the reader's own culture without insisting that he understand the cultural patterns of the source language context.

From the above, there are individual problems in the two forms of equivalences, and the problems vary in scope-based on the cultural and linguistic gap between the two languages concerned. In connection to this, Nida made reference to a bible translation where *Lamb of God* is transposed as *Seal of God* for the Eskimos. This is because; the lamb does not imply innocence in their culture. He further asserts that in a situation like this, a formal equivalence does not mean anything in a different culture and so, a dynamic equivalence is very pertinent in this type of translation. Irrespective of the situation where this kind of translation can be applied, some people still believe that the literal form of translation is the best. Due to this, on the contrast of formal and dynamic equivalence, it is highly believed that people who believe that literal translation is closer to the original have much preference over the formal equivalence while on the contrast, people that prefer a dynamic equivalence will feel that such translation allows people to understand better the original information. So on the contrastive analysis of the two forms of translation according to Nida (1964), there are differences with the formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. The issue with the former is that it might demand too much of some readers while in the later, the reader encounters the text with most of the decisions already made and must assume that the work of the translator(s) are not prejudicial. In filmic study, Gottlieb (1992) came up with the translation strategies for film subtitles, and they are:

i.   **Expansion:** This is used when the original requires an explanation because of some cultural nuances that are not retrievable in the target language.
ii. **Paraphrase:** It is used in cases where the phraseology of the original cannot be reconstructed in the same syntactic way in the target language.
iii. **Transfer:** This involves translating the source text completely and accurately.
iv. **Imitation:** This is maintaining the same forms, typically with names of people and places.
v.   **Transcription:** It is used in the cases where a term is unusual even in the source text.
vi. **Dislocation:** This is adopted when the original employs some sort of special effect.
vii. **Condensation**: This involves the shortening of the text in the least obtrusive way possible.
viii. **Decimation**: This is an extreme form of condensation where perhaps for reasons of discourse speed, even potentially important elements are omitted.
ix. **Deletion**: This involves the total elimination of parts of a text.
x.   **Resignation**: This is used when no translation solution can be found and meaning is inevitably lost.

From the above outlines, these strategies are used by translators to handle different subtitle problems. Upon this, Nwatu (2017) asserts that Gottlieb provided a general typology of the various forms of audiovisual translation. However, condensation is different from paraphrase because, condensation compresses the message while the paraphrase quickly rearranges the sentential structures. Again, condensation precedes and necessitates paraphrase. The implication according to Gottlieb (1992) is that by using the subtitle strategies on the videos, it will be shown to have more frames - subtitles than it actually has. This is to say that a particular frame reflects more than one strategy at once. Summarily, the work of Gottlieb maintains that translators who set to subtitle must use strategies in order to perform well in the translational exercise. Summarily, the research frameworks for this study are Nida's equivalence and Gottlieb's subtitle strategies.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In line with the above information, there are different methods one can adopt in order to have a clear rendering. Many translation scholars have come up with different theories, techniques, principles and strategies in order to see that the transferred information is perceived original in the target language by the target audience. Based on this, the study shall adopt the emergent design approach in its methodology in studying the correctness of subtitled expressions in context: The translator in film making process in the film titled *Onye Bụ Nna M* since this study is a qualitative research. The appropriateness of the design for the study is because, it adapts to new ideas that comes up in the course of carrying out a qualitative research. Also, the study shall adopt the methodology of explication in analyzing the data used for the study. The researcher shall play and replay the movie in order to make a fair judgment.

IV. OVERVIEW OF THE MOVIE *ONYE Bụ NNA M*

The movie was shot to reveal the decadence people show in their relationships. It addresses that one should take up his responsibilities. The movie entitled *Onye Bụ Nna M'* is an Igboeze production movie of the Nollywood industry. It is a film that presents the need of a father in one's life. Chioma who was pregnant for Samuel gave birth to Amaka who was born outside wedlock in her father's house (Chioma's father). Samuel who the film revolves around was in a relationship with Nneka. Also, he is the one who got Chioma pregnant at their early age of life and equally denied being responsible for the pregnancy. In one of the occasions, Sam (Samuel) as he is usually called proposed to Nneka for marriage but was turned down. However, Sam moved on with his life. Afterwards Sam's proposal was pushed to bay, he got across Chioma and started making moves to make peace with her which he succeeded at last and they lived happily after whilst he assumes the role of a father to Amaka.

V. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data analysis is strictly done based on the objective of the study in order to get the actual result that is supposed of this research exercise. The objective is to ascertain the correctness of subtitled expressions in context: The translator in film making process. It will also use the Nida's equivalence and Gottlieb's strategy in the analysis. Based on this, the analysis will be done in the tables 1 - 3 below.

TABLE I
SHOWING THE USE OF TRANSFER IN *ONYE BỤ NNA M*

Asụsụ Igbo	Movie English Language subtitle	Correct expressions in context
I were ego maọbụ ihe ọ bụla nye amụnsụ, I korola okwu	Shoukd you offer mony or any other thing to a wizard you've invite trouble	If you give money or anything to a witch, you have brought problem on yourself
ọkwa ị mara nwata nwanyị a dị ọcha na-aga achọta m toro ogologo?	Do you know that very young girl that do visit me §	Do you know the tall and fair complexioned young girl that visits me?
Ya ka ọ nọkatara last week nwata nwanyị a wee buru onwe ya bịa.	Just last week the girl showed up	Just on a sudden last week, the girl came visiting
A na-ekwu ka a na-ekwu, nwata nwanyị nọrọ n'elu bed pịwa phone	Just in same time the girl started browsing through phone in bed	Without wasting time, the girl climbed the bed and started pressing phone
Ihe m na-akọgheri bụ adịm ime. ọ kwa ihe m na-agwa gị na mụ achọghị ka o mee	The rubbish am talking is that am pregnant Same thing I was warning you I wouldn't like to happen	The rubbish that I am talking about is that I am pregnant. It is what I was telling you that I would not want to happen
Onweghi ihe m mere. O nweghi ihe m mara m mee gị	I don't know what I did. I don't know if I did anything to you	I did not do anything; there is nothing I knew that I did to you.
A na-ekwu okwu love ọ na-ekwu okwu ring	Talking love he's talking ring	While talking about love, you are talking about ring
Mụ na ezinaụlọ m na ndị be anyị na-adị gị ka ndị ara	I and my family all seem to you like crazy ones	I and my family as well as my people seem to you like mad people.
	SEASON TWO	
Mụ gaghị achọ m pụta n'ezi m hụ gị na ụmụnwoke na-akwụgharị	I wouldn't want seeing you roaming about with men	I will not want to come outside and see you and boys perambulating.
Amaka biko ewela iwe o, ezi enyi m	amaka please don't get annoyed over what I just said	My good friend Amaka, please don't be angry again.

The translator uses the transfer strategy to achieve his aim. This method is involved with translating the source text completely and accurately without meaning loses in the target language. A clear explication of the embodiments of what transfer connotes can be seen in the table above. The used strategy also aligns with the view of Nida's theory of equivalence. Equivalence is involved with having the same information of the original in another language without meaning lose.

TABLE II
SHOWING THE USE OF PARAPHRASE AND IMITATION IN *ONYE BỤ NNA M*

Asụsụ Igbo	English Language subtitle	Correct expressions in context
Chere Nneka, ị dịkwa serious n'ihe a ị na-ekwu?	Wait Nneka so you're actually serious about what you're are saying §	Wait, are you actually serious with what you are saying Nneka?
Ị na-ege m nti?	Are you listening §	Are you listening to me?
Maka a pịwakwaraa ihe a, uche ha apụọ	Cos once they start that chatting they lose concentration	Because they lose concentration once they start chatting,
Sam, ya oteela I mewere?	Sam its long you've been doing?	So, it has been long you started doing it Sam?
Nwanne gị nwoke asịrọ gị, ị sị ya .	If your does not say to you you'll say to him	If your brother does not say to you, you will say to him.
Ngwanụ biko ka anyị mee sọsọ otu or ka anyị mee half, sọ sọ half	Ok then. Please, just once Or lets do half. Just half	Ok, please let us do it once or we do half, just half.
Kee ihe ị sịrị na ọ bụ ya na-eme gị?	What did say is wrong with you?	What did you say that is happening to you?
Ahụkwara m gị n'anya, ọ bụghị ring ga-ebutere mụ na gị esemokwu	I love you. its not ring that should bring us quarrel	It's not ring that will bring quarrel between us, I loved you
Maka ị ma na ọ ga-akago aka	Cos you know she must've matured	Because you know that she must be mature by now
Maka ụdị ọsọ ọ gbaa taa	Cos the way she ran today	Because the way she ran today
O nwere onye I na-ele anya ya ga-achọta gị n'abalị a?	Are you expecting a visitor tonight §	Are you expecting anybody to visit you tonight?
Gaa mara onye bụ ihe ahụ na-akụ aka	Go check to know who's that knocking	Go and check the person that is knocking
Ihe nke a pụtara bụ na mụ aghọtaghị agwa gị nke ikpe azụ a	What this means, is that I don't understand your behavior this lastly	What this implies is that I do not understand your behaviour lately
Esisielam nri, bịa ka ị bịa rie nri	I'm done cooking. Come have dinner	Come and eat food, I am through with cooking
ọ bụrụnụ ring ka ị chọrọ, ring juru n'ime ahịa, m jee ahịa m kpote ring mkponye gị	If it is ring you want there are uncountable of it in the market when go to market I ll get you enough of it	When I go to the market, I will get you enough of it. If it is ring that you want rings are much in the market.
Ajụọla m gị, mmadụ abụọ nwere temper problem, ha a na-anọ n'otu ụlọ?	Does two people that with temper problem stay in one house §	I have asked you; do two people with temper problem stay in one house?
Ihe m chọrọ kịtaa bụ etu mụ na nwa m nwanyị ga-eji na-adị na mma	The only thing I want right now is how be in good terms with my daughter	The thing I wanted right now is how I will be in good terms with my daughter.
Otu ụbọchị isi na nti onye ọzọ nụ na ada gị nwanyị na-agba nkwụ	One day, you'll hear from someone else that your daughter is having her traditional wedding	One day, you will hear from someone else that your daughter is having her traditional marriage.
Bịa, lee m anya	Come, look	Come, look at me.

Kee ka ị ga-esi ebe isi tiri bata bịa na-achọ onye ga-enye gị ugwu?	How can you just from wherever barge in here looking for who will give you respect §	How will you just come from anywhere and start to look for one who will respect you?
M ka ga-abịa hụ gị. ọ kwanụ ọrụ, ọrụ kariri m ahụ, biko ewela iwe	I will still come and see you its just work I am very much occupied with work please do not be angry	It is just work, I have too much work, don't be angry please, I will still come and see you
Etu m si were hụ ya bụ nwa, o nwekwara mwute na ụdị akwa o bere ebe a	The way am looking at that man he's deeply pained cos the way he cried here today	The way I see that boy, he was remorseful as well as the way he cried here
Atarọ m gị	I do not blame	I do not blame you
	SEASON TWO	
ọ na-abụkwaraa I kwuwe ihe dị etu a, ọ na-echetara ihe m chezọrọ echezọ	Each time you say things like this it reminds me of things I've long forgothen	Once you start saying things of this kind, it reminds me of the things I have long forgotten
ọkwanụ otu afọ fọrọ ka m si na mahadum pụta	Is it not just one year left and I will graduate from the university §	It is just a year that remains for me to graduate from the university.
Ka m gwa gị nke na-eme eme	Let me tell you what do happen	Let me tell you the happening information
Uncle Sam sị na ọ ga-azụtara m ji a hụrụ ahụ na mmanụ ma ọ na-abịa	Uncle Sam saids he will bring me roasted yam while coming	Uncle Sam said that he will buy for me a roasted yam and red oil while coming
Gị na Uncle Sam nke a. ị dị sure na ọ bụghị ya bụ nna gị?	and you're now happy. are you sure uncle Sam is not your father §	You and this uncle Sam. Are you sure he is not your father?
ọ etu unu si eme dịka nna na nwa	It just because of the closeness between you both	It is because of the way you people behave as father and daughter
Uju nekwaa anya ka m gwa gị, e nwere ihe e ji egwu egwu nwee ihe ejighi egwu egwu..	Uju look let me tell you. they're things you joke with and they're things you don't joke with also	Uju look let me tell you, there are things one plays with and things one doesn't play with
Ka a kpọgodu nke a egwuregwu. Anwakatakwala anwa n'ụwa a again were ụdị ihe a wee gwusa m egwu ọzọ	For today lets call it a joke. Next don't you ever try this kind of joke again.	Let us just call this one a play. Never you in this life use this kind of thing to play with me again

Looking at the frames - subtitles, you will discover that it is full of rephraseology and imitation of the original information in order to be faithful with the information. So, paraphrase is resorted to in cases where the phraseology of the original language cannot be reconstructed in the same syntactic way in the target language while imitation maintains the same forms, typically with names of people and places unaltered. So the formness retention is almost in alignment with Nida's view of dynamic equivalence where his focus is on form and content. Extracts from the table above explicates the rendition of the frames hence, subtitles.

TABLE III
SHOWING THE USE OF EXPANSION IN *ONYE BỤ NNA M*

Asụsụ Igbo	English Language subtitle	Correct expressions in context
ọ sịrị ka ọ kwụnye bulb?	He said he wants to plug in bulb	He said that he wants to have sex
{ tara akwụ ka etu a ka eze gị si acha?	Did you chew palm-fruit or is this the colour of your teeth §	Are you ok?
Maka ọ nwaa ya anwaa, m kuru mmiri ọnwaụ che ya	Cos if he dares it, I'll give him death water	Because if he tries it, I will kill him

The used strategy in the above table tries to make explicit the original information to the target audience. It tries to explain utterances. In other words, it defines the utterances used in the source video. The strategy is expansion. So, an expansion is used when the original text requires an explanation because of some cultural nuances not retrievable in the target language. When the right information is being tendered wrongly, the grammar may give false information. So, wrong expression in context actually gives a negative thought to the intended message. Due to inappropriate expression of the intended information of the source language due to wrong use of verb, adjective and adverb or other word classes, the supposed information tends to be missed in the process. On the contrary, the good expression of thoughts gives credit to the information that is meant for the target audience. In subtitle based on the little time that is used to read up the frames on the bottom part of the screen or cinema, a good subtitle will require a short time for the information to be digested easily, when the right terms are used with the right tenses, concords, grammatical constructions and all the rudiments that make up a sentence.

VI. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON ASCERTAINING THE CORRECT EXPRESSION IN CONTEXT, IN THE IGBO SUBTITLED MOVIE

The language of the world operates with different syntactic and grammatical contrasts, and its right use brings about good semantic contrasts. In this study, it is discovered that grammar can be seen as a general rule that governs languages of the world while phonotactics deals strictly on a particular language. This is to say that the rule that is obtainable in phonotactics is language specific. However, it is discovered that expression is used to denote spoken or written utterances while the focus of this segment is on the correct expression in context of the movie used for the study. It looked at how well the subtitled information is rendered in the target language. The study reveals that the source language of the film used for the study is Igbo while the target language is English language. So, in order to have

accuracy in the different terms and phrases of the source information to the target based on the right expressions used in context, the study finds out that different languages are used throughout the world to communicate ideas, beliefs, intentions, actions and feelings. It also discovered that with mass media and the internet, interaction is occurring faster and more frequently with every passing second. The study showed that a wrong expression used in context of discourses brings about change in communication of ideas, beliefs, intentions, actions and feelings in the subtitled Igbo movie used for the study and other areas where grammar use can be applied. Based on this, the study claims that if information is written well with the right tenses by observing the right phonotactics of that language, there will be no misinterpretation of ideas or information, and on this, the objective of this study is achieved. This is because, the study has actually ascertained the right expressions used in context, in the Igbo subtitled movie used for the study. It has equally given its signification on the insight translators can follow when faced with subtitle of this kind.

A. Conclusion

Due to the discrepancies between the two languages of discourse, the nature of subtitling in the Igbo films are critically analysed carefully. So, looking at the totality of the study, the research shows that translation is not just an interlinguistic process of information used or transferred, but a more complex exercise which is more than just replacing a source language text with a target language text. On this note, it is worthy to state that out of the findings of the study, it is discovered that the major or ultimate constraint or problem on the subtitles arise from the fact that it is an overt form of translation in the sense that it can be assessed and evaluated by anyone who knows the source language of the movie used for the very information under discourse. However, following the strategy of Gottlieb (1992), the subtitle strategies shows that the constraints that operate in the process of subtitling result in a greater degree of loss than it is the case in other types of transfers. Based on this, it can be said that the findings of this study have taken the gaps that prompted this study to the limelight in going a long way in solving the problem of the study. The adopted frameworks that are used for the study is suitable. For Gottlieb's (1992) subtitle strategies, it went far in capturing the various subtitling strategies employed by the translators of the Igbo films used for the study. The study also uses three tables for the study and finally concludes that the study has left no stone unturned.

B. Recommendations

In the future based on this research conducted in ascertaining the correct expression in context, in the Igbo subtitled movie, the researcher recommends that further researches should be done in audiovisual productions in Igbo language which in the course of the study, the exercise will look at dubbing and subtitles in Igbo. Again, the quality of subtitles of the Igbo home made movies that its focus is on the target audience should be investigated. This will be on the basis that the information meant for a particular group must conform to their belief systems and ideologies of the people so that it will be embraced by the target audience. This is also in alignment with Nida's proposition on sameness in the sense that any translational piece is said to be equivalent only if the effect, which the source text has on its readers are also achieved on the target readers.

REFERENCES

[1]   Aderinokun, T. (2005). The economics of Nigerian film, art and business. [Online]. Retrieved October 16, 2019, from: http://www.nollywood.net/Essays/p2_articleid/26
[2]   Bilal K. K. (2016). An introduction to subtitling: Challenges and Strategies. *International Journal of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies, 3(1)*. Retrieved 26 November, 2020, 122 -124
[3]   Christopher, R. (2014). The interpreter and translator trainee. *The subtitle Project, 2(1)*. Doi:10.1080/1750399x.2008.10798768.
[4]   Gottlieb, H. (1992). Subtitling a new university discipline. In Dollerup, C. & Loddegaard, A. (Eds.), *Teaching translation and interpreting: training talent and eụperience: papers from the first language international conference, Elsinore, Denmark,* 161-170.
[5]   Magdalene, O. & Agnieszka, S. (2020).The quality of templates in subtitling: A survey on current market practices, and changing subtitler competences. *Perspective.*Doi.org/10.1080/0907676ụ.2020.1791919. Retrieved August 8, 2020.
[6]   Nida, E. A. (1964). Toward a science of translation. Leiden: Brill
[7]   Nwatu, R. G. (2017). Subtitling in some selected Igbo musical videos. M. A Dissertation, Department of Linguistics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
[8]   Nwike, C. C. (2015). Usoro na nsogbu a na-enwe na ntụgharị {duuazị: *Chike and river* dịka ebe mgbakwasị ụkwụ. B. A. Project, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
[9]   Nwike, C. C. (2019). Issues and challenges in translating legal text from English to the Igbo language. M. A Dissertation, Department of Linguistics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
[10]   Tim, Z., Wilfried, A., Fred, P. & Nadira, S. (2017). Effect of subtitles, complexity and language proficiency on learning from online education videos. *Journal of Media Psychology Theories, Method and Application 29(1)* Doi:10.1027/1864-1105/900208.
[11]   Uchenna, O. (2007). Nollywood: The influence of the Nigerian movie industry on African culture, Retrieved January 1, 2020 from https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=xCh6NzoAAAAJ&hl=en.

Christopher C. Nwike is a native of Onitsha, Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra State. He was born in Ogidi, Anambra State on the 3rd of May. Christopher C. Nwike obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in *Linguistics/Igbo* in the department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka Enugu State in 2015. Also, he obtained a Master of Arts degree in *Translation* in the department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka Enugu State in 2019. Currently, Christopher C. Nwike undergoes a doctoral study (PhD) in *Translation* in the department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

He engages in translation jobs – textual translation and subtitles. He is an Igbo language teacher in Royal Crown Academy Orba Road Nsukka, Enugu State.

Mr. Nwike belongs to the Association of Translation Studies in Nigeria. He also obtained an academic merit award in Honour of Aknu-ibiam As the Best Graduating Student Who Produced the Best Long Easy in Igbo Language in the 2014/2015 Academic Session.

Christopher Uchenna Agbedo was born and brought up in Olido, Elugwu-Ezikeoba, Igbo-Eze North Council Area of Enugu State Nigeria. He studied in the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria Nsukka and obtained B.A (Linguistics/Igbo), M.A (Linguistics), PhD (Linguistics) in 1986, 1991 and 1997 respectively. He has been a key player in the university system as a lecturer, supervisor, researcher, mentor, administrator, language development expert and communication strategist, consultant to professional and corporate bodies like National University Commission, National Commission for Colleges of Education, and Joint Admission and Matriculation Board. He is a member of the Senate of the University of Nigeria, member, Senate Entrance Committee, chairman and member of several University, Faculty, and Departmental Committees. He is a Professor of Linguistics, and was immediate past Head of Department, Linguistics, Igbo & Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka Nigeria. Prof Agbedo has authored over 100 publications, comprising 9 mainline textbooks on language and linguistics, 4 creative works (novels), 80 journal articles, 16 book chapters and 2 edited books and journals. He is a member of professional organisations, including Linguistic Association of Nigeria, Applied Linguistics and Literacy in Africa & the Diaspora Research Network, American Association for Applied Linguistics, International Pragmatics Association, African Studies Global Virtual Forum, Pennsylvania State University, USA and Fellow, Netherlands Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS-KNAW). He has attended over 28 local, national, and international conferences, seminars, and workshops. He has successfully supervised over 100 undergraduate long essays, 38 Master of Arts dissertations, and 19 doctoral theses. He is an external examiner to over 10 federal and state universities and external assessor of professorial appointments to several federal and state universities. He is currently on the editorial boards of about 10 local and international journals as founding editor, editor-in-chief, editorial consultant, and peer review editor. He has 10 local and international prizes and awards. His areas of specialisation are sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics; his research interests include critical applied linguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, translation/interpretation, child communication disorders and documentary linguistics.

Efficacy of EFL Teachers' Assessment Literacy and Professional Identity in Boosting Learners' Autonomy

Hooshang Yazdani
Department of English Language and Literature, Arak University, Arak, Iran

Parviz Ghasedi
Department of English Language and Literature, Arak University, Arak, Iran

Abstract—**This study was set out to investigate the effects of EFL teachers' assessment literacy and professional identity on learners' autonomy. Meanwhile, the relationship between teachers' assessment literacy and professional identity was investigated. Moreover, educators' perspectives on learner autonomy were studied. To this end, 40 EFL teachers participated in the study through completing assessment literacy scale developed by Mertler (2003) and teacher professional identity questionnaire designed by Beijaard et al. (2000). Besides, 20 EFL teachers were interviewed. Likewise, 110 upper-intermediate EFL learners answered Zhang and Li's (2004) learner autonomy questionnaire. A mixed method design was used to answer the research questions. The findings revealed that teachers' assessment literacy was linked to their professional identity. Moreover, assessment literacy and professional identity had fruitful effects on learner autonomy. The findings made it certain that teachers believed in learners' abilities however they didn't know how to cultivate autonomous learners.**

Index Terms—**assessment literacy, autonomy, professional identity**

I. Introduction

The vital roles of teachers in educational context are undeniable. Teachers are considered as the main sources for selecting materials, arranging the classrooms, providing learning opportunities, and assessing learners' advancement. Therefore, teacher's professional identity and assessment literacy are considered as crucial components in determining the effectiveness of any educational context. On the other hand, equipping learners with skills to be autonomous received the attention of lots of teachers and researchers nowadays. Accordingly, this study tries to investigate the effects of teacher's professional identity and assessment literacy on learners' autonomy.

Professional identity relates to teacher self-conception based on his/her experiences, perspectives, and believes (Ibarra, 1999). Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010, p. 1564) refer to teacher professional identity as teacher understanding of "teaching related situations and relationships that manifest themselves in practical professional activities". Bullough (1997) considers teacher identity as the essence of teacher decisions. It roots in sociocultural factors (Mofrad, 2016) and influences teacher manner and behavior (Abednia, 2012). Caihong (2011) notes that teachers' professional identities determine their interpretations of learners' behavior and improvements; it also effects teachers' teaching methods. Ivanovaa and Skara-Mincĺne (2016) mention that professional identity is linked to effective teaching. Therefore, effective teachers have positive professional identities.

van Huizen et al. (2005) argue that one of the main aims of teacher training courses is boosting educators' professional identities. Research indicates that teacher professional identity is linked to teaching quality (Veisson & Kabaday, 2018) and teacher pedagogical content knowledge (Atai & Khazaee, 2014). Moreover, teachers with high level of professional identity have better relationships with learners (Rockoff, 2004) and are more effective in teaching, understanding learners' needs, solving problems, and transferring knowledge (Levine, 2006).

Assessment and learning opportunity are considered as two main concepts in language teaching. Creating appropriate contexts and providing accessible input seems not to be enough for language acquisition. Assessment determines learners' strengths and weaknesses. It helps teachers to design, adopt, or change teaching methods. Likewise, assessment determines the quality and effectiveness of teaching (Stiggins, 1999). Therefore, teacher knowledge of assessment has direct effects on learners' outcomes (Bennett, 2011). Messick (1989) mentioned that teachers should have accurate and acceptable knowledge of the effects, results, and consequences of assessment.

In the same line, Stiggins (1991) coined the concept of assessment literacy and defined it as teacher comprehension of appropriate assessment. Ainsworth and Viegut (2006, p.53) described it as "the ability to understand the different purposes and types of assessment in order to select the most appropriate type of assessment to meet a specific purpose" (p. 53). More specifically in applied linguistics, the notion of language assessment literacy was defined as "the ability to design, develop and critically evaluate tests and other assessment procedures, as well as the ability to monitor, evaluate,

grade and score assessments on the basis of theoretical knowledge" (Vogt & Tsagari, 2014, p. 377). Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) is vital competence for stakeholders involved in language teaching and assessment (Taylor, 2009; Yastıbaş & Takkaç, 2018). Scarino (2013) believed that developing LAL is necessary for a teacher. LAL helps educators to evaluate their attitudes, believes, actions, and understandings (Scarino, 2013). On the other hand, the low level of LAL leads to an invalid evaluation of a learner (Suah, 2012).

The third variable of this study is learner autonomy. Autonomy refers to learners' "ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981, p. 3). Nunan (2003) viewed autonomy as students' capacity to monitor their acquisitions. Benson (2001) argued that autonomy has three main levels. These levels include monitoring learning, learning contents, and cognitive process (Benson, 2001). Little (2009) mentioned that autonomous learners do their works independently. Holec (1981) asserts that being autonomous enable learners to set goals, select contents, choose appropriate methods, control their learning, and assess their progress. Ghasedi et al. (2018) note that autonomous learners are more willing to participate in classroom interactions and negotiations. Zarei and Gahremani (2010) added that learners with the higher level of autonomy are more active and effective in language acquisition.

The review of literature indicated that autonomy is linked to motivation (Hua, 2009; Li & Yu, 2008) self-efficacy (Li & Yu, 2008; Wu & Zhang, 2009) effective learning (Vickers & Enn, 2006), critical thinking (Fahim & Haghighi, 2014), language proficiency (Qi, 2011), and speaking fluency, accuracy, and complexity (Ghasedi et al., 2018) The efficacy of teachers' professional identity and assessment literacy is well documented. Likewise, a conclusive review of previous studies indicates that learner autonomy is a vital variable in language acquisition. Some studies were conducted in this regard; however, no study investigated the links between teacher professional identity and assessment literacy. Moreover, no study investigated the effects of language assessment literacy and professional identity on learner autonomy. Accordingly, this study was set out to fill the gaps and find plausible answers to the following questions:

1. Do teachers' assessment literacy and professional identity affect learners' autonomy?
2. Is there any links between teachers' assessment literacy and their professional identity?
3. What are teachers' perspectives about learners' autonomy?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Professional Identity

Professionalism has different meanings for different individuals (Fox, 1992). It is considered as a quality of any profession (Hoyle, 1980). Professional identity refers to the continuous procedure of understanding and re-translation of encounters (Kerby, 1991). In educational contexts, it is defined as the characteristics and behaviors of an expert educator (Hoyle, 1980). Lasky (2005) refers to teacher professional identity as the way educators characterize their jobs. Ashforth and Tomiuk (2000) contend that professional identity includes individual, expert, and situational factors. They added that in different contexts one of these factors became prevailing. Kompf et al. (1996) mentioned that teachers' professional identities determine their attitudes, convictions, actions, and reactions.

Considering professionalism as one of the main characteristics of a professional teacher, McBer (2000) noted that responsibility, certainty, reliability, and regard are the main dimensions of teacher professional identity. Hoyle and John (1995) considered responsibility, autonomy, and knowledge as three main components of professional identity. David (2000) believed that hypothetical and practical ability, autonomy, ethicality, open assistance, and discipline were the main subcomponents of professional identity.

Asserting that the identity of a teacher develops during teaching; Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) add that teachers' professional identities enable them to shape their value system about how to comprehend their roles or how to be in school or society. Moore and Hofman (1988) noted that the higher the teachers' professional identity the lower their job dissatisfaction and work stress. Gaziel (1995) showed that professional identity was negatively correlated with teacher burnout. İlgan et al. (2015) put forth that teachers with high professional identity spent more time on teaching tasks in order to increase the quality of teaching.

The results of Veisson and Kabaday (2018) indicated that the lower the teachers' professional identity, the lower their teaching quality. Aghaalikhani and Maftoon (2018) studied the effects of EFL teaching programs on teachers' professional identities. They collected data from 150 Iranian EFL teachers. Their findings showed that teacher education programs only improved two dimensions of professionalism (professional development and reflection) and had no significant effects on responsibility and ethics. They added that context and politics are two main factors that affect teacher professional identity.

B. Language Assessment Literacy

Assessment has different functions in various educational contexts. Fulcher (2010) summarized the main functions of an assessment as providing information to make decisions, gatekeeping, diagnose learner level, motivate student, and impose specific political and social norms. Likewise, assessment has lots of advantages such as providing data to improve teaching styles, control learner learning, make students aware of their competence, and improve learners' self-esteem (Yamtima & Wongwanich, 2014). Moreover, the direct link between teaching and assessment implies that assessment improves teaching (Malone, 2013). Consequently, assessment literacy or more specifically LAL could be considered as one of the main requirements of an effective teacher.

Assessment literacy refers to teacher sound understanding of the principles of evaluation, methods of assessment, assessment criteria, and assessment tools and strategies (Mertler, 2003; Popham, 2004; Volante & Fazio, 2007). Arguing that assessment literacy involves theoretical and practical knowledge, Taylor (2009, p. 27) added that such knowledge should be contextualized "within a sound understanding of the role and function of assessment within education and society". The highly cited definition of LAL, proposed by Fulcher (2012, p. 125) is as:

- "Knowledge, skills and abilities required designing, developing, maintaining or evaluating" different kinds of language tests.
- Awareness of assessment strategies and familiarity with underling standards and ideas that guide and support evaluation
- The capacity to implement such knowledge and skills "within wider historical, social, political and philosophical frameworks"

Stiggins (1999) numbered the main criteria for a teacher to be assessment literate as starting with a specific purpose of assessment in mind, determining the level of requirement, selecting suitable methods of assessment based on the purpose and level of requirement, developing accurate test rubric, avoiding subjectivity in scoring, and giving appropriate feedback based on learners' scores. These criteria were summarized by National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), National Education Association (NEA), and American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in 1990. These criteria include being skillful in choosing suitable methods for assessment, designing or implementing accurate tools for assessment, taking the exam, scoring the answer sheets, and reporting the results, making differentiation between learners based on their scores, transferring the results of assessment to learners, learners' parents, and other stakeholders, and being aware of the differences between ethical and unethical assessment and being unwilling to use unethical ones. Such criteria help teachers evaluate learners fairly (Lian & Yew, 2016). Fulcher (2010) believed that the teachers who have high level of LAL are able to distinguish notions like assessment for learning from assessment of learning. Likewise, they are familiar with different kinds of assessment such as formative, summative, self/peer assessment, and dynamic assessment (Fulcher, 2010). Accordingly, they can choose the best one based on their needs and contexts.

Tsagari and Vogt (2017) investigated European EFL teachers LAL. Their findings indicated that teachers felt that they had low level of LAL. The participants in the study noted that their LAL was not enough for assessment activities. Tsagari and Vogt (2017) mentioned that teacher training courses didn't prepare teachers to use assessment tools, strategies, and routines. In a similar study Volante and Fazio (2007) concluded that Canadian college teachers had low level of assessment literacy. They added that those teachers need more training on classroom assessment. The findings of Shim (2009) showed that teachers were assessment literate; however, they didn't implement lots of assessment principles into practice. Xu and Brown (2017) reported that there wasn't significant difference between male and female teachers concerning assessment literacy.

C. Learners' Autonomy

Autonomy has different interpretations in different cultures (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). It was regarded as learners' responsibility for their improvement (Brindley, 1990). Being autonomous refers to being able to make decision for one's own advancement. Taking the needs lacks, wants, and goals into account, autonomous learners are able to direct and manage their studying. Having the clear understanding of their purposes, duties, and expectations autonomous learners review their progress and assess their changes (Holec, 1981).

Kumaravadivelu (2012) divided the autonomy into two kinds of academic and liberatory. He viewed academic autonomy as a narrowed view which aims to develop learners' academic abilities. Kumaravadivelu (2012) added that this kind of autonomy boosts learner's understandings of how to learn. On the other hand, the liberatory autonomy considered the academic autonomy as a mean to learning to liberate. Liberatory autonomy enables students to "recognize sociopolitical impediments placed on their paths to progress and provide them with the intellectual tools necessary to overcome them" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 47). This broad view of autonomy develops learners' critical thinking abilities (Kumaravadivelu, 2012).

Benson (2001) maintained that training learners are necessary for developing their autonomy. Balçıkanli (2010) proved that teachers have the high tendency to develop learners' autonomy. Chen (2011) showed that the autonomy of teachers directly affect the autonomy of students. Birchley (2003) viewed teachers in autonomous contexts as assistors, models, suppliers, advisors, and instigators. Üstünlüoğlu (2009) compared teachers and learners' perception of autonomous classrooms. The findings indicated that students had the capacity to monitor their learning; however they didn't have the willingness to do so. On the other side, teachers perceived learners incapable of taking charge of their own learning.

Dafei (2007) examined the relationship between learner autonomy and language proficiency. Findings highlighted the differences between learners with different levels of autonomy. The findings of Sakai and Takagi (2009) and Yasmin and Sohail (2017) proved such results and showed a positive correlation between learners' autonomy and language proficiency. Zarei and Gahremani (2010) showed the significance of learners' autonomy in developing their reading comprehension. Zhalehgooyan and Alavi (2014) reported the efficacy of autonomy in developing learners' listening comprehension.

A conclusive review of the previous studies highlights the significance of teachers' professional identity and assessment literacy. The benefits of autonomy in language acquisition and advancement were also accentuated. Some studies have been conducted in this regard; however, no studies examined the links between teachers' professional identity and assessment literacy. Moreover, no study addressed the effects of teachers' professional identity and assessment literacy on learners' autonomy. Therefore, this study was set out to fill the gaps and provide fruitful theoretical and pedagogical implications in this regard.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

Forty EFL teachers (17 males and 23 females) participated in this study. Their age ranged from 28-45 and all of them were Persian native speakers. They were selected from three cities (Qorveh, Dehgolan, and Sannandaj) of Kordestan province, Iran. They had different years of teaching experiences, ranged from 5 years to 15 years. It should be noted that they taught EFL in different private institutes.

Likewise, 110 upper-intermediate EFL learners (47 males and 63 females) answered learner autonomy questionnaire. They were Persian and Kurdish native speakers who had no opportunities to talk to native speakers. Their age ranged from 16-22.

B. Instruments

Assessment Literacy Scale

The first instrument that was used in this study was classroom assessment literacy inventory developed by Mertler (2003). It was adopted from Teacher Assessment Literacy Questionnaire developed by Plake et al. (1993). Classroom assessment literacy inventory involves two parts. The first part includes 35 items (4 choices for each item) about seven standards concerning teacher assessment knowledge. These standards include teacher skill in selecting appropriate and accurate assessment methods (items 1,2,3,4, and 5), designing and developing methods for assessment (items 6,7,8,9, and 10), administrating the test, scoring it, and making meaning of scores (items 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15), taking appropriate action based on test result (items 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20), gradation and categorization of learners (items 21,22,23,24, and 25), reporting the test results (items 26,27,28,29, and 30), and detecting biased, illegal, and inaccurate items (items 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35). The second part of classroom assessment literacy inventory asks questions about teachers' backgrounds such as gender, educational level, and general knowledge concerning teaching and assessment. The reliability of the instrument conducting Cronbach's alpha was .97 (Mertler, 2003).

Professional Identity Questionnaire

Teacher professional identity questionnaire developed by Beijaard et al. (2000) was used to measure teacher professional identity. The scale consists of four sections. The first section includes questions about teacher's years of experience, age, subject matter taught, and gender. The second section asks questions about subject matter field (item1, 2, 3, and 4). The third section has questions about teachers' understanding of professional teaching (items 5,6,7,8,9, and 10). The fourth section includes items about supporting learners socially, mentally, and emotionally (items 11, 12, 13, and 14). The participants were asked to what extent they were agreed with each item on four-point Likert scale. The reliability of the inventory running Cronbach's alpha was .91.

Learner Autonomy Scale

The third instrument that was used in the current study was learner autonomy scale designed by Zhang and Li (2004). The scale has two parts. The first part involves 11 items with five options, 1= never, 2= rarely, 3= sometimes, 4= often, and 5= always. The second part includes 10 items in multiple-choice format. The choices ranged from A to E which A is equal to 1 point and E is equal to 5 points. The reliability and validity of this scale was established (Dafei, 2007).

Semi-structured interview

A semi- structured interview was conducted to investigate teachers' perspectives about learners' autonomy. The interview includes five questions with follow up questions (Appendix A). The interview questions focused on teachers' perspective about learner autonomy. Moreover, some questions were asked about the teacher training programs, conferences, and workshops. It's worth noting that the validity of the interview was confirmed by two experts who had P.h.D in applied linguistics.

C. Data Collection Procedures

The researcher obtained the permission from heads of institutes and teachers before conducting the study. Moreover, the participants were asked if they wanted to participate in the study. Teachers and learners were given necessary instruction concerning answering the scales. Then, the classroom assessment literacy inventory was distributed among teachers. They were given enough time to answer the questions. After ten minutes brake, the professional identity scale was distributed. Teachers were given necessary information concerning how to answer the scale. The questionnaires were collected after completing. Learner autonomy scale was administered among language learners to measures their autonomy. The researcher guides learners and translate the words or expressions that caused difficulty for them.

It should be noted that the two different meetings were held in each city (Qorveh, Dehgolan, and Sanandaj) for collecting data; one meeting for teachers and the other one for learners.

The interview was administered by the researcher. Teachers were selected based on availability and willingness to participate in the interview. The interviews were conducted in the institutes that the teachers worked. The researcher went to the institute one by one and invited the teachers into a room. The time of each interview lasted 20 minutes. The researcher transcribed the teachers' answers.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data were codified and entered into SPSS version 21. To answer the first research question Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used. The results of descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1 and the results of correlation are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT LITERACY AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

	N	M	Std. Deviation
assessment literacy	40	.792	.227
professional identity	40	3.246	.115

Table 1 shows that the mean and standard deviation for assessment literacy and professional identity are M= .792, Std.= .227 and M= 3.246 , Std.= .115, respectively.

TABLE 2
CORRELATION COEFFICIENT OF TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT LITERACY AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

		Professional identity
	R	.427[**]
Assessment literacy	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006
	N	40

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

As the data in Table 2 reveals, there is a significant positive correlation between teachers' assessment literacy and their professional identity (r= .427, p= 006). Accordingly, it could be claimed that the higher the teachers' assessment literacy, the higher their professional identity.

Results of the first question revealed that there was a positive link between teachers' assessment literacy and their professional identity. Such findings are consistent with the results of Jumardin et al. (2014). They believed that professional identity enables teachers to evaluate and guide learners better. Similarly, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) noted that teachers' identities affect the way of institutional evaluation and changes. On the other hand, teachers' identity is considered to be dynamic which is affected by many factors (Beijaard et al., 2000; Bressler & Rotter, 2017; Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007; Wang & Du, 2014). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) asserted that teachers' professional identities are formed by their encounters. Kostogriz and Peeler (2007) showed that teaching and interactions among teachers and learners have significant role in developing learners' professional identity. Accordingly, assessing learners and giving feedbacks to interlocutors could be considered as one of the main factors in developing teachers' professional identity.

Moreover, Ivanovaa and Skara-Mincłne (2016) added that the contextual setting provides the ground for developing teachers' professional identities. Hence, the sociocultural setting of teaching and evaluation a combined by factors that were mentioned for being assessment literate teachers and teachers trying to achieve such factors boost teacher professional identity. Factors like having the accurate understanding of the subject matter field, principles and methods of assessment, reporting the assessment results, and consequences of assessment improve teachers' professional identity. In sum, it seems that there is a direct link between assessment literacy and professional identity which implies that assessment literacy improves professional identity and professional identity improves assessment literacy.

The second question investigates the effects of teachers' assessment literacy and professional identity on learners' autonomy. The results of statistical analysis are depicted in Table 3 and Table 4.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT LITERACY/PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND LEARNERS' AUTONOMY

	N	M	Std. Deviation
Learners' autonomy	110	2.919	.295
Assessment literacy	40	.792	.227
Professional identity	40	3.246	.115

The mean and standards deviation of teachers' assessment literacy and professional identity were discussed in the previous question. The mean and standards deviation of learners are 2.919 and .295 respectively.

		Assessment literacy	Professional identity
Learners' autonomy	R	.415**	.429**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.006

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

Table 4 revealed that there are positive correlation between language learners' autonomy and EFL teachers assessment literacy (R= .415, p= 008) and professional identity (R= 429, p= .006). Therefore, it could be concluded that teachers' assessment literacy and professional identity have direct effect on learners' autonomy.

The results of second research question revealed that learners' autonomy is influenced by teacher identity and assessment literacy. Therefore, such variables could be considered as two main factors in developing language learners' autonomy. These findings are supported by the results of Morgan (2004) and Varghese et al. (2005). Varghese et al. (2005) showed that the style of teaching influences learner participation in class activities. It should be noted that active participation in classroom activities is considered as one of the main characteristics of autonomous learners (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Besides, Chen (2011) reported that teacher characteristics influence learners' autonomy. Moreover, Zarei and Gahremani (2010) considered teachers as facilitators of learners' autonomy. Gao et al. (2013) asserted that teachers' evaluation and teaching affect students' characteristics.

In light of the results of the current study it could be argued that teachers' personality, competence, and skillfulness affect learners' autonomy. It seems that autonomous teachers inbreed autonomous learners. Therefore, to have independent and active learners there should be proficient and literate teachers.

The last question investigates teachers' perspectives about learners' autonomy. The results of interviews revealed that the main characteristics of autonomous learners are being self-confident, curious, creative, flexible, independent, risk taker, critical thinker, good guesser, tolerant, motivated, and goal setter. Moreover, they believed autonomous learners prefer student-centered classrooms. Most of the teachers' confirmed that their students were motivated language learners, but they didn't believe in themselves. They argued that the language learners relied too much on textbooks and teachers. The learners didn't have necessary confidence and skills to take charge of their learning. They argued that sometimes they give learners the opportunities to select the topics for discussion. However, learners gained no opportunity to select content. The main reason was student incapability to do so.

Concerning learners' responsibility teachers believed that learners should take control of their learning. Learner involvement in learning and advancement boosts their efficacy and helps them to achieve their goals. Most of the teachers believed that teacher training courses didn't pay enough attention to learner autonomy. They mentioned that during their training courses they received instructions based on predetermined books by Ministry of Education. They added that they didn't receive appropriate and accurate instructions on how to develop learner autonomy.

The findings of the third research question made it clear that most of the participants were aware of the significance of learners' autonomy. Likewise, the teachers believed in learners' capabilities, however, learners didn't believe in themselves. Besides, most of the learners didn't gain the opportunity to select the topic, content, or method. Moreover, the results showed that most of the teacher inadequacy in developing learner autonomy was related to teacher training programs. The findings are supported by the results of Aghaalikhani and Maftoon (2018). They mentioned that teacher training courses in Iran didn't provide educators necessary information about new concepts and technologies. Likewise, Ghaemi and Abdullahi (2016) noted that teachers are supposed to do some responsibilities and they have few freedoms in selecting contents and materials. Similarly Tsagari and Vogt (2017) noted that European teachers aren't only competent in new concepts but also they aren't provided with enough information in this regard. Moreover, the findings of Ivanovaa and Skara-Mincĺne (2016) made it clear that pre-service teachers need more contextualized guidance.

Concerning learner autonomy, the results of this study are in line with the findings of Üstünlüoğlu (2009) and Balçıkanlı (2010). Üstünlüoğlu (2009) showed that students had the capability to take charge of their improvement but they weren't tended to do so. On the other hand, Balçıkanlı (2010) asserted that teacher belief in learner skills to control their own learning. Learners' unwillingness to take charge of their own learning seems to be rooted in their backgrounds. To the best of researcher knowledge, learners are consumers of teachers' knowledge in Iran. Students have no role in selecting the books, contents, or materials. Assessments are mostly formative or summative in schools. We don't observe self-assessment, peer assessment, or dynamic assessment. Such problems should be solved by equipping teachers with needed skills and knowledge. Accordingly, teacher education programs should be fruitful.

V. CONCLUSION

Considering language assessment literacy, professional identity, and autonomy as vital criteria in learning and assessment, this study tried to fill the gaps in the literature through investigating the effects of EFL teachers' language assessment literacy and professional identity on learner autonomy. Moreover, the relations between teachers' professional identity and assessment literacy were examined. While many studies are required to be conducted to examine the correlation between teachers' professional identity and language assessment literacy and the effects of such variables on learners' autonomy; the results extracted from the statistical analysis of the current study made it certain that there was a positive correlation between LAL and professional identity. Likewise, findings indicated that teachers'

LAL and professional identity had valuable effects on learners' autonomy. Finally, it was shown that teachers admitted learner autonomy however they weren't competent enough to nurture autonomous learners.

Teacher professional growth involves developing competence in the field, teaching, understanding learners, and supporting them. On the other hand, to be literate in assessment, language teachers should be competent in selecting and designing assessment methods, testing, scoring, and comparing learners, and presenting the results (Beijaard et al., 2000). Consequently, it puts many demands on teacher training programs. One of the main aims of teacher education programs can be the development of teachers' LAL and professional identity. However, teacher training courses in Iran haven't received serious attention in Iran (Aghaalikhani & Maftoon, 2018). Ghaemi and Abdullahi (2016) asserted that language teachers in Iran are supposed to teach specific books in specific ways. This may be due to the lack of awareness of the significance of teachers' LAL and identity. Accordingly, based on the results of this study and the fact that pre-service teacher education has fruitful effects on teacher proficiency and literacy; it is recommended to provide the necessary guidance and support to plan and nourish LAL and professional identity.

APPENDIX

1. What makes an autonomous language learner?
2. How do you describe your students? Why?
3. Do you give your student any opportunity to select the topic, content, or material? Why?
4. How much is an EFL learner responsible for his/her learning? Why?
5. How do you evaluate teacher training programs, workshop, and conferences concerning learners' autonomy?

REFERENCES

[1] Abednia, A. (2012). Teachers' professional identity: Contributions of a critical EFL teacher education course in Iran. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(25), 706-717.
[2] Aghaalikhani, H., & Maftoon, P. (2018). English Teacher Education Programs and Professionalism: The case of Iranian Novice/Experienced Teachers. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, 6(1), 78-94.
[3] Ainsworth, L., & Viegut, D. (2006). Common formative assessments: How to connect standards-based instruction and assessment. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
[4] Ashforth, B. E., & Tomiuk, M. A. (2000). Emotional labour and authenticity: Views from service agents. In S. Fineman (Ed.), *Emotion in organizations* (2nd ed., pp. 184- 203). London: Sage.
[5] Atai, M. R., & Khazaee, M. (2014). Exploring Iranian EAP Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Their Professional Identity. *Issues in Language Teaching*, 3(1), 35-51.
[6] Balcikanli, C. (2010). Learner autonomy in language learning: Student teachers' beliefs. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 35*(1), 90-103.
[7] Beauchamp, C., & Thomas, L. (2009). Understanding teacher identity: an overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 39(2), 175-189.
[8] Beijaard, D., Verloop, N., & Vermunt, J. D. (2000). Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and teacher education*, 16(7), 749-764.
[9] Bennett, R. (2011). Formative assessment: A critical review. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 18*, 5–25.http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2010.513678.
[10] Benson, P. (2001). Autonomy in language learning. Harlow: Longman.
[11] Birchley, S. (2003). Creating Learner Autonomy: Self-Access & an English Lounge, Japan. *Bulletin of Toyo Gakuen University*, 15, 31-44.
[12] Bressler, C., & Rotter, C. (2017). The Relevance of a Migration Background to the Professional Identity of Teachers. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(1), 239-250.
[13] Brindley, G. (1990). The role of needs analysis in adult ESL programme design. In R. K. Johnson (Ed.) *The second language curriculum* (pp. 63-78). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[14] Bullough, R. V. (1997). Becoming a teacher: Self and the social location of teacher education. In B. Biddle, T.Good, & I. Goodson (Eds), *International handbook of teachers and teaching* (pp. 79-134). Springer.
[15] Caihong, H. A. O. (2011). Changes and characteristics of EFL teachers' professional identity: The cases of nine university teachers. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 34(1), 3-21.
[16] Chen, V. (2011). Authenticity and identity in the portable homeland. In T. K. Nakayama & R. T. Halualani (Eds.), *The handbook of critical intercultural communication* (pp. 483–494). Malden, MA: Wiley.
[17] Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1999). Shaping a professional identity: Stories of education practice. London, ON: Althouse Press.
[18] Dafei, D. (2007). An exploration of the relationship between learner autonomy and English proficiency. *Asian EFL Journal*, 24(4), 24-34.
[19] David, C. (2000). Professionalism and ethics in teaching. London: Taylor & Francis Books Ltd.
[20] Fahim, M., & Haghighi, M. (2014). The relationship between critical thinking ability of Iranian EFL learners and their academic self-regulation. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, 5(3),* 390-400.
[21] Fox, C. J. (1992). What do we mean when we say" professionalism?": a language usage analysis for public administration. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 22(1), 1-17.
[22] Fulcher, G. (2010). The reification of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and effect-driven testing. In A. Psyaltou-Joycey & M. Matthaioudakis (Eds.), *Advances in Research on Language Acquisition and Teaching* (pp. 15–26). GALA.

[23] Fulcher, G. (2012). Assessment literacy for the language classroom. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 9(2), 113-132.

[24] Gao, X., Liao, Y., & Li, Y. (2013). Empirical studies on foreign language learning and teaching in China (2008–2011): A review of selected research. *Language Teaching, 47*(01), 56-79. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0261444813000414.

[25] Gaziel, H. H. (1995). Sabbatical leave, job burnout and turnover intentions among teachers. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 14(4), 331-338.

[26] Ghaemi, H., & Abdullahi, H. (2016). EFL Teacher's Affective Constructs and Their Sense of Responsibility. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, 4(1), 64-72.

[27] Ghasedi, P., Mashhady, H., & Okati, F. (2017). The effects of homogeneous and heterogeneous pushed output instructions on speaking complexity, *ENGLISH REVIEW: Journal of English Education, 6*(1), 11-20.

[28] Ghasedi, P., Okati, F., Mashhady, H., & Fallah, N. (2018). The effects of symmetrical and asymmetrical scaffolding on speaking complexity, accuracy, and fluency. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, 4(1), 1-10.

[29] Holec, H. (1981). Autonomy and foreign language learning. Oxford: Pergamon.

[30] Hoyle, E. (1980). Professionalization and deprofessionalization in education. In E. Hoyle & J. E. Meggary (Eds.), *The professional development of teachers* (pp. 42–57). London: Kogan Page.

[31] Hoyle, E., & John, P.D. (1995). Professionality, Professionalism and control in teaching, *London Educational Review, 3*(2), pp. 13-19.

[32] Hua, W. (2009). Shilun waiyu xuexi dongji yu xuexizhe zizhu. [Learner autonomy and learning motivation of foreign language]. *Foreign Languages Research, 1*, 57-62. https://doi.org/10.13978/j.cnki.wyyj.2009.01.024.

[33] Ibarra, H. (1999). 'Provisional Selves: Experimenting with Image and Identity in Professional Adaptation', *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44, 4*, 764–91.

[34] İlgan, A., Aslanargün, E., & Shaukat, S. (2015). Öğretmenlik mesleği profesyonellik ölçeği geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışması {Developing teacher professionalism scale: Validation and reliability study}. *Eğitimde Kuram ve Uygulama*, 11(4), 1454-1474.

[35] Ivanova, I., & Skara-Mincāne, R. (2016). Development of Professional Identity During Teacher's Practice, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 232, 529-536.

[36] Jumardin, J., Bahri, S., Gani, H., & Jasruddin, J. (2014). Analysis Of The Pedagogic Competence And Professionalism Of Lecturers In Seamanship Polytechnıc Makassar Based On The Sailing Period. *International Journal Of Academic Research*, 6(4), 176-181.

[37] Kerby, A. (1991). Narrative and the self. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press

[38] Kompf, B., Dworet & Boak. (1996). Changing research and practice: Teachers' professionalism, identities and knowledge. Londra, Falmer Press.

[39] Kostogriz, A., & Peeler, E. (2007). Professional identity and pedagogical space: Negotiating difference in teacher workplaces. *Teaching education*, 18(2), 107-122.

[40] Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). Language teacher education for a global society: A modular model for knowing, analyzing, recognizing, doing, and seeing. London: Rutledge.

[41] Lasky, S. (2005). A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform. *Teaching and teacher education*, 21(8), 899-916.

[42] Levine, A. (2006). Educating school teachers. New York: The Education Schools Project. (2020, March 19) www.edschools.org/teachers_report.htm.

[43] Li, K., & Yu, L. (2008). Daxuesheng yingyu xuexi dongji, ziwo xiaonenggan he guiyin yu zizhu xuexi xingwei de guanxi yanjiu [Relationship between college students' autonomous learnig behavior and motivation, self-efficacy and attribution]. *Foreign Language Learning: Theory and Practice, (2)*, 1-5.

[44] Lian, L.H., & Yew, W.T. (2016). A Framework for Examining Assessment Literacy of Preservice Teachers. *US-China Education Review A, 6*(5), 294-300.

[45] Little, D. (2009). Language learner autonomy and the European language portfolio: Two L2 English examples. *Language teaching*, 42(2), 222-233.

[46] Malone, M.E. (2013). The Essentials of Assessment Literacy: Contrasts between Testers and Users. *Language Testing 30*(3), 329-344. DOI: 10.1177/0265532213480129.

[47] McBer, H. (2000). Research into Teacher Effectiveness: A model of teacher effectiveness, Department for Education and Employment. (2020, March 19), https://dera.ioe.ac.uk//4566/.

[48] Mertler, C. A. (2003, Oct.15). Pre-service versus in-service teachers' Assessment literacy: Does classroom experience make a Difference? Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association, Columbus, OH.

[49] Messick, S. (1989). Meaning and values in test validation: The science and ethics of assessment. *Educational researcher*, 18(2), 5-11.

[50] Mofrad, E. Z. (2016). Exploring the professional identity of the Iranian English teachers: The case of English institutes of Iranshahr. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 6(4), 843-848.

[51] Moore, M., & Hofman, J.E. (1988). Professional identity in institutions of higher learning in Israel. *Higher Education,* 17(1), 69-79.

[52] Morgan, B. (2004). Teacher identity as pedagogy: Towards a field-internal conceptualization in bilingual and second language education. In J. Brutt-Griffler & M. Varghese (Eds.), *Re-writing bilingualism and the bilingual educator's knowledge base* (pp. 80–96). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

[53] Nunan, D. (2003). Nine steps to learner autonomy. *Symposium*, 2003, 193-204.

[54] Plake, B. S., Impara, J. C., & Fager, J. J. (1993). Assessment competencies of teachers: A national survey. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 12(4), 10-12.

[55] Popham, W. J. (2004). America's failing schools: How parents and teachers can cope with No Child Left Behind. New York: Routledge Falmer.

[56] Qi, A. (2011). On the relationships between learner autonomy and language proficiency: An investigation of Chinese English majors. *Energy Procedia*, (13), 9976-9982.

[57] Rockoff, J.E. (2004). The impact of individual teachers on student achievement: Evidence from panel data. *American Economic Review*, 94(2), 247-252.

[58] Sakai, S., & Takagi, A. (2009). Relationship between learner autonomy and English language proficiency of Japanese learners. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, *6*(3), 297-325.

[59] Scarino, A. (2013). Language assessment literacy as self-awareness: Understanding the role of interpretation in assessment and in teacher learning. *Language Testing*, *30*(3), 309-327.

[60] Shim, K. N. (2009). An investigation into teachers' perceptions of classroom-based assessment of English as a foreign language in Korean primary education [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Exeter, Exeter.

[61] Stiggins, R. J. (1991). Assessment literacy. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *72*(7), 534-539.

[62] Stiggins, R. J. (1999). Are you assessment literate? *The High School Journal*, *6*(5), 20-23

[63] Suah, S. L. (2012). Analisis model literasid anamal an pentaksiran guru sekolah sertaka jiantentan gjurangan tarakeduanya {Analysis of literacy model and assessment practices of school teachers and study of the culture gap} *[*Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation*]*. School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia).

[64] Taylor, L. (2009). Developing assessment literacy. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *29*, 21-36.

[65] Timoštšuk, I., &Ugaste, A. (2010). Student teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and teacher education*, 26(8), 1563-1570.

[66] Tsagari, D., & Vogt, K. (2017). Assessment Literacy of Foreign Language Teachers around Europe: Research, Challenges and Future Prospects, *Papers in Language Testing and Assessment, 6*(1), 41-63.

[67] Üstünlüoğlu, E. (2009). Autonomy in language learning: Do students take responsibility for their learning?. *Journal of Theory & Practice in Education*, *5*(2), 148-169.

[68] van Huizen, P., van Oers, B., & Wubbels, T. (2005). A Vygotskian perspective on teacher education. *Journal of curriculum studies*, *37*(3), 267-290.

[69] Varghese, M., Morgan, B., Johnston, B., & Johnson, K. A. (2005). Theorizing language teacher identity: Three perspectives and beyond. *Journal of language, Identity, and Education*, *4*(1), 21-44.

[70] Veisson, M., & Kabaday, A. (2018). Exploring the Preschool Teachers' Views on Professionalism, Quality of Education and Sustainability: International Study in Estonia and Turkey. *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, *20*(2), 5-18.

[71] Vickers, C.H., & Ene, E. (2006). Grammatical accuracy and learner autonomy in advanced writing. *ELT Journal, 60*(2), 109-116.

[72] Vogt, K., & Tsagari, D. (2014). Assessment literacy of foreign language teachers: Findings of a European study. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, *11*(4), 374-402.

[73] Volante, L., & Fazio, X. (2007). Exploring Teacher Candidates' Assessment Literacy: Implications for Teacher Education Reform and Professional Development. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *30*(3), 749-770.

[74] Wang, L., & Du, X. (2016). Chinese language teachers' beliefs about their roles in the Danish context. *System*, *61*, 1-11.

[75] Wu, X., & Zhang, Q. (2009). Relationship between learning achievement and self-efficacy, learning strategies and learner autonomy. *Foreign Language Education, 30*(3), 43-62. https://doi.org/10.16362/j.cnki.cn61-1023/h.2009.03.019.

[76] Xu, Y., & Brown, G. T. (2017). University English teacher assessment literacy: A survey-test report from China. *Papers in Language Testing and Assessment*, *6*(1), 133-158.

[77] Yamtima, V., & Wongwanich, S. (2014). A study of classroom assessment literacy of primary school teachers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 116, 2998 – 3004.

[78] Yasmin, M., & Sohail, A. (2017). Realizing learner autonomy in Pakistan: EFL teachers' beliefs about their practices. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *8*(2), 153-162.

[79] Yastıbaş, A. E., & Takkaç, M. (2018). Understanding language assessment literacy: Developing language assessments. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *14*(1), 178-193.

[80] Zarei, A., & Gahremani, K. (2010). On the relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension. *TELL, 3 (10)*, 81-99.

[81] Zhalehgooyan, B., & Alavi, S. M. (2014). Contribution of learner autonomy to listening comprehension problems of EFL learners. *Frontiers of Language and Teaching*, *5*(1), 86-98.

[82] Zhang, L. X., & Li, X. X. (2004). A comparative study on learner autonomy between Chinese students and west European students. *Foreign Language World*, 4, 15-23.

Hooshang Yazdani, Assistant Professor at Arak University, he has taught English as a foreign language for several years at Arak University. He was the supervisor of many MA thesis and P.h.D. dissertations. He has published several papers in scientific journals.

Parviz Ghasedi, P.h.D Candidate at Arak University, he has taught English as a foreign language at Arak University. He has participated in many national and international conferences as a lecture. He published many scientific articles in national and international journals.

A Review of the Research on Pre-service English Teachers' Professional Development Based on Mobile Technology[*]

Miaomiao Gao
School of Foreign Languages, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China

Xifang Tu
School of Foreign Languages, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China

Junshui Li
School of Foreign Languages, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China

Abstract—**Great changes have taken place in educational methods under the background of "internet plus", and the emergence of mobile learning indicates that there is another effective way for the development of pre-service teachers. This study takes the related papers published from 2008 to 2020 as the research objects, summarizes the research status of MALL in China from the aspects of concept definition, research methods and research topics, and analyzes the existing problems and development trends. The results show that in recent years, the research development of mobile learning at home and abroad has been accelerated, and the research objects and topics are diverse, but the research on the dimensions of pre-service English teachers is less, which needs to be strengthened urgently.**

Index Terms—**mobile technology, pre-service English teacher, literature review**

I. INTRODUCTION

Most of today's pre-service teachers are post-90s and post-00s, They're the generation that grew up with the Internet, recognized as "digital aborigines ". There are four features (Chen Jianlin). (1)They are the generation of technology. From birth into the era of rapid development of information technology, Using electronic products has become the norm in their lives, So technology became part of their lives; (2) They are the generation who read pictures. Young pre-service teachers getting the information from an early age through lots of pictures, movies, anime, advertising has become their habits; (3) They are an innovative generation. With the vast resources of the information age, That provided the conditions for their innovation, Promote their desire for innovation; (4) They are an eager generation. The Internet makes people's sense of distance disappear. These pre-service teachers are used to the speed of the Internet. To get information, they formed the habit of advocating change and paying attention to efficiency. With the initiate of the Lifelong Education and the concept of 'teacher is researcher', the teacher has become both learner and researcher. And pre-service teachers, concerned its teaching idea advanced, the higher teaching enthusiasm, the firm teaching belief, have undoubtedly become a major user and beneficiary of mobile learning.

From the perspective of foreign language teaching, the use of mobile assisted language learning technology is an efficient method to promote effective teaching and individualized learning. At present, many foreign language teachers begin to pay attention to how to use mobile technology to improve their professional ability. Mobile aided language learning (MALL, Mobile Assisted Language Learning) has become another hot topic in theory and practice after computer aided language learning (CALL, Computer Assisted Language Learning) in China.

Nowadays, as teachers with the characteristics of the new era, if they still improve their own professional accomplishment in a traditional way, they obviously can no longer meet their learning aspirations and needs. It is impossible to meet the needs of full teachers in the future, such as cross-cultural awareness and mobile teaching. The rapid development of information technology under the background of "Internet" brings opportunities and challenges to pre-service foreign language teachers in the 21st century. They should not only master the operation and application of various multimedia technologies, but also maintain a keen sense of smell at all times, so as to draw teaching resources from various modern information channels such as mobile information networks, renew teaching concepts and enhance professional literacy. It can be seen that teachers must rely on mobile language assisted learning technology to realize the development and promotion of their professional ability according to the change of information learning mode. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to study the purpose, frequency, effect and evaluation of the use of mobile

assisted language learning technology by pre-service English teachers.

II. CORE CONCEPTS

A. Mobile Learning

At present, there is no exact definition of the concept of mobile learning, experts and scholars in the field express their opinions and understand and interpret mobile learning from different angles. This paper synthesizes the viewpoints of scholars at home and abroad (Clark Quinn, 2000; Cui Guangzuo, 2001; Chen Zhenzhen, 2019), and gives the following explanation: Mobile learning refers to a new learning form that uses wireless mobile communication network technology and wireless mobile communication devices (such as smart phones, tablet PCs PDA, smart watches, etc.) to obtain educational information, educational resources and educational services. Compared with other forms of learning, mobile learning has the characteristics of learning convenience, individualized teaching, rich interaction and context relevance. Mobile learning is the product of grafting mobile computing technology and digital learning technology, which represents the future of learning.

B. Pre-service English Teachers

As a professional term, "pre-service teacher" appeared in teacher education in Europe and America in 1960s, but the group it refers to was not clearly defined. Until 1985, Japan officially defined "pre-service teacher" as "teacher education is a professional education for training teachers, which can be carried out continuously through three stages: pre-service training, induction training and on-the-job training" in the book Encyclopedia of International Education (English version), thus defining the students who are in the stage of professional pre-service training as pre-service teachers.

Mingucci (2002) believe that teachers' professional development refers to the continuous improvement of teachers' knowledge, thought and teaching effect, which is regarded as various means adopted by teachers in the process of improving teaching practice, emphasizing teachers' experience and professional knowledge. The representative views of teachers' professional development in China are as follows: Xiao Liping (2002) pointed out that teachers' professional development is a process of enhancing teachers' professionalism and improving teachers' professional quality, emphasizing that teachers should imagine their own career development goals from the perspective of personal development, improve their education and teaching ability through learning and further education, and maximize their life value; According to Tian Han (2014), teachers' professional development refers to the process in which teachers acquire professional skills in education and teaching, form professional ideals, professional ethics and professional abilities, and achieve professional autonomy through continuous professional education, relying on professional organizations, special training systems and management systems.

English teachers' professional development is the concretization of teachers' professional development at the discipline level, Wen Qiaoping (2007) defined the concept of "foreign language teachers' professional development" as a dynamic process in which foreign language teachers take the need of self-development as the driving force and constantly develop and improve their professional intelligence and belief system through continuous learning and reflection in the teacher education mechanism.

Therefore, in this study, the professional development of pre-service English teachers means that English normal students or postgraduates who are still in the "pre-service" stage and promote their professional development by improving their educational and teaching knowledge and professional knowledge. In recent years, with the application of information technology in education and teaching, pre-service English teachers have more and more means to improve their professional development, such as distance education and mobile learning.

III. DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS

The selected papers in this study are from CNKI, and the literature published from 2008 to 2020 is searched on CNKI. Taking the periodical database of CNKI as the source database and using its advanced retrieval function, "mobile learning", "English teacher" and "pre-service" were respectively entered in "subject" for precise retrieval. The retrieval time was limited from 2011 to 2020, and a total of 219 papers were retrieved. Through content analysis, 9 papers that are not related to mobile language learning are eliminated, and the remaining 210 papers are taken as research objects. This study adopts the content analysis method to describe the current situation of the professional development of pre-service English teachers in mobile assisted language learning (MSLL) in China in the recent ten years through the two dimensions of research trends and research topics. In addition, statistical analysis is used to summarize the research status of "mobile learning" and "pre-service English teachers" at home and abroad by referring to the research contents and types of high-frequency literature, and draw conclusions.

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

In recent years, research on mobile learning has been hot，and few scholars focus on the professional development of pre-service teachers supported by mobile learning. Abroad, Frohberg has applied short message service to the training of pre-service teachers and obtained positive experimental results, which further proves the effectiveness of mobile

learning. Golonka(2012) made a review of technology types and their effectiveness based on technologies. Frohberg & C. Göth & G. Schwabe. (2009) got a critical analysis of the state of the art by their mobile learning projects. Domestic Lu Yingbo and ZhiPing(2013) apply basic theory of constructivism teaching, teaching design and interactive teaching method as the theoretical guidance, starting from the three dimensions of mobile learning mode design, mobile language learning content design and mobile learning foreign language teaching mode architecture, and they put forward constructive ideas for mobile learning, therefore, more English pre-service teachers develop their professional ability and open up a new direction. Li Gang(2019) et al. found through the investigation and data statistics of the six major abilities of 2015 English normal college students in the educational practice of Hunan University of Arts and Science that normal college students generally adopt mobile learning in teaching design and teaching practice to improve and develop their professional abilities. The research also points out that under the background of "Internet plus", the professional development of pre-service teachers assisted by mobile technology is definitely effective.

Under the background of Internet plus, the educational mode has undergone a great change, and mobile assisted language learning has emerged in this environment. The author searched CNKI with the title of "mobile learning" and including "English Teacher", and made a quantitative visual analysis of the results:
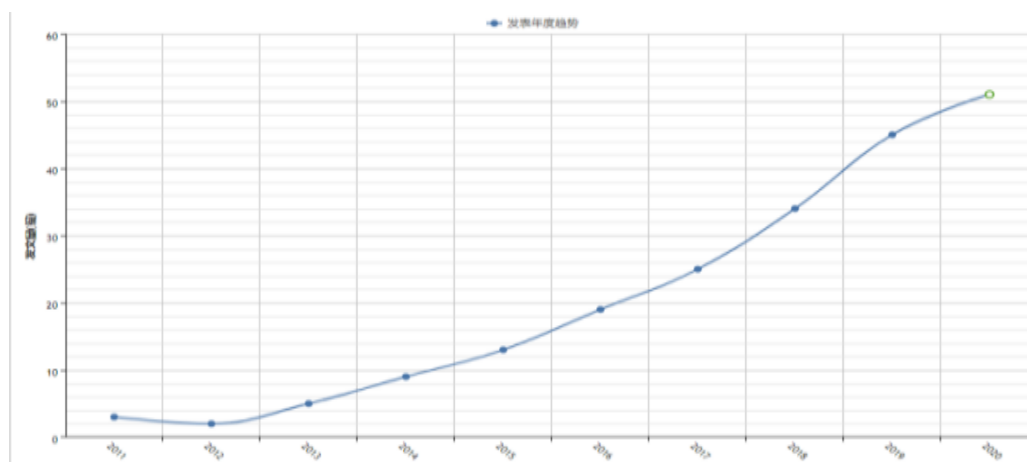
Figure 1 Distribution of publication years of relevant researches on Mobile learning pre-service English teachers

In terms of the overall trend of publication volume, although the development of mobile technology has been going on for nearly 30 years, researches on pre-service English teachers supported by mobile technology were mainly started in 2011, but few relevant literatures were published before 2015, and the development of researches on English teachers was relatively slow. In recent 5 years, it has developed rapidly and has a trend of sustainable development.
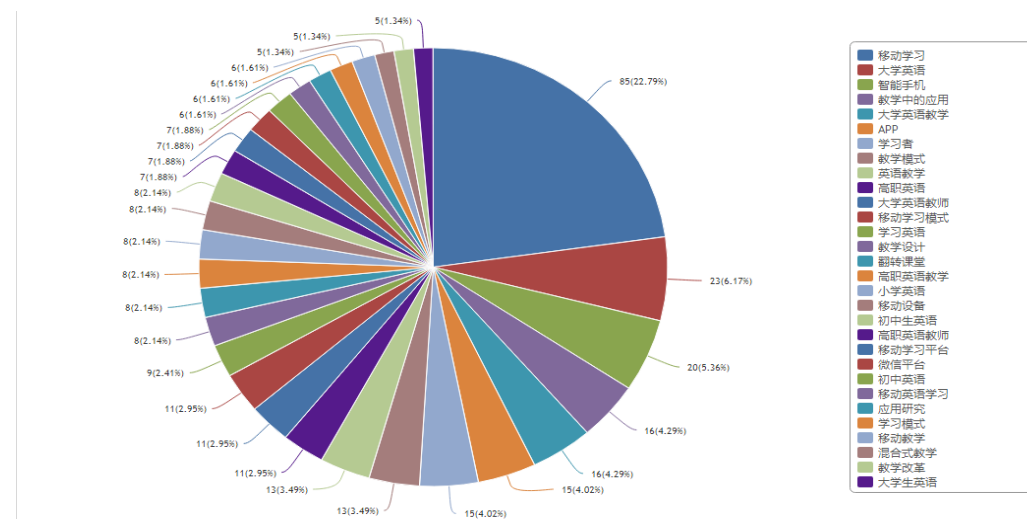
Figure 2 Distribution of relevant research topics for English teachers under mobile learning

From the perspective of the topic distribution of mobile learning and English teachers, the researches in recent years mainly focus on college English, mobile learning platform, mobile learning model and in-service English teachers, and less on the professional development of pre-service English teachers. Therefore, this paper will focus on the research on the professional development of pre-service English teachers supported by mobile technology.

A. Research on Mobile Learning in China and Abroad

Under the background of Internet Plus, the educational mode has undergone a great change, and mobile assisted language learning has emerged in this environment. Although mobile assisted language learning because of the research history of the development of science and technology conditions is less than 30 years, but under the move tool explosive changes several times over the years, mobile learning methods are becoming more and more popular. Smart phones, smart tablet, laptop, smart watches almost penetrate in People's Daily life, such as language of mobile learning research both at home and abroad have explosive growth. The author reviews and analyzes the relevant literature on mobile assistive language learning technology at home and abroad as follows.

TABLE 1
IS THE PART OF HIGH-FREQUENCY CITED LITERATURE ABOUT THE RESEARCH OF "MOBILE LEARNING" IN CHINA AND ABROAD

序号	文献名称	作者	出版年份	类型	出版源
1	Personalized mobile English vocabulary learning system based on item response theory and learning memory cycle	Chen, C. M., &Chung, C. J	2008	[J]	Computers & Education
2	Using audioblogs to assist English-language learning: an investigation into student perception	Comac, L	2008	[J]	Computer Assisted Language Learning
3	Will mobile learning change language learning?	Kukulska-Hulme, A	2009	[J]	ReCall
4	Use of academic podcasting in the foreign language classroom	Abdous, M. H.et	2009	[J]	ReCall
5	a review of technology types and their effectiveness	Ewa M. Golonka.et	2014	[D]	Computer Assisted Language Learning
6	微信公众平台支持英语阅读教学的实验研究	蒋银健	2016	[J]	外语电化教学
7	基于移动学习模式的语言形式聚焦探究	曾罡, 于连芬	2017	[J]	外语电化教学
8	移动技术辅助外语教学对英语词汇习得有效性的实证研究	李思蒙, 高原	2016	[J]	外语界
9	智能手机辅助外语课堂教学中的学习投入研究	陈真真	2019	[J]	外语电化教学
10	游戏化移动学习对大学英语学习者词汇学习的有效性研究	凌茜, 王皓, 王志浩	2019	[J]	外语电化教学

Based on the detailed analysis of the above literature and the reference of relevant literature, the author finds that the research results at home and abroad are as follows:

In terms of research content, in the past decade, based on the existing theories and achievements of mobile learning, foreign mobile learning mainly discusses the optimization and integration of technology and curriculum, demonstrates the practical significance and value of mobile technology equipment for English language learning, and presents and analyzes the effect of mobile learning system on language teaching. In China, mobile learning mainly focuses on the following aspects: related technology research of mobile learning system, software development research of mobile learning terminal, development research of mobile learning curriculum, standardization research of mobile learning system, theoretical research and empirical research.

In terms of research types, there are few pure theoretical researches on mobile learning abroad, most of which are the introduction of new technologies and new ideas, or the practice summary evaluation based on a certain vision. The practice field involves all levels of society, such as primary and secondary education, higher education, vocational education, distance education and so on. Since the research on mobile learning started 6 years later in China than in the rest of the world, theoretical research is in the majority. Especially, there are relatively few empirical or investigation studies and applied studies on the introduction of foreign ideas, and the research objects are mainly teachers and students in universities.

Above related literature on the "mobile assisted language learning", this project has the following enlightenment: in recent years, mobile learning research will practice at home and abroad research as the main body, in both the international and domestic research, mobile learning application research have absolute superiority, with the university scientific research platform as well as the ownership of the mobile devices of university students have a lot to do. Domestic scholars on the multi-faceted mobile learning both at home and abroad, to the development of the current domestic mobile learning put forward the corresponding proposal, for example, research mode and method should be diversified, research focus should be given a heavier "technique" back to "learning", the object of study should be expanded to the field of basic education, etc., and compared with foreign research field, is also lack of domestic research for English teachers , and related research about pre-service teachers is even less. Therefore, as pre-service English teachers, it is necessary for us to take the professional competence development of pre-service English teachers as the research object for the current booming mobile learning.

B. Research on Professional Development of Pre-service English Teachers

Through the retrieval of the relevant literature on the professional development of pre-service English teachers and the regulation and analysis of the corresponding high-frequency cited literature, it is found that the research results on the professional development of pre-service English teachers in recent years mainly focus on the following aspects:

TABLE 2
HIGH-FREQUENCY CITED LITERATURE ON PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN CHINA AND ABROAD

序号	文献名称	作者	出版年份	类型	出版源
1	Hand book of research on teacher education	Houston	1990	[M]	University of Chicago Press
2	Teacher development and educational change	Fuller & Hargreaves	1992	[M]	Falmemer Press
3	Effective peer mentoring for EFL Pre-service teachers' instructional practicum practice	Nguyen	2010	[J]	EFL Journal Quarterly
4	TESOL in Context: Authentic workplace learning for pre-service teachers	Thomsett & Leggett & Ainsworth	2011	[J]	EBSCO
5	Me like Pre-service EFL teacher learning during the practicum: A multiple case study in a context of systemic dissonance	Bulut	2016	[D]	University of Leeds
6	教育实习与职前英语教师专业发展关系探究	郭新婕, 王蔷	2009	[J]	外语与外语教学
7	中国基础教育阶段外语教师的职前教育研究	邹为诚	2009	[J]	外语教学理论与实践
8	教育信息化背景下职前外语教师技术倾向研究	李涛, 欧阳护华	2017	[J]	外语电化教学
9	职前外语教师科研参与状况及影响机制调查研究——以学科教学(英语)专业学位研究生为例	寻阳	2018	[J]	山东外语教学
10	"互联网+"中学教师职前专业能力发展研究	李钢，范丽娜，李金姝	2019	[J]	湖南师范大学教育科学学报

Through the keyword search of *professional development of pre-service English teachers* and the corresponding regularity and analysis, it is found that the research results on professional development of pre-service English teachers in recent years mainly focus on the following aspects.

Abroad research on pre-service English teachers from the beginning of the definition of language teachers to enhance the second language teacher identity definition, research topics, research methods and other aspects of cognition, second language teacher identity research focus on pre-service teachers and in-service teachers, and pre-service teacher identity research is significantly more than in-service teacher identity research, most of the research uses qualitative research methods, there are theoretical studies mainly to explore the second language teacher identity shaping factors, second language teacher identity change, English or non-English teachers division and second language teacher identity construction and other topics, empirical research focuses on pre-service teachers' educational practice.

However, the research on the status of foreign language teachers in China started late and is mostly a summary of western research results. Moreover, the research focuses on the clarification of related concepts and the exploration of teachers' professional development. The research objects are mainly teachers in higher education and in-service, and pay less attention to pre-service English teachers. In the future, many scholars believe that the factors of English teachers' professional development should change from static research to dynamic improvement, from external factors to internal driving force, and from traditional mode to educational information-based mode.

V. SUMMARY

Through the above literature review of mobile assisted language learning and professional development of pre-service English teachers, the author finds that with the further development of teachers' specialization, the relevant research on pre-service teachers is gradually being paid attention to. However, the domestic research on pre-service English teachers needs to be improved. The professional development of pre-service English teachers is the knowledge and specialization of teachers to prepare for future English teachers during pre-service education. In recent years, mobile learning has become one of the most popular learning methods under the background of the integration of information technology and subject teaching. But it also poses new challenges to teachers' professional development. Therefore, it is also very important to cultivate pre-service English teachers' information technology literacy in foreign language education research. Through the reference of relevant literature, the author finds that the domestic research on pre-service English teachers is mainly about the status and practical process of pre-service English teachers. Few scholars pay attention to the professional development of pre-service English teachers in information technology, especially mobile learning. Therefore, this topic combines the application of mobile learning in education and teaching under the development of information technology with the professional development of pre-service English teachers in order to improve the information technology literacy of pre-service English teachers. Based on the results of literature analysis, the author summarizes the current situation of language learning supported by mobile technology in China and points out the research. In view of the above review and analysis, the authors think that in order to improve the effect of teachers' informal learning under the mobile Internet, we must make efforts from the aspects of teachers themselves, school management, learning resources and network environment.

(1) Correct learning attitude and raise learning awareness

Teachers should make it clear that human beings acquire more than 80% knowledge through informal learning, and the role of informal learning in our daily production and life is self-evident. At the same time, the concept of lifelong learning is indispensable in this increasingly competitive and challenging society. As teachers with educational mission, they should bear the brunt and become the guide and role model of lifelong learning in this society. In the new era of scientific and technological innovation, informal learning based on mobile Internet is an important way for teachers to improve their professional level. Only on the premise of affirming the importance of informal learning can teachers

have strong learning motivation and maintain a positive learning attitude in informal learning. Learning motivation is the driving force for all human beings to learn. It plays the role of encouragement, persistence and self-regulation, and is the basis of all learning activities. Learning attitude is also an important guarantee to promote the effective development of learning activities. As Hill, a famous American scholar, said ," there are two things that can not be separated from human achievements today, one is ability, the other is attitude." the importance of learning attitude can be seen.

(2) Strengthen the construction of learning resources of mobile network.

Learning content is a very important part of teachers' informal learning process. The quality of learning content directly determines the quality of learning results. In order to be targeted, we must fully grasp the characteristics of informal learning, classify the learning content, and make the knowledge points more refined, so that teachers can learn in pieces anytime and anywhere. At the same time, in the process of learning resources presentation, we should minimize the occurrence of content unrelated to normal learning. Learning content in the process of display should be as diverse as photos, moving pictures, video and other presentation methods, in order to stimulate teachers' interest in learning, but also conducive to the storage and memory of useful knowledge.

(3) Strengthen the network security management.

A harmonious and healthy mobile Internet environment is an important guarantee for most teachers to carry out informal learning spontaneously. When teachers get information hungry on the Internet, they often have no time to take into account some bad information, and may click on some unsafe links in the unconscious, which will not only affect the teacher's body and mind. It is also possible to bring money losses. The ultimate influence is teachers' confidence and enthusiasm for informal learning in mobile environment. Therefore, relevant departments should pay attention to Internet security issues and improve relevant laws and regulations. Those who publish bad information and create bad websites should be severely punished. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the professional technical support and security of relevant forums, learning platforms or learning websites, so that teachers can carry out informal learning with a relaxed and pleasant attitude under the mobile Internet, which can greatly improve the efficiency and results of teachers' informal learning.

(4) Establish a network learning community for teachers in or between schools.

In Internet plus era, the increase and share of data grow with each passing day, which brings opportunities for schools to form new teaching and research organizations. Teachers' network cooperative community emerges as the times require. This kind of community, whether in the form of QQ, Wechat or other apps, integrates online discussion, interaction and sharing as one platform, providing teachers with a community space for common learning. In this learning organization, the school encourages teachers to carry out teaching research, not only to be the enjoyment of network resources, but also to be the builder of network resources, and constantly create excellent teaching resources, so as to better promote the accumulation of teachers' teaching knowledge, improve the level of professional skills, and become mature in professional psychology.

(5) To ensure the effective operation of mobile e-learning community.

First of all, the school should formulate scientific and reasonable informal learning rules of mobile Internet, that is, the specific learning rules of e-learning community, such as the composition of learning group members, activity attendance, learning content, learning form, learning time and member performance evaluation. Secondly, the school should strengthen the active operation of the network community. This requires schools to carry out more informal learning activities with the help of mobile network, so that teachers' learning can break through the limitations of time and place, and can be involved in the upsurge of mobile learning anytime and anywhere. We should not let the network community become a mere formality and empty platform. We should give more play to the power of mutual supervision and progress among the members of the lesson preparation group and the teaching and research group, encourage teachers to share, interact and communicate more, and give full play to the power of peer support. In addition, schools should establish clear incentive measures for teachers' Informal Learning under the mobile Internet. Regularly carry out a variety of activities related to knowledge competition or teaching resources informatization, and give material and spiritual rewards to teachers with outstanding performance, which can greatly enhance teachers' enthusiasm for online learning.

REFERENCES

[1] Abdous, M. H., Camarena, M. M., & Facer, B. R. (2009). MALL technology: Use of academic podcasting in the foreign language classroom. *ReCALL*, 21: 76-95.

[2] Bulut. (2016). Me like Pre-service EFL teacher learning during the practicum: A multiple case study in a context of systemic dissonance, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Leeds.

[3] Chen, C. M., &Chung, C. J. (2008). Personalized mobile English vocabulary learning system based on item response theory and learning memory cycle. *Computers & Education,* 51,624-645.

[4] Chen Jianlin. (2010). Integration of Computer Networks and Foreign Language Courses Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign language Education Press.

[5] Chen Zhenzhen. (2019). A Study on the Learning Input of Smartphone Assisted Foreign Language Teaching in Classroom Teaching. *Audio-visual Teaching of Foreign languages* 6, 49-54.

[6] Clark N. Quinn. (2010). The Mobile Academy: M learning For Higher Education. San Francisco, California, Jossey-Bass Press.

[7]   Comac, L. (2008). Using audioblogs to assist English-language learning: an investigation into student perception. *Computer Assisted Language Learning,* 21, 181- 198.

[8]   Cui Guangzuo et al. (2001). Mobile Education — a New Direction of Modern Educational Technology National Higher Education Technical Cooperation Committee. Theory and Practice—E-Learning Research and Application of Modern Educational Technology. Chongqing, southwest normal University Press.

[9]   Frohberg &C. Güth &G. Schwabe. (2009). Mobile Learning projects-a critical analysis of the state of the art. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning,* 25,307-331.

[10] Golonka, E. M., Bowles, A. R., Frank, V. M., Richardson, D. L. & Freynik, S. (2012). Technologies for foreign language learning: A review of technology types and their effectiveness. *Computer Assisted Language Learning,* 27, 70–105.

[11] Kukulska-Hulme. (2009). Will mobile learning change language learning? *ReCALL*, 21, 157-165.

[12] Li Gang, Fan Lina, Li Jinshu. (2019). A Study on the Development of Pre-service Professional Competence for Middle School Teachers. *Internet Journal of Educational Science, Hunan normal University,* 01, 102-107.

[13] Lu Yingbo, Yu Ping. (2013). A Study on the Mode of Foreign Language Teaching Based on Mobile Learning Terminal. *Modern Educational Technology,* 6, 71-75.

[14] Mingucci, M. M. (2002). AR as ESL Teacher Professional Development. University of Misouri-Kansas City.

[15] Tian Hanzu. (2014). Qi Yujie, Li Danhua. Current Situation, Problems and Countermeasures of Teachers' Exchange in Compulsory Education in Beijing. *Educational science research*, (12):24-30 36.

[16] Wen Qiaoping. (2007). A Reflections on the Intension of Foreign Language Teachers' Professional Development. *Journal of Hunan Agricultural University (Social Sciences Edition)*, (01):87-89.

[17] Xiao Liping. (2002). A Review of the Research on Teacher Professional Development at Home and abroad. *Chinese Journal of Education,* (05):61-64.

Miaomiao Gao was born in Shanxi, China in 1996.

She is currently a postgraduate student in the School of Foreign Languages, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China. Her research interests include English Education and text book analysis.

Ms. Gao is a member of the postgraduate student research innovation project in Chongqing.

Xifang Tu was born in Jiangxi, China in 1996.

She is currently a postgraduate student in the School of Foreign Languages, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China. Her research interests include English Education and second language acquisition.

Ms. Tu is a member of the postgraduate student research innovation project in Chongqing.

Junshui Li was born in Fujian, China in 1995.

He is currently a postgraduate student in the School of Foreign Languages, Chongqing Normal University, Chongqing, China. His research interests include Cognitive linguistic and Mobile-Assisted language learning.

Mr. Li is a member of the postgraduate student research innovation project in Chongqing.

Morphosyntactic Analysis of Onitsha Personal Names

Chika Obiageli Ezeudo
Department of Linguistics, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria

Sopuruchi Christian Aboh*
Department of Linguistics, Igbo and other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Kalu Mba Idika
Department of Linguistics, Igbo and other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Abstract—**This study examines Onitsha personal names (OPN) from a morphosyntactic perspective. The major objective of this study is to examine the syntactic and morphological structure of some OPN. Specifically, the study seeks to ascertain the morphological processes and the relation in the internal structures of the morpheme that are combined to form the names. A sample of 250 names for both male and female were used for the analysis. The data were obtained from a list of names in schools, men and women religious associations. Oral interviews were conducted with native speakers in order to get clarifications as it concerns the meaning of the names. The roots, stems, and affixes of the names were analysed using the descriptive approach and applying the word formation rules. The findings reveal the following: that most of the morphological processes in the formation of OPN are predominantly clipping, prefixing and suffixing in a hierarchical manner, such that the meaning of the names are predictable from their structural components and most of these names are derived from clauses by desententialisation process; the philosophy behind the names are often lost due to clipping; OPN at sentential level can function as statements, interrogatives, or imperatives, commands; the morphological components in terms of size, length or shape can be monomorphemic, dimorphemic, trimorphemic and polymorphemic. Structurally, they can be single stem, compound or complex.**

Index Terms—**morphology, syntax, anthroponyms, Onitsha, onomastics**

I. INTRODUCTION

Names are given in particular languages whose morphology, syntax and semantic inform their meaning to great extent (Batoma, 2006). This implies that understanding personal names hinges on taking a critical look at the internal structures of the word(s) and the syntactic structure that constitute the name besides sociolinguistic, sociocultural, historical and ethno-linguistic domains. The study of personal name is important in understanding the culture, norms, and values, and circumstances behind the birth of individuals. It further foregrounds the place of proper names as a major etiquette of the society and understanding of this is necessary for a peaceful co-existence in the society.

Onomastics is an area that studies names in all aspects. In the most precise terminology; a set of personal names is called anthroponyms and its study is called anthroponymy. Onitsha indigenes attached much importance to names and naming practices. The knowledge about Onitsha names give insight into Onitsha, culture, philosophy, thoughts, environment, religion, language and culture. Many scholars have written on the social, cultural importance of names (see Onukawa, 2000; Agyekum, 2006; Ahamefula et al. 2019; Ikotun, 2013; Akinola, 2014) but little attention is given to the morphosyntactic analysis of Onitsha personal names to the best of the researchers' knowledge. A related linguistic structural analysis of personal names is Eze, Aboh and Eze's (2020) research where they explored the linguistic formation patterns of anglcised traditional Yorùbá anthroponyms. Their research focused mainly on phonological features of anglicised Yorùbá personal names. This study therefore seeks to add another dimension to the study of names by using a morphosyntactic approach to analyse Onitsha personal names, which is a variety of the Standard Igbo language. This study is important because since the philosophy behind some names are lost due to truncation, studying Onitsha personal names (henceforth, OPN) from a morphosyntactic perspective helps to trace back the initial structures of OPN.

Folklores on the origin of Onitsha reveal that Onitsha has a close contact with Igala and Edo through Igweze Chima. This necessitated the borrowing of a list of names from the town. Linguists use the term borrowing and loanword to refer to instances in which one language takes a lexical expression from another language (Haspelmath, 2008). Onitsha is a town in Anambra State, Nigeria.

---

* Corresponding author's email: sopuruchi.aboh@unn.edu.ng

The objectives of this study are to identify the morphological components of OPN and to analyse the syntactic functions and structures of OPN. This is a qualitative study which involves the morphosyntactic analysis of Onitsha personal names. Insights from morphological and syntactic principles are used to interrogate the data. Here, morphological analysis is seen as the syntax of morpheme, and a complex word is seen as a concatenation of morphemes. (Aronoff, 1976; Yule, 2020). Onomastics has influenced the recovering and reconstruction of many heritages. In the words of Batoma (2006, p. 2), "a major trend in African studies today consists of using traces of African culture embedded in African names and naming practices to recover or reconstruct Africa heritage". In addition to this, personal names can be grouped with reference to their formation which include those of one word or element and those made up of two elements; compounds. This classification has linguistic underpinning. The type of classification crucial to the study is the one with linguistic orientation.

The data for the study were obtained from a list of names in schools, men and women religious associations who are of Onitsha origin. In all, the researchers randomly sampled 250 personal names over a period of four months. After collecting the names, the researchers used inductive and creative synthesis approach to data analysis to categorise and code the personal names under the right morphological and syntactic divisions. The researcher also interacted with the elders, youths of Onitsha indigenes to gather the story that portrays the philosophy behind the names. This was useful because it helped the researcher to get the underlying personal morphological and syntactic structures of the names since they are no more in their original form due to the short forms that are used in this contemporary time.

II. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Onukawa (2000) maintains that the core values of a people are better propagated in the native language. He further explains that the Igbo values are seriously threatened and an achievement on its propagation should be made more and better via a very important component of the language, therefore, Igbo should return to the traditional Igbo personal names, and let the names serves as vehicles for the propagation of Igbo core values since the traditional names are very rich in culture content.

In line with the above, Batoma (2000) opines that names are given in particular languages whose morphology, syntax and semantics inform their meaning to a great extent. This implies that understanding names (personal names) hinges on taking a critical look at the internal structure of the word(s) and the syntactic structure that constitute the name besides sociolinguistics, sociocultural, historical and ethno-linguistics domain.

Mbhele (2006) argues that names convey important socio-cultural information, they are analysable into syntactic components such as phrase types and sentence types she studies Sesotho names. According to Anderson (1992), the ideas of morpheme are as follows: Morpheme are homogeneous and indivisible atomic units of linguistic form; each morpheme in a given phonological represented by exactly one morph and each morph represents exactly one morpheme and they are arranged into a structure of immediate constituent, which yields a sort of phrase marker as the analysis of a word structure. In addition, Anderson notes that since the function of derivation is to construct new words of this sort, it follows all derivation must take place prior lexical interpretation. On the other hand, inflectional operation refers to a morphosyntactic representation as well as to a stem, so all genuinely inflectional operation must take place after lexical interpretation. In the word of Halle (1973) word formation Rules (WFRs) are therefore necessary to specify how morphemes are to be arranged.

The paper analyses OPN by looking at their morphological and syntactic components. The morphological component deals with the internal structure of the individual morphemes that constitute the names. This helped to identify the word formation processes involved. The syntactic components deal with functional and structural nature of Onitsha personal names at the sentential level. It indicates whether a particular name is functionally a declarative, interrogative or imperative sentence or structurally a simple, compound or complex sentence.

III. SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS OF OPN

This section looks at the syntactic structure of some OPN. It looks at OPN and sentential level analysis. The names will be analysed into two broad categories: sentence function and sentence structure.

A. Sentential OPN and Sentence Function

Sentence by function is divided into declaratives, commands and questions (interrogation). The analysis of the data indicates that some OPN can be declaratives, commands, or a question.

TABLE 1
SENTENTIAL OPN WITH INTERROGATIVE FUNCTION

	Formed names	Original names	Gloss
1	Àkàmù ònyé?	Àkàmù òny émma ?	Am I better than others?
2	Àfùlùenū?	Àfùlùenūányá?	Who knows tomorrow?
3	Àjùlù?	Àjùlùchúkwúajùjú?	Was God questioned?
4	Ènwèónwú?	Òny énwèònwú?	Who owns death?
5	Ìbúzò?	Ìbùchúkwúúzò?	Are you above God?

The data in Table 1 show that many of the OPN are in interrogative sentences. The names formed are also rhetorical questions. The formed names in table 1 changed their inherent tone patterns and some segments are clipped to have the short forms. It is observed that some meanings of these names are lost after the formation.

TABLE 2
SENTENTIAL OPN WITH DECLARATIVE FUNCTION

	Formed names	Original names	Gloss
6	Ùdèmúézùè	Ùdèmúézùègó	My fame is complete
7	Táàgbó	Táábùgbóó	It is still early
8	Ọnwúghàlú	Ọnwúghàlú m	Death spare me
9	Ǹkèchí	Ǹkèchúkwúnyèrè	God's gift to me.
10	Énùùmà	Énùùmàíjèm	God knows my journey.

The names in table 2 above are instances of OPN that have declarative structure. Placing the formed and original names side by side, it is observed that the formed names are derived through the process of truncation. In respect to the original names, the names are formed through desententialisation where sentences as observable in the gloss (egs 6-10) are compressed to serve as personal names.

TABLE 3
OPN FORMED ACCORDING TO THEIR PARTS OF SPEECH

	Names	Formed names	Parts of speech	Gloss
11	Àkù + ńné	Àkùńnē	Noun +Noun	Mothers wealth
12	Àkù + ńwátà	Àkùńwátà	Noun + Noun	Young rich man
13	Àkù + nwááfõr	Àkụnwááfõr	Noun +Noun	Son of the soil
14	Òfú + ńné	Òfúńnē	Nominal + Noun	Siblings
15	Ònyé+ ọmá	Ónyẹ́má	Participle + Adjective	Good person

The above examples show OPN formed with noun + noun and participle + adjective. The lexical class of the realised name is a noun. There are some names formed by compounding. Compounding is the addition of one base to another to form a new word. It is a situation where two words are combined into a morphological unit.

TABLE 4
OPN FORMED BY COMPOUNDING

	Names	Compound names	Parts of speech	Gloss
16	Chǐnwè + Okwu	Chǐnwèokwu	Noun + Noun	God decides
17	Àmàlà+ chukwu	Àmàlàchukwu	Noun + Noun	God's grace
18	Òlǐsà+ ẹ́gbòó	Òlǐsàẹgbò	Noun + Adjective	God intervene
19	Àjùlù +chukwu	Àjùlụchukwu	Adjective + Noun	Did you ask God

The OPN by compounding retain then inherent tones when combined. Semantically, compound words have meanings and at times, their meaning, cannot be inferred from their individual meaning. The names that were formed by compounding retain their inherent tone after combination. The compound names did not affect the inherent tone of the different names combined. The analysis also identified that the compound names are exocentric compounds because they indicate a hyponym of some unexpressed semantic heads (it has no relation with each other). This shows the internal stability of the morphemes in the construction.

OPN formed from participle phrases

Òménàzù – Born after the death of his father.
Ókwúézè– Born during the period of kingship.
Òbńwè– Belonging to the monarch.
Ónyẹ́má– Good person.

The above subset of data shows de-verbal OPN showing the internal stability of the morphemes in the construction.

Chomsky and Halle (1956) assume that the internal structure of words is to be labeled, bracketing much like the internal structure of sentence. Morphemes are organized into a hierarchical, systematic, immediate constituent structure.

Name:

Ọbụkaesieme
```
Ọ ——— Ọbụkaesieme
(1)
        bụ ——— bụkaesieme
        (2)
              ka ——— kaesieme
              (3)
                    e ——— esieme
                    (4)
                         si ——— sieme
                         (5)
                               e ——— eme
                               (6)
                                     me
                                     (7)
```

Ọbụmselu
```
Ọ ——— Ọbụmselu
(1)
        bụ ——— bụmselụ
        (2)
              m ——— mselu
              (3)
                   se ——— selụọgụ
                   (4)
                         lụ ——— lụọgụ
                         (5)
                               ọgụ (6)
```
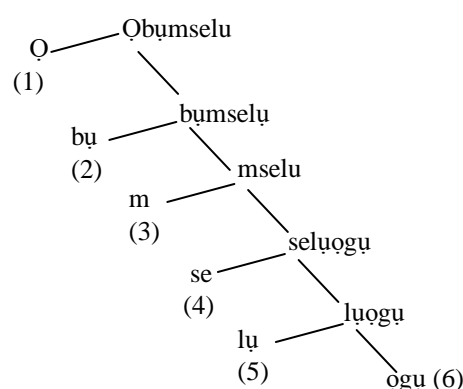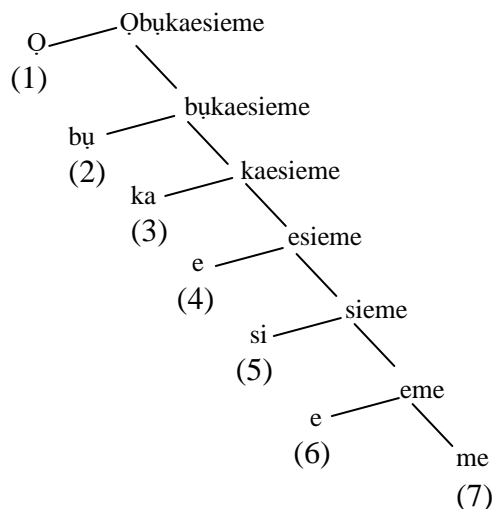
The data indicate that the arrangement of the phonemes and morphemes are fixed and compatible. Since there is a strong interface between morphology and phonology, there are some phonological processes that are involved in the formation of some OPN.

TABLE 5
PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES THAT ARE INVOLVED IN THE FORMATION OF SOME OPN

	Name	Phonological processes/type	Output	Gloss
20	Olisa + egboo	Regressive assimilation	Oseegbo	God has intervened
21	Olisa + emeka	Regressive assimilation	Oseemeka	God is great
22	Chibuike	Elision	Chiike	God is my strength
23	Emeeọdị	Regressive assimilation	Ém ódī	You shall reap what you sow

Table 5 shows that there are instances of phonological process in the word formation of OPN. Some of the morphemes undergo some phonological processes: assimilation and elision. Assimilation and possible elision are obtainable during fast speech. In many cases, Igbo people in general and Onitsha indigenes in particular elide some phonemes in names for convenience. The rationale is that it is easier to pronounce abridged version of a name than its complete form.

B. Morphological Analysis of Onitsha Personal Names

Morphology is the beginning of syntax indeed; all levels of linguistic are interconnected. Morphosyntax links morphology and syntax through morphosyntactic or simply morphological processes. It is through these interfaces that all issues about derivation, extension, and inflation are handled in human communication. This section will treat the morphological analysis of OPN; beginning with the types of morpheme and number of syllable structure of OPN.

TABLE 6
MORPHOLOGICAL ORGANISATION

	Complete name (COPN)	No of morphemes	No of syllable	Short forms names (SFN)	Gloss
24	Énúélūáká	3	6	Ēl ùaka	Life is not easy
25	Ọ̀ny ẹ́n ééọ́ dịlị ā	6	8	Émódī	You will reap whatever you sow
26	Mm ádù àdịch íé	4	7	Àd ćh íé	Compensation by god
27	Íwéyíràzìán'òfú	5	8	Íw ẹ́n òf ú	Mellow down your anger

1. Morphological Structure

In terms of Igbo tonology, morphology and syntax, Igbo nouns and verbs and nouns are better more economically classified as simple and complex. Simple nouns are – mono – morphemic, while complex nouns are bi – morphemic, tri-morphemic and multi-mophemic.

Poly-morphemic OPN - Uyanne, Anịonwu, Adaiba , Afuanya,

Bio-morphemic OPN - Chịma, Eneanya

Tri-morphemic OPN - Egodigbo, Nwadiogbu, Nwaonyeugbo

Multi - morphemic OPN - Oguejiofor, Okwuegbunam, Onyeachonam Onyeachonam

Mono – morphemic OPN - Udo, Ubili, Agụ, Agha EluIyom Ebo, Offiah, Obi. Monomorphemic are also referred to as single structures and polymorphemic as complex structures.

Generally, according to Onukawa (1995, 2000) Igbo personal names are derived from nouns Onitsha, beginning a dialect of Igbo language have their personal names are sentential before the application of morphological, synthactic

and phonological rules that gives rise to the short forms. Most of OPN are polymorphemic and segmented. Sentential nominalization in the analysis of the data indicates that there are varieties of morphological components in their internal structure.

2. The Morphological Rules Applied in Formation of OPN

The morphological rules applied in forming OPN are as: clipping, compounding, vowel alteration (internal structure) affixation. In linguistics, clipping is the word formation process that consists in the reduction of a word to one part. The types of clipping in the formation of OPN are as follows:

TABLE 7
OPN THAT ARE FORMED BY FRONT CLIPPING (APHRESIS)

	Full name	Front clipping	Formed names	Gloss
28	Nwando	Ndo	Ndo	A Calm child
29	Ejiroikeeme	Ejiro	Ikeme	You don't survive by struggling
30	Chibuike	Chi	Buike	God is great
31	Chikamma	Chi	Kamma	God is great

In this construction, the subject in the sentence that is combined to be a proper name is deleted. The syntactic nature of the names is formed on deletion of the front part segment. The philosophy behind the meaning of the name after the clipping process is partially or completely distorted.

TABLE 8
OPN FORMED BY BACK CLIPPING (APOCOPATION)

	Name	Clipped segments	Short forms	Gloss
32	Étúkáókwú	Ókwú	Étúká	Stressed argument
33	Òbùmsèlùògù	Lùògù	Òbùmsè	Am not the cause of the fight
34	Mmáschúkwú	Chúkwú	Mmásí	Gods whish
35	Sópúrúchúkwú	Chúkwú	Sópúrú	Honour God

The compliment and some subjects in the construction are often deleted by front clipping process. Both of them result in word reduction because a shorter word is derived or made from a longer one. In the formation of OPN names (short forms) clipping is used. Clipping as a morphological process, involves the shortening of polysyllabic words without necessary regard to derivational analogy, the shortening of personal names exemplify clipping as a synchrony one.

TABLE 9
OPN FORMED BY MEDIAL CLIPPING OR (SYNCOPE)

	Name	Clipped segments	Short forms	Gloss
36	Obi/nwere/ozo	Nwere	Obiozo	Royal palace
37	Ani/nwe/onwu	New	Anionwu	All flesh must die
38	A/ni/chebe	ni	Achebe	The land will protect m

TABLE 10
MIXED CLIPPING/COMPLEX

	Name	Deleted segments	Formed names	Gloss
39	Chukwukadibia/kwu, dibia/	Kwu/dibia/kwu, dibia/	chuka	God is greater
40	Chimeeremchi	Chi/remchi	mmee	God did it for me
41	Chukwudumaka	Chuk/wum	duaka	God holds me

3. Desententialisation Process in Forming OPN

The process of desententialisation is a morphological process where the subject, verb, and compliments of a clause are fused resulting in a nominal (Onukawa 1995).

TABLE 11
DESENTENTIALISATION PROCESS IN FORMING OPN (S+V+C)

	Subject	Verb	Compliment	Fused names	Word order
42	Azi	Ka	Iwe	Azikiwe	SVO
43	Mba	Na	Efo	Mbanefo	SVO
44	Ofor	Di	Ile	Ofordile	SVO
45	Okwu	dị	Nka	okwudịnka	SVO
46	Nwa	Ka	Ego	Nwakaego	SVO
47	Azu	bụ	Ogu	Azubuogu	SVO
48	Nwa	dị	ọgwa	Nwadịọgwa	SVO

C. General Analysis of the Formation of OPN

Declaratives

i.   full OPN   Formed OPN (FOPN)   Gloss
    Òlìsàjìńdù   Òsájì   (SVO)   God is in charge of my life

N   V   N
Ólìsà– jìńdù   →   3morphemes
o-li –sa-ji-n – du   →   5syllables
Here, there is one-word morpheme, the deletion of 'li', clipping of 'ndụ' and a change in tone.

ii.   Bèlúsò   Òlìsà   Bòósà– Bǒsa   Only God knows
   Adv   N
   belụsọ -   Olisa→   2morphemes
   be-lụ-sọ-o-li-sa   →   6syllables
   The production involves deletion and we have a gliding tone after the deletion.

iii.   Énwèlùmúzò   -Énwēzò   (SVO)   Do I have another one
   V pro N
   e-nwe-lụ-ụzọ   →   4 morphemes
   e-nwe-lụ-ụ-zọ   →   5syllables
   In 'enwelu', we have 3 morphemes with 'nwe' as the root, 'e', as the participle maker and 'lụ' as past tense marker, hierarchically arranged. In 'Enwezọ' we have changed in tone involving deletion of 'lụ' and 'ụ'

Commands   **Formed OPN**   **Gloss**
iv.   Ùmèbèèlúm   Ùmèbèé   Death cease
   N V pro
   ume-be-e-lụ-m   →   5morphemes
   u-me-be-e-lụ-m   →   6syllables
   The production of 'Umebee' involves the deletion of 'lụ' and 'm' and the words that formed. It also retains its inherent tones.

v.   Ábādōzìnālū   m –   Àbádóm   Stop scolding me.
      V   pro
   A – bado - zị - na - lụ - m   →   6morphemes
   A – ba – do - zị - na - lụ - m   →   7syllables
   The formation of 'Abadom', it involves the deletion of "zinalụ" and change in tone. The morphemes in 'abadozịnalụ' are six and they are hierarchically arranged.

   OPN in a complex sentence structure.
vi.   Ọ́dírōmmātáàòdị́échi   Ọ́dị́tà   Bad times will turn good tomorrow
      Pro V neg adj   adv   pro v adv
   ọ - di - rọ - mma – taata - ọ - dị - echi   → 8morphemes
   ọ - di - rọ - m – ma – ta – a – ta - ọ - di - e – chi   → 12syllables
   'Ọdịta' is formed by the deletion/elision of morphemes 'rọ, mma, ọ, dị and echi and the clipping of 'taa' and it involves change in tone. The verb 'dịrọ', 'ro' is a negative marker. The new formed name   lost some important information about the name from the deleted segments.

   OPN in the form of simple sentences   **GLOSS**
vii. Ázìkà́ ka   ́wé   Youths are easily enraged.

        ↓   ↓   ↓
        N   V(couplar) N

viii. Òfódị́   ̀ɪe   Equity is justice

      ↓   ↓   ↓
      N   V(copular) N

ix. Ńwádị̀   ọ́gwá   It is good to have different sex

      ↓   ↓   ↓
      N   V(copular)   Adj

Complex Sentence   **Gloss**

x. [Ọ bụrụnaụwaekwe, m ga-adị],   ⎰ ndụ ⎱   I will the survive despite tribulation

                                        ⎱ mma ⎰   paragmatic relationship

The name contains 2 verbs; hence, it is a complex relationship structure and can take various complements which are in a paradigmatic relationship. The parenthesised sentence is the conditional sentence while the other part is the subordinate clause. The name shows some elements of persecution around the bearer of the name.

   xi. Name   **Formed OPN**   **Glosses**

Ó   on îanyanwὰ n à– ɛ́n ĺ úɔ́nwé/yā -   Ón îanwà   Who digs a pit will fall inside it

Pro   v   n   aux   part. reflexive pro.

Complex sentence involves the deletion of the subordinate clause for the production of 'Óníanwà. The meaning of the subordinate clause depends on the main clause.

É   m èé ọ̄   dī - Emeeọdị - Emoodi – Ém ɔ́dī

Pro v   pro V

This is also a complex sentence and the end product 'Emodi', was formed by the assimilation (Regressive) and deletion with tone change.

Compounds

xii. Chí + nwé + ókwú Chínwèókwú Chínwŏkwú

It involves compounding, regressive assimilation and finally, deletion and the end product Chinwokwu has a gliding tone.

xiii. Òl ìsà+ égb̀ŏgó+ òg ù - Olisaegbo (ọgụ) – Oliseeegbo – Òl ìségbò

Here, 3 words were joined – 2 noun and 1 verb. 'Ọgụ' was clipped with Olisaegbo left. 'e' assimilated 'a' and finally, one 'e' was deleted.

TABLE 12
OPN NAME FORMED FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF SPEECH

From nouns		Verb	Adjective in function	Numerals
a.	Ubuni	Obanye	Uzọamaka	Ofunne
b.	Uyanne	Ojekwu	Okechukwu	Adịbụa
c.	Uzọnịcha	Onyalụ	Obinwa	

Most OPN that are formed from verb roots have affixes attached to them.

Ọbanye   — ọ/ba/nye. o is the prefix, -ba is the verb root and nye is the suffix.

Ojekwe   — o/je/kwe. o- is prefix,-je is the verb root and kwe is the suffix.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper has shown the morphological and syntactic structure of Onitsha personal. From the data analysis and discussion, it has been observed that some of the names change their inherent tones when the rules of word formation are applied, while some drop the subject in the construction when front clipping rule is applied to the name that are sentential. The clipping takes away some important information in the name resulting in the loss of the philosophy behind the name. In addition, the internal structure of the names analysed show the arrangement of the phoneme and morphemes are fixed and compatible. The hierarchical organization of the morpheme that is segmented to form the names is also shown the analysis. Some OPN syntactically function as declaratives, commands and interrogative. In terms of size, length or shape the morpheme are mostly polymorphemic and polysyllabic showing varieties of morphological components in the internal structure. Most derivation takes place with verbal roots while some undergoing some phonological process thereby changing their forms.

REFERENCES

[1] Agyekum, K. (2006). The sociolinguistic of Akan personal names. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 15(2), 206 235.

[2] Ahamefula, N. O., Odii, B. C., Udechukwu, C. N., Ezemoka, A., Aboh, S. C., Okoye, L. C., Ozioko, E. & Nwachukwu, A. P. (2019). Intercultural communication and international cohesion: A study of Chinese and Igbo names exchange phenomenon. *Igbo scholars International Journal of Igbo Scholars Forum, Nigeria*, 12(1), 47-65.

[3] Akinola, O. A. (2014). Communicative role of Yorùbá names. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*, 2(9), 65-72.

[4] Anderson, S.R. (1992). A-morphous morphology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[5] Aronoff, M. (1976). Word formation in generative grammar. Cambridge: MIT Press.

[6] Batoma, A. (2006). African ethnonyms and topononyms: An annotated bibliography. Retrieved from http://lir.ulowa.edu/ejab/10/10/1ss1/1 on 20/08/2018.

[7] Bosah, B.I. (1975). Groundwork of the history and culture of Onitsha. Onitsha: Etukokwu Printing Press

[8] Chomsky (1956). Three models for description of language. *Transaction on Information Theory,* 2, 113-124.

[9] Chomsky, N. (1970). Remarks on Nominalization. In R. Jacobs & P. Rosenbaum (Eds.), *Readings in English transformational grammar.* Waltham Massachusetts: Gin and Company.

[10] Crystal, D. (1985). A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics (2nd ed.). New York: D.C. Heath and Company.

[11] Eze, A. N., Aboh, S. C. & Eze, D. E. (2020). Linguistic formation patterns of anglicised traditional Yorùbá anthroponyms, *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 38(4), 282-292.

[12] Halle, M. (1973). Prolegomena to a theory of word-formation. *Linguistic Inquiry,* 4, 3-16.

[13] Haspelmath, Martin. (2008). Loanword typology: Steps toward a systematic cross-linguistic study of lexical borrowability. In T.

Stolz, D. Bakker & R. Salas Palom, (eds.), *Aspects of language contact: New theoretical, methodological and empirical findings with special focus on Romancisation processes,* 43–62. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

[14] Ikotun, R. O. (2013). New trends in Yorùbá personal names among Yorùbá christians. *Linguistik Online,* 59(2/13), 67-85.

[15] Marchand, H. (1969). The categories and types of present-day: English wood formation. Munchen: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

[16] Mbhele, M. (2006). Sesotho non-proprials as phrases. *Tsebo-journal of Research and Creative Writing,* 1(1), 31-41.

[17] Onukawa, M. (1995). A Re-analysis of the So Called Igbò De-sentential Nominals. In N. Emenanjo & O. Ndimele (Eds.), *Issues in African Languages and Linguistics:* Essays in Honour of K Williamson, 266-278. Aba: NINLAN.

[18] Onukawa, M. C. (2000). The Chi concept in Igbo gender naming. *Africa,* 70(1), 107-117.

[19] Yule, G. (2020). The study of language (7th ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Obiageli C. Ezeudo was born in Onitsha, Anambra State on 1st August. She has Bachelor of Arts Degree, Master of Arts Degree and PhD in Linguistics at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Obiageli specialises in Psycholinguistics and Applied Linguistics.

She has co-published "Sound symbolism in Igbo: A Magnus approach", Journal of Linguistic Association of Nigeria, 20(2), 104-108.

Dr. Ezeudo is a member of Pragmatics Association of Nigeria, and Linguistic Association of Nigeria.

Sopuruchi C. Aboh was born in Aba, Abia State on 20th November. He had his Bachelor of Arts Degree and Master of Arts Degree in Linguistics at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Sopuruchi specialises in Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics.

He has published some articles including: "The ideology of post-truth in Nigerian cities: A discourse historical analysis", Journal of Linguistic Association of Nigeria, 22(1), 64-78 and "A comparative analysis of lexical prepositions in the Ibibio and Igbo languages", Macrolinguistics, 6(9), 36-45.

Mr. Aboh is a member of Pragmatics Association of Nigeria, Nigeria Ecolinguistics Association, and Nigerian Institute of Translators and Interpreters.

Kalu M. Idika is a PhD student in the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He holds Bachelor of Arts Degree and Master of Arts Degree in Linguistics. Obiageli specialises in Cognitive Semantics and Applied Linguistics.

He has co-published "Sound symbolism in Igbo: A Magnus approach", Journal of Linguistic Association of Nigeria, 20(2), 104-108.

Mr. Idika is a member of Linguistic Association of Nigeria.

Attitudes and Challenges Towards Virtual Classes in Learning English Language Courses From Students' Perspectives at Taibah University During COVID-19 Pandemic

Mohammad Abd Alhafeez Ali Ta'amneh
Taibah University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—**Educational institutions all over the world have shifted from conventional education to distance (online) learning system as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Identifying the advantages and disadvantages of online learning during the present pandemic can help the professors, educators, and educational experts in taking and adopting new appropriate decisions that match the students' needs in such difficult conditions. This study aimed at investigating the first year students' attitudes towards virtual classes in learning English courses. It also aimed to identify the obstacles that encounter them while using this kind of learning. The sample of the study consisted of 336 students at Taibah University during the first semester of the academic year 2020/2021. A well-designed online questionnaire was used to collect data. Results revealed that students' attitudes towards the use of the online learning were positive. Students considered this kind of learning as the best strategy during COVID-19 pandemic. The results also showed that the students faced some pedagogical, technical and personnel obstacles while attending virtual classes.**

Index Terms—**attitudes, distance learning, learning management system, online learning, virtual education.**

I. INTRODUCTION

It is a clear cut that the emergence of Information Technology (IT) has spread all over the world and it has been used in every aspect of life. Educationalists tend to take advantage of computerized utilities and all other means of IT to benefit the process of teaching and learning. Al-Zaidiyeen, Mei and Fook (2010) affirm that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have proved to be active and effective tools for educational process and "it has extended and transformed the way students learn and teachers teach" (p. 211). Because of the increase awareness of the importance of ICTs to be implemented in education, educational institutions launch many electronic learning projects to introduce appropriate technologies and therefore the quality of teaching and learning can be successfully enhanced. The global crisis of COVID-19 pandemic has forced all educational institutions to change their instruction from face-to-face learning to distance (online) learning classes. Alahamdi and Alraddadi (2020) state that "The development of e-learning has expanded to a great extent to include a variety of online learning approaches such as virtual classes, video conferencing and blended learning" (p.57). The Kingdome of Saudi Arabia has been affected by COVID-19 pandemic. All educational institutions have been closed and changed their instruction to distance learning as the only choice to continue their learning during this pandemic. Accordingly, students have attended their lectures online through virtual classes.

The use of the internet helps learners and instructors in their learning and teaching (Sallbego & Tumolo, 2015). Many empirical researches investigate the positive effects of integrating internet technology in EFL teaching and learning (Al-Tale, 2014). As a result of the effectiveness of the internet in educational setting, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia uses it in different educational fields. The online learning includes the Blackboard Platform used at Taibah University which facilitates e-learning system for students and instructors. The virtual classroom is a type of educational tools presented in the Blackboard. Virtual classes according to Cakiroglu (2014) include a variety of learning and teaching services, such as chat, whiteboard, break-out rooms, application sharing, synchronized web browsing, and feedback. It also has many advantages that motivate both learners and teachers to develop the learning process, such as overcoming geographical barriers, recording the session, reducing students' anxiety and increasing their motivations, and improving communication and collaboration (Yadav, 2016). Many universities and educational institutions all over the world during COVID-19 pandemic move to online learning as the only available choice for learning. Using virtual classes in English language learning and teaching becomes widely used during the present pandemic. They allow both teachers and students to communicate, share, and exchange their ideas through online platforms (Yadav, 2016).

What matters the most in this research is the students' attitudes since they play important roles in the acceptance and use of virtual classes. Kim, Chun & Song (2009) define attitude towards a behavior as "an individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior"(P.64). It involves a person's judgment about behavior whether it is good or bad and then a person can behave in a certain way toward something. From a psychological perspective, Affizal

and Sahak (2009) define the word attitude "as a subjective or mental preparation for action. It defines outward and visible postures and human beliefs. Attitudes determine what each individual will see, hear, think and do" (p.59). In other words, such definition involves the characteristics or the qualities that motivate and stimulate a person to behave in a certain way to make him/her likes or dislikes a property. Therefore, attitudes direct someone's attention to go for something or even react against it occasionally. In relation to technology, attitude can be affected positively or negatively. Researches show that the ultimate success or failure of technology use in education depends heavily on the person's attitude towards technology use (Abirini 2006).

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The use of online learning platforms contributes to benefit students, teachers and administration if they accept to use and get advantage of it. Therefore, technology acceptance, as perceived by Davis (1989) determines the factors that affect the actual use of educational technology in school context. One of the main aims of online learning is to enhance the positive tendency and to increase the society awareness about Information and Communication Technology and its role on the process of teaching and learning. Using virtual classes in online learning is considered as important as physical attendance in face to face learning. Students have enough knowledge and experience to learn online and attend virtual classes efficiently and frequently. As a result of that, the researcher tends to carry out this investigation to recognize the students' attitudes towards the effect of the virtual classes and identify the encountered obstacles that hinder their actual use.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study drives its importance from the fact that it discovers and sheds the light on the students' attitudes towards the use of EFL virtual classes. In fact, the study is important because:
1. The increase awareness of the EFL virtual classes is directly reflected in the policies and visions of higher education in general and Taibah University in specific in Saudi Arabia. Taibah University offers significant importance to encourage administrative staff, instructors and student to implement online learning in every step they make.
2. The study aims to investigate the students' attitudes towards the use of online learning during COVID-19 pandemic. When the findings are identified, the positive or negative attitudes help educationalists account for the right modifications.
3. It is expected for the study to find the obstacles that students confront when they use attend virtual classes and then the study suggests some solutions.
4. The study may enrich the literature and library sources as it keeps up-to-date record.

IV. QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study attempts to answer the following questions:
1. What are the students' attitudes towards the use of EFL virtual classes in learning English courses?
3. What are the encountered obstacles that the students face while attending EFL virtual classes?

V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The findings of the present study were limited to the students at Taibah University studied at Badr branch. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other students in different areas.
2. The study may be repeated in other branches with a larger sample to investigate the students' attitudes.
3. Examining students' attitudes towards virtual classes after being enrolled in training session may affect the results and reduce the obstacles.

VI. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

1. Virtual class: It is a kind of electronic classroom used in the process of teaching and learning to make online learning more attractive and purposeful.
2. Attitude: It is a psychological tendency that is expressed by "evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor" (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 1).
3- Electronic learning: It is the process of using electronic applications to facilitate students' learning and improve their understanding.
4-Students' attitudes: They are the students' general tendency to react favorably or unfavorably to an object (Morris and Maisto, 2005). In this study the students' attitudes are measured by their answers to the items of the questionnaire.

VII. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The term electronic learning, such as internet, intranet, virtual classroom and computer-based learning, can be defined as the process by which we can use electronic application and software to improve and enrich learning.

Nowadays, universities are fully provided with all means of technology to facilitate the teaching and learning processes. Bena and James (2001) mention some benefits for using technology in learning. They assert that technology increases students' ability and motivates them to do their tasks eagerly. It also prepares students for success in a technology-centered world of work. Furthermore, it helps students to manage and use information so they become more productive and responsible. Smith (2013) and Madison (2011) assert the importance of using technology in educational process through making education more enjoyable and attractive.

Using internet technology and educational platforms in learning and teaching, such as Blackboard platform, are used globally to enable users to manage the contents of learning activities and overall development of students and faculties as well. According to Beatty (2013), a virtual classroom is a kind of "electronic classroom that can be expandable in time, space, and content" (p. 156). In virtual learning, instructors and students "are not present physically in the same class; instead, they remain separate different locations and connect via different IT (Information Technology) applications" (Shahzad, Hussain, Sadaf, Sarwat, Ghani& Saleem, 2020, p.4). As a result of COVID-19 pandemic, many counties suggest educational institutions to use virtual learning programs and different educational applications so the instructors can deliver their lectures to their students through online platforms.

According to Yadav (2016), virtual learning motivates learners and instructors to communicate and share ideas through oral communication, texts, video and audio conversations, chat and Power Point presentations. Munoz-Organero, Munoz-Merino & Kloos (2010) suggest that exploring motivational problems for some students early give teachers a chance to present additional encouraging activities for them in the future. That is to say, if problems behind students' abstain from using the virtual classes are identified, teachers can design new tasks and assignment that match the students' need and interest. Additionally, Alahmadi & Alraddadi (2020) assert that creating environment that encourages students to communicate in English is considered as a challenge in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Indeed, many researchers view EFL virtual classes as a potential solution to this challenge because of the benefits of these classes for English students. (Alahmadi& Alraddadi, 2020; Bianchi, Yyelland, Yang & McHarg, 2019; Hussein, 2016; McBrien, Cheng, & Jones., 2009). Consequently, students become more motivated to get advantage of all utilities of virtual classes and their level of confidence starts to increase more. Some researchers consider online learning as helpful and efficient educational tools of electronic learning systems for both instructors and learners. (Ta'amneh, 2014; Liaw, 2008; Chang, 2013). "To know the benefits of technology in educational processes, both learners and instructors have to use it efficiently and successfully in their practices" (Ta'amneh, 2020. p.83).

VIII. LITERATURE REVIEW

The effectiveness of online and distance learning has been investigated by many researchers. Alahamdi and Alraddadi (2020) discovered that the students had positive attitudes towards using virtual classes for foreign language learning. Furthermore, Al-Qahtani (2019) found that the students and teachers had positive attitudes towards teaching and learning via EFL virtual classes. His findings also agreed with the important role of virtual classes in developing communication skills. In the same vein, Cakiroglu (2014) asserted that using the internet and it's applications in the educational process helped the development of communication among students, instructors, and sharing resources for knowledge. His results also emphasized that "Virtual classrooms are one of the main components of synchronous settings that share certain similarities with real classrooms"(p. 1). Sarica and Cavus (2008) considered online learning as an alternative way to study English and give students good opportunities for the development of learning processes and improving their language skills. Similarly, Sanders (2012) conducted a study to examine the effect of e-learning tools in improving students' English communication and performance. The results showed that using these tools outside the classroom encouraged students' engagement in the process of learning. Likewise, Hariri and Bahanshal (2015) found a positive relationship between students' proficiency in English language as a result of employing e-learning system. Similarly, in a study that compared students' use of two different platforms, Al-Mubireek (2019) found positive attitudes towards learning via online learning. Likewise, Anas (2020) confirmed that Saudi students at Bisha University appreciated the interactivity of online learning tools, such as discussion forums and collaborative activities. According to Ta'amneh (2017), using online technological educational systems in the process of learning gave both students and teachers more educational advantages and assisted them to overcome the problems of conventional learning through discussing, explaining and exchanging ideas connected to their courses at any time and everywhere.

Studies done on the attitudes towards electronic learning in general and virtual classes in particular were so many in numbers in the literature especially those studies that were conducted on teachers' and students' attitude towards technology in learning. However, studies done on students' attitudes towards EFL virtual classes were limited in number. Therefore, the researcher concentrated on the studies conducted on the EFL virtual classes and students' attitudes towards the use of them during COVID-19 pandemic in the related literature. Here are some of them:

Alhawiti (2017) examined the effectiveness of virtual classes on student English proficiency at Tabuk Community College during the first term of the academic year 2016–2017. The sample of the study consisted of 224 students. The participants were divided into two groups (control and experimental). The independent variable consisted of the proposed virtual classes used to teach the students of the experimental group at Tabuk Community College. The dependent variable was student English proficiency. The results showed that the students in the experimental group

were better and higher on the English achievement test than other students in the control group as a result of attending EFL virtual classes.

Al-Qahtani (2019) investigated teachers' and students' attitudes' towards EFL virtual classes and the effects of these classes on improving communication skills. The sample consisted of thirty teachers and students at King Khalid University in Abha. They were divided into two groups (control and experimental).The results showed that the majority of the participants had positive attitudes towards EFL virtual classes. They agreed that these classes play a vital role in developing communication skills.

Alahmadi and Alraddadi (2020) investigated the impact of the virtual classroom on English language interaction. Ninety students in an English language course in the Preparatory Year Program at a Saudi English Language Centre participated in this study. They were asked to respond to the questionnaire developed by the researchers to measure their attitudes towards this kind of learning. The results revealed that there was a satisfied interaction among students in virtual classes. Besides, they indicated that the students had positive attitudes towards using these classes for learning English language skills.

Adnan and Anwar (2020) examined the attitudes of Pakistani students towards compulsory digital and distance learning university courses during COVID-19 pandemic. The sample of their study consisted of 84 female and 42 male higher education students who were surveyed to find their attitudes towards online education in Pakistan. The findings of the study indicated that online learning could not produce good results in Pakistan because of the internet problems and other technical and monetary issues in addition to other difficulties like the lack of face-to-face communication with their teachers and the absence of conventional classroom socialization. The results also showed that online learning was not as effective as traditional learning although it played a vital role during the pandemic. The result also indicated that curriculum designers and teachers need to develop and improve their curriculum and design suitable content for online meetings.

Hamouda (2020) conducted a study to discover the effects of using the virtual classes on English speaking skills and to study their attitudes towards the use of virtual classes at Qassim University. The study consisted of seventy students distributed into two groups (control and experimental) during the first semester of the academic year 2019-2020. The results indicated that the students in the experimental group scored better on the speaking test than those in the control group. The findings also revealed that students had positive attitudes towards using virtual classes.

Khalilia (2020) did a study to determine students' attitudes and difficulties towards online learning during the times of crisis and to help teachers, students and the educational institution in taking appropriate decisions in such difficult situations. Two hundred and eighty students at Al-Istiqlal University responded to online questionnaire during the second semester of the academic year 2019-2020. The results indicated that the participants had appositive attitudes towards online learning. It also revealed that the participants encountered some obstacles while using the e-learning process related to computer skills, gender, and internet connection.

Lassoued, Alhendawi and Bashitialshaaer (2020) conducted a study to reveal the obstacles of online learning during COVID-19 pandemic. The participants consisted of 400 professors and students from Algeria, Egypt, Palestine, and Iraq. The researchers wanted to investigate the different ways used by students to continue learning outside universities as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. They used a questionnaire to achieve the objectives of their study. The results indicated that the participants encountered self-imposed difficulties, as well as pedagogical, technical, and financial or organizational obstacles.

It has been noticed that the use of technology in education enhances the teaching and learning process. Using virtual classes facilitate such a process and help teachers prepare the material and make it accessible anytime. Students also can get access to this material, do the task, modify it and then share it with other students, too. Students tend to react positively towards the use of technology in education and the majority of the students perceive the virtual class as a helping system for their learning. Administrators and teachers recommend using this kind of learning since it saves time, costs less, and creates a social and helpful network between teachers, students and their parents as well.

The present study investigates the recent use of EFL virtual classes at Taibah University and investigates both the students' attitudes towards the use of these classes in learning online English courses and students' encountered obstacles that hinder them while using this technology. In fact, this study sheds the light on the students' actual use of EFL virtual classes among university students at Taibah University and offers some solutions to help learners get more benefits and then perform better while learning.

IX. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all students at Taibah University\ Badr branch during the academic year 2020-2021. The sample of the study consisted of 336 students. Twenty students were chosen randomly to validate the instruments. The respondents to the main questionnaires were 336 students who completed filling in the questionnaires.

Instruments of the Study

The study consisted of two questionnaires. They were developed originally by the researcher. The first questionnaire was consisted of 20 items used to find the students' attitudes towards EFL virtual classes during COVID-19 pandemic. The second questionnaire examined the encountered obstacles from students' perspectives.

Validity of the Instruments

The first draft of the questionnaires was given to a jury of seven experts in the field of English language teaching. They held a meeting and suggest some recommendations. Their recommendations were analyzed and taken into consideration.

Reliability of the Instruments

To establish the reliability of the questionnaires, the researcher conducted a pilot study on 20 students who were not included in the sample of this study. The questionnaires were distributed to those students to answer their items and then the copies were collected. After two weeks, the questionnaires were submitted in the same way. To calculate the responses, it was found 0.830 by the use of Person Correlation. In fact, it is considered a reasonable value to conduct this study.

Data Collection Procedures

This study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2020/2021. After validating and establishing the reliability of the questionnaires, the researcher distributed the copies of the questionnaires to students. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to them thoroughly and assured them that their responses would be kept confidential and would be used only for academic purposes.

X. Results

This section presents the findings of the students' attitudes towards EFL virtual classes in learning English language courses and their encountered obstacles while practicing this kind of learning. To answer the first question (What are the students' attitudes towards virtual classes in learning English language courses), the participants were asked to respond to 20 Likert-scale items measuring the students' attitudes towards EFL virtual classes in learning English language courses. The results of descriptive analysis (percentages, means, and standard deviations) of the participants' responses on each item of the questionnaire were calculated. Table 1 presents the results.

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGES, MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS VIRTUAL CLASSES IN LEARNING ENGLISH
LANGUAGE COURSES

No	Item	Percent %					Mean	St. D
		S. Ag	Ag.	Un	Dis	S. Dis		
1	Virtual classes help me get access to the information faster.	35.1	40.8	12.5	6.3	5.4	3.94	1.099
2	Virtual learning motivates me to look at details about target topics.	27.7	46.7	14.6	6.5	4.5	3.87	1.035
3	Virtual classes change my learning techniques and strategies to be more autonomous.	29.5	43.2	17.0	7.4	3.0	3.89	1.010
4	Virtual education provides learners with relevant, valuable, and comprehensive resources.	30.7	40.5	16.4	8.3	4.2	3.85	1.077
5	Virtual classes make the process of English learning more attractive and competitive.	35.4	38.4	8.9	9.8	7.4	3.85	1.219
6	Virtual education enriches the curriculum and helps me understand it better.	31.5	37.8	13.7	10.7	6.3	3.78	1.182
7	Online learning platforms makes the process of learning English easier.	36.6	29.8	16.4	11.3	6.5	3.80	1.217
8	Online examinations and tasks develop my skills in dealing with international exams.	42.3	32.1	14.6	5.4	5.7	4.00	1.138
9	I am more likely to improve my learning autonomy when learning English through online platforms.	36.6	35.7	18.5	5.7	3.6	3.96	1.049
10	The process of communication is appropriate to get access to the online learning platforms.	32.1	40.5	11.9	8.9	6.5	3.83	1.167
11	Virtual learning is better than conventional learning in improving my academic achievement.	29.5	32.4	15.2	11.3	11.6	3.57	1.328
12	The online meetings and virtual lectures motivate me to participate in English without fearing.	42.0	31.0	16.4	7.7	3.0	4.01	1.079
13	Online learning devices are very useful for learning English language skills.	37.8	34.8	17.9	7.1	2.4	3.99	1.029
14	I like to communicate in English with students more through online learning platforms.	29.5	37.2	17.9	11.3	4.2	3.76	1.118
15	Virtual learning provides me with different learning sources	32.4	47.6	11.6	5.4	3.0	4.01	0.962
16	Virtual classes change the ways of communication between students and instructors.	33.9	46.1	12.8	3.6	3.6	4.03	0.966
17	I understand the instructions easily to attend virtual lectures.	39.0	42.3	7.7	8.3	2.7	4.07	1.020
18	I understand the instructions through virtual classes to respond to the online exams and tasks easily.	39.9	39.9	11.3	6.8	2.1	4.09	0.984
19	Online learning in general and virtual classes in specific help me to communicate with learners all over the world.	44.0	38.1	10.4	4.8	2.7	4.16	0.976
20	Virtual learning provides me with different learning sources	35.1	44.6	14.0	3.0	3.3	4.05	0.951

After examining table 1, it is obvious that the mean score ranges from (3.57 to 4.16). In fact, the results show that the items of the highest statistical analysis of mean scores were: item 19 (Online learning in general and virtual classes in specific help me to communicate with learners all over the world) with a mean score of (4.16) and with the highest percentage of S. Ag of (44.0%), item 18 (I understand the instructions through virtual classes to respond to the online exams and tasks easily) with a mean score of (4.09), item 17 (I understand the instructions easily to attend virtual lectures) with a mean score of (4.07), item 20 (Virtual learning provides me with different learning sources) with a mean score of (4.05), and item 16 (Virtual classes change the ways of communication between students and instructors) with a mean score of (4.03). By contrast, the items of the lowest mean scores were: item 11 (Virtual learning is better than conventional learning in improving my academic achievement) with a mean score of (3.57) and item 14 (I like to communicate in English with students more through online learning platforms) with a mean score of (3.76). The students have positive attitudes towards online learning in general and EFL virtual classes in specific since the overall mean score for the all items is (3.93).

To answer the second question (What are the encountered obstacles that the students face while attending EFL virtual classes?), the participants were asked to respond to the questionnaire items that reflect the encountered obstacles. The answers were totally from students' own perspectives.

TABLE 2
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE STUDENTS' RESPONSES OF ENCOUNTERED OBSTACLES

No	Item	Frequency	Percentage %
1	I do not have enough experience to deal with virtual classes .	57	15.7
2	I do not have enough experience in the use of technology while attending virtual classes.	39	11.1
3	I do not have suitable technological tools to attend the virtual lectures.	59	16.8
4	The home environment is not appropriate for me to learn and communicate in virtual classes.	70	19.6
5	I feel tired and bored in completing the online tasks in the given time.	140	42.0
6	Attending a virtual class is difficult and makes me feel scared sometimes.	84	25.2
7	There is no social connection between the teacher and students while and after virtual classes.	105	31.7
8	There are no extra marks or moral incentives while attending virtual classes.	184	55.1
9	I have problems with internet connection.	164	49.5
10	I think that virtual classes do not account for the individual differences and do not satisfy all students' needs.	195	58.6

Table 2 reports the results of descriptive statistics of students' obstacles. Through a close look at the above Table, the researcher identified that the most frequent obstacles that the students faced while attending virtual classes were item 10 (I think that virtual classes do not account for the individual differences and do not satisfy all students' needs) with a percentage of (58.6%), item 8 (There are no extra marks or moral incentives while attending virtual classes) with a percentage of (55.1%), item 9 (I have problems with internet connection) with a percentage of (49.5 %), item 5 with a percentage of (42.0), and item 7 (There is no social connection between the teacher and students while and after virtual classes) with a percentage of (31.7). On the contrary, the least frequent items that indicate students' problems were items 2 (I do not have enough experience in the use of technology while attending virtual classes) ,item 1 (I do not have enough experience to deal with virtual classes), item 3 (I do not have suitable technological tools to attend the virtual lectures), item 4 (The home environment is not appropriate for me to learn and communicate in virtual classes) , and item 6 (Attending a virtual class is difficult and makes me feel scared sometimes) with percentages of (11.1), (15.7), (83.2), (16.8) (19.6), and (25.2) respectively.

XI. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate the students' attitude towards virtual classes in learning English language courses and their encountered obstacles while practicing this kind of learning. Concerning the results of the first question, the statistical analysis results showed that the overall mean score to the students' attitude was (3.93). In fact, this means that the students' attitudes towards this kind of learning reach the standard. As shown in table 1, students prefer attending virtual (online) classes in learning English language courses during COVID-19 pandemic. An explanation to this comes from that fact that students view attending EFL virtual classes in the time of crises as an essential and necessary strategy to learn English language courses during COVID-19 pandemic. For example, item 19 which has one of the highest mean score (4.16) states that students strongly agree that virtual classes improve their academic achievement and communication skills. Students also agree that they view EFL virtual classes as a comfortable place to think critically and use higher level of thinking. They think beyond the text and solve problems by using different levels of thinking.

They also consider using online learning in general and virtual lectures in specific as enjoyable and interesting technique especially while doing course revision. They believe that using this kind of learning is effective in establishing a good relationship between teachers and students. Smith (2013) asserts this by saying that the integrating technology in the process of learning improves educational settings and makes it more enjoyable. Furthermore, Students agree with a percentage of (69.3%) that the use of virtual classes can enrich the curriculum and help them understand it better. In fact, they think that these classes help them get different resources (i.e. visual, auditory and kinesthetic) as shown in item 6. In a way to explain these results, item 3,8, and 12 demonstrate that the majority of the students think that the use of the EFL virtual classes is an effective way to make them feel self-confident.

In addition, students consider virtual learning as a tool that helps them in organizing their homework, assignments, and time. They agree that the use of virtual learning saves their times and efforts. It seems that students download and send data electronically and by doing so the virtual class saves their time. The reasons behind these attitudes can be explained as the teachers may ask students to surf the internet looking for new information that help them understand or add more to curriculum. Educationally speaking, assignments and homework are used to assist the understanding and enrich the curriculum. Teachers assign the homework and check them back at specific time that both students and teachers know it. As a result, students feel it is a requirement to do their assignments and homework before the deadline. Sanders (2012), Hariri and Bahanshal (2015), Alhawiti (2017), Al-Qahtani (2019), Alahmadi and Alraddadi (2020), Hamouda (2020) and Khalilia (2020) asserted what this research ends up.

To identify the challenges that the students face while using the EFL virtual classes, the present study listed many obstacles that hinder students' use of these classes as can be seen in the answer to the second question of the study.

Each obstacle will be fairly discussed from the most frequent one to the least one. Individual differences were not recognized by teachers as seen in the next most frequent item number 10. Thus, (58.6%) of the students were not stimulated to do tasks that reflect their needs and interests. Besides, almost half of the students (55.1) thought that there were no extra marks or moral incentives while attending EFL virtual classes. This problem could affect their interests negatively to attend these online classes. Brinol and Petty (2005:579) affirmed that "individual differences can determine what information is used to validate thoughts or attitudes." So that, when the tasks of the EFL virtual classes are interrelated with students' needs, this will increase their awareness and their desire to use these classes will be fostered.

Technical problems prevented some students from using EFL virtual classes effectively. Almost half of the participants with a percentage of (49.5%) faced internet problems and had a difficulty in dealing with their EFL virtual classes. The same result was seen in the study of Lassoued, Alhendawi and Bashitialshaaer (2020) who stated that "one of the obstacles to achieving quality in distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic was the weak internet speed in many remote areas, and the consequent interruptions in broadcasting and the impediment to following lessons" (p. 9). Students also demonstrated that they did not have enough time to use the EFL virtual classes. This is due to the fact that students are overwhelmed with university tasks, courses and exams. Additionally, almost one third of the students (31.7%) thought that there were no social connections between teachers and students while and after the use of the EFL virtual classes as seen in item 7. In fact, this is a challenge that explains the above item also.

The fifth item of the most frequent problem was that "I feel tired and bored in completing the online tasks in the given time" (item 5). Students expressed with a percentage of (42.0%) that they felt tired with the online tasks in the given time used in the system. To explain this problem, the researcher thinks that students were not fully educated about the system in general and the process of attending online exams and assignments in specific. They might feel their practices are watched out. This made them feel bored and sometimes tired as a result of technophobia.

The least frequent obstacles were item 2 (I do not have enough experience in the use of technology while attending virtual classes), item 1(I do not have enough experience to deal with virtual classes), item 3 (I do not have suitable technological tools to attend the virtual lectures), item 4 (The home environment is not appropriate for me to learn and communicate in virtual classes), and item 6 (Attending a virtual class is difficult and makes me feel scared sometimes).It seems that most of the students do not face these obstacles while attending virtual classes.

XII. CONCLUSION

The study aims to find out the students' attitudes towards the EFL virtual classes and to identify the obstacles that faced students while attending these classes. After doing analytic descriptive methods by terms of statistics to achieve this purpose, it has been found that students' attitudes towards the use of the EFL virtual classes tend to positive and reach the standard limits. Students prefer attending the EFL virtual classes during COVID-19 pandemic. They also strongly agree that the virtual classes help them in their academic achievement. The result shows also that students face many challenges as they get access to the EFL virtual classes. Obstacles were divided in two categories: the most frequent and the least frequent ones. The researcher recommends curriculum designers and decision makers to overcome any obstacles to make students feel more motivated to use the online learning and EFL virtual classes during crises.

XIII. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following points:
1. Motivate students to be educated more about the utilities of the EFL virtual classes and keep them updated with new changes by means of training sessions.
2. It is advisable for the teachers to explore the individual differences of the students, stimulate and motivate them to use the EFL virtual classes by means of extra marks and other incentive tools.
3. Homework and assignments can be assigned electronically so that students surf the internet (educational platforms), download and upload their data.
4. Integration of other university subjects can be an effective tool. ICT teachers can inform and integrate other university subjects with theirs by means of electronic projects and materials.
5. Forums and video conferences have to be activated so that students exchange ideas and hold open discussion.

REFERENCES

[1]   Adnan, M. & Anwar, K. (2020). Online Learning amid the COVID-19 Pandemic: Students' Perspectives. *Journal of Pedagogical Sociology and Psychology*, 2(1), 45-51.
[2]   Affizal, A. and Sahak, R. (2009). Teacher- Student Attachment and Teachers' Attitudes towards Work. *Jurnal Pendidik, Jil*, 24, 55-72.
[3]   AL- Tale, M. (2014). The Effect of a Blended E-Learning Environment on EFL Students' Academic Performance, and Attitudes towards Internet-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching. *King Khalid University Journal for Humanities,* 23(1), 71-96.

[4] Alahmadi, N. S. & Alraddadi, B.M. (2020). The Impact of Virtual Classes on Second Language Interaction in the Saudi EFL Context: A Case Study of Saudi Undergraduate Students. *Arab World English Journal*, 11 (3) 56-72.

[5] Albirini, A. (2006). Teachers' Attitudes toward Information and Communication Technologies: The case of Syrian EFL Teachers. *Computers & Education*, 47(4), 373-398.

[6] Alhawiti, M. M. F. (2017). The Effect of Virtual Classes on the Students English Achievement in Tabuk Community College. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 16(5), 90–101.

[7] Al-Mubireek, A. (2019). E-learning in the English classroom: Comparing two e-learning platforms impacting preparatory year students' language learning. *CALL-EJ*, 20(2), 19–37.

[8] Al-Qahani, M. H. (2019). Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Virtual Classes and the Effectiveness of Virtual Classes in Enhancing Communication Skills. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), Special Issue: The Dynamics of EFL in Saudi Arabia,* 223–240.

[9] Al-Zaidiyeen, N., Mei, L., & Fook, F. (2010). Teachers' Attitudes and Levels of Technology Use in Classrooms: The Case of Jordan Schools. *International Education Studies*, 3(2), 211-218.

[10] Anas, A. (2020). Perceptions of Saudi Students to Blended Learning Environments at the University of Bisha, Saudi Arabia. Arab. *World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL* (6). 261-277.

[11] Beatty, K. (2013). Teaching & researching: Computer-assisted language learning. London: Routledge.

[12] Bena, K. & James, M. (2001). Information Technology for Schools, Creating Practical Knowledge to Improve Students' Performance. Jossey-Bass A Wiley Company San Francisco

[13] Bianchi, R., Yyelland, B., Yang, J., & McHarg, M. (2019). Avatar kinect: Drama in the virtual classroom among L2 learners of English. *The Qualitative Report,* 24(13), 58–74.

[14] Brinol, P., & Petty, R. E. (2005). Individual Differences in Attitude Change. In D. Albarrac ń, B. T. Johnson, & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), *The Handbook of Attitudes and Attitude Change* (pp. 575-616). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

[15] Cakyroglu, U. (2014). Evaluating Students' Perspectives about Virtual Classrooms with Regard to Seven Principles of Good Practice. *South African Journal of Education*, 34(2), 1–19.

[16] Chang, C. (2013). Exploring the Determinants of E-Learning Systems Continuance Intention in Academic Libraries. *Library Management*, 34(1), 40-55.

[17] Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13 (3), 319–340.

[18] Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). The psychology of attitudes. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.

[19] Hamouda, A. (2020). The effect of virtual classes on Saudi EFL students' speaking skills. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 3(4), 174–204.

[20] Hariri, R. O., & Bahanshal, D. A. (2015). Maximizing L2 interaction through using Edmodo in Saudi EFL classrooms. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*, 2 (4), 48–60.

[21] Hussein, E.T. (2016). The effectiveness of using blackboard in improving the English listening and speaking skills of the female students at the University of Hail. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal,* 3(12), 81–93.

[22] Khalilia, W. (2020). Attitudes and Challenges towards E-Learning System in Time of Covid-19 from the Perspective of Al-Istiqlal University Students. *Elixir Edu. Tech*, 145, 54676-54682.

[23] Kim, Y.J., Chun, J.U., and Song, J. (2009). Investigating the Role of Attitude in Technology Acceptance from an Attitude Strength Perspective. *International Journal of Information Management*, 29 (1), 67–77.

[24] Lassoued, Z., Alhendawi, M. & Bashitialshaaer, R. (2020). An Exploratory Study of the Obstacles for Achieving Quality in Distance Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Education Science*, 10(9), 232.

[25] Liaw, S. (2008). Investigating Students' Perceived Satisfaction, Behavioral Intention, and Effectiveness of E-Learning: A Case Study of the Blackboard System. *Computers & Education*, 51(2), 864-873.

[26] Madison, ED. (2012). Face to Face: Virtual Teachers Can't Replace the Real Thing. [Online] Available: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ed-madison/virtual-teachers-vs-real-teachers_b_813438.html (November 9, 2020).

[27] McBrien, J. L., Cheng, R., & Jones, P. (2009). Virtual spaces: Employing a synchronous online classroom to facilitate student engagement in online learning. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 10*(3). 1-17.

[28] Morris, C. G. and Maisto, A. A. (2005). Psychology: An Introduction, 12th Ed. New Jersey: Pearson, Prentice Hall.

[29] Munoz-Organero, M., Munoz-Merino, P. J., & Kloos, C. D. (2010). Student Behavior and Interaction Patterns with an LMS as Motivation Predictors in E-Learning Settings. *IEEE Transactions on Education,* 53(3), 463–470.

[30] Salbego, N. & Tumolo, C. (2015). Skype Classes: Teachers and Students' Perceptions on Synchronous Online Classes in Relation to Face-To-Face Teaching and Learning. *International Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics,* 1(3), 36-45.

[31] Sanders, K., S. (2012). An examination of the academic networking site Edmodo on student engagement and responsible learning, (5), (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). University of South Carolina, Ann Arbor.

[32] Sarica, G. & Cavus, N. (2008). Web-Based English Language Learning. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 1 (1), 439-445.

[33] Shahzad,S., Hussain,J., Sadaf,N., Sarwat,S., Ghani,U., & Saleem, R. (2020). Impact of Virtual Teaching on ESL Learners' Attitudes under Covid-19 Circumstances at Post Graduate Level in Pakistan. *English Language Teaching*. 13(9).1-9.

[34] Smith, P. (2013) Benefits of Technology in Education. [Online]Available:http://edtechreview.in/news/705-benefits-of-technology-in-education (22 -10-2013).

[35] Ta'amneh, M. (2014). The Effect of Using Educational Websites on First Year Students' Achievement in English Grammar in Badr Community college. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS),* 5(2), 184-189.

[36] Ta'amneh, M. (2017). The Effect of Using WhatsApp Messenger in Learning English Language among University Students. *International Research in Education (IRE)*, 5,(1), 143-151.

[37] Ta'amneh, M. (2020).The Effect of Blackboard Learning on the Development of English Writing Skills among University Students. *Journal of Education and Practice*. 11(19), 83-91.

[38] Trayek, Fuad and Hassan, Sharifah. (2013). "Attitude towards the Use of Learning Management System among University Students: A Case Study". *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education-TOJDE* 14 (3), 91-103.

[39] Yadav, G. (2016). Reflection on virtual classes: Spirit of the time. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 4(4), 1162–1167.

Mohammad Abd Alhafeez Ali Ta'amneh is an Associate Professor of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at Taibah University. He got his BA in English language and Literature from Yarmouk University in 2002 and MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) from Hashemite University in 2005. He received his Ph.D. in English Language Curriculum and Instruction from Yarmouk University in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in 2012. His research interests include applied linguistics, blended learning, language teaching, e-learning, language in use, and language analysis.

The Linearity of Verb Copying Cleft Construction in Chinese: Semantic Underspecification and Pragmatic Enrichment

Moying Li
Dongfang College, Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics, China

Lian Zhang
Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics, China

Abstract—**In Standard Chinese, verb doubling cleft construction (henceforth VDCC) has received little attention in the linguistic literature. Recently, Cheng and Vicente (2013) claim that VDCC has the same internal syntax as regular clefts, and two verbs stand in A-bar movement relation based on the lexical identity effect. In this paper, we argue that (1) VDCC is derived in line with the principle of linearity; (2) the first verb is a reduced minimal form acting as a topic which is pragmatically enriched via contextual information; (3) the second verb is interpretively dependent on the first verb.**

Index Terms—**verb copying cleft construction, lexical identity effect, linearity, minimal form, frame setting**

I. INTRODUCTION

In Standard Chinese, verb doubling cleft construction (henceforth VDCC), as illustrated by example (1) below, has received little attention in the linguistic literature:

    (1) 吃，我是吃过了，不过…
        Chi, *wo shi chi guo le*,   *buguo…*
        eat I COP eat EXP LE   but
        'As for eating, I have (indeed) eaten, but…'

Recently, having treated the two verbs in VDCC as standing in an A-bar movement relation, Cheng and Vicente (2013) claim that VDCC in Chinese has the same internal syntax as regular clefts, rather than being an independent construction. In this paper we argue that VDCC in Chinese is not derived via movement. It is generated in line with the principle of linearity or relative to context. The first verb is a reduced minimal form acting as a topic, whose interpretation would be pragmatically enriched via context; the second verb is interpretively dependent on the first verb.

This paper is structured as follows. In section 2, we mainly present a critical review of the analysis proposed by Cheng and Vicente (2013). Section 3 proposes an account of the first verb in VDCC in terms of semantic underspecification and pragmatic enrichment. Section 4 discusses the relationship between the first verb and the second verb. A conclusion is made in section 5.

II. EXISTING ANALYSIS

In this section, we will critically review Cheng and Vicente (2013)'s analysis on VDCC, which adopts the hypothesis laid out in Cheng (2008). Cheng (2008) claims that the morpheme *shi* in Chinese is a copular verb taking a small clause with *pro* predicate, as (2) shows:

    (2) *shi* [$_{SC}$[$_{SUBJECT}$XP][$_{PRED}$*pro*]]

The *pro* predicate then raises to the left of *shi* and forms inverse predication structure, which is structurally equivalent to the English cleft counterpart "it is x":

    (3) [*pro*]$_i$*shi*[$_{SC}$[$_{SUBJECT}$XP][t_i]]

The constituent immediately following *shi* is the focus of the cleft. And other constituents of the SC subject may appear to the left of *shi*, which is taken as the topic via movement, as listed in (4):

    (4) 王五是昨天看见了李四。
        [$_T$*Wangwu*] *shi* [$_F$*zuotian*]   *kanjian le*   *Lisi.*
        Wangwu COP   yesterday see   LE Lisi
        'It is yesterday that Wangwu saw Lisi.'

According to Cheng and Vicente (2013), verb doubling clefts in Standard Chinese also display the same distribution of topic and focus like (3). "The first instance of the verb, being to the left of *shi*, is interpreted as a topic. Similarly, the second instance of the verb following *shi*, is interpreted as a (part of the) focus" (Cheng and Vincente, 2013, p.5), as can

been seen in (5):

(5) Q: 你吃过饭没有？

     Ni   chi-guo   fan   meiyou?

     you   eat-EXP   rice   not.have

     'Have you eaten already?'

  A: 吃，我是吃过，不过…

     [$_T$ *Chi*], [$_T$ *wo*] *shi* [$_F$*chi-guo*], *buguo*…

     Eat   I   COP   eat-EXP   but

     'As for eating, I have indeed eaten, but…' (Cheng and Vicente, 2013, p. 5)

Note that the focus in (5) is a *verum* focus rather than a contrastive one, which affirms the truth of the proposition (see also Krifka, 2007). This requires that focalized element is not the lexical verb itself but the event. VDCC in Chinese also triggers an adversative implicature: The meaning of the cleft is true, some additional contextual factors need to be taken into account, as indicated by *buguo* 'but'.

The two verbs are in A-bar movement chain on the basis of lexical identity effects, and they need to be lexically identical. "It is not possible for one of them to further specify the other" (Cheng and Vicente, 2013, p. 9):

(6) a. 旅行，我是坐过飞机。

    *Lüxing, *wo shi* *zuo-guo* *feiji*.

    travel   I COP sit-EXP   airplane

    'As for travelling, I have taken a plane.'

  b. 煮菜，我是烤过鸡。

    *Zhucai,   *wo shi* *kao-guo*   *ji*.

    Coo-meal, I COP roast-EXP chicken

    'As for cooking a meal, I have indeed roasted chicken.'

Based on the lexical identity effect, Cheng and Vicente (2013) state that "a verbal constituent undergoes A-bar movement out of the focus position and into a topic position"(p.9). They then conclude that verb doubling clefts and regular clefts are derived from the same syntactic frame. The *verum* reading (as opposed to the contrastive focus reading of regular clefts) arises as a consequence of the fact that the upper copy of verb is interpreted as a topic (see also Bastos, 2001).

However, Cheng and Vicente's claim should be untenable, since we can use another verb to specify the first verb:

(7) 旅行，我是乘火车去的，不过很难受。

   Lüxing, *wo shi* *cheng huoche qu* *de*, *buguo* *hen* *nanshou*.

   travel   I COP take train go DE but   very   uncomfortable

   'As for travelling, I have indeed taken a train, but it is very uncomfortable.'

In (7), the second verb phrase is also a *verum* focus to affirm the truth of the topic expressed by the first verb. And an additional meaning *buguo hen nanshou* 'it is very uncomfortable' can also be taken into account. (6b) is unacceptable because topic and comment are not in an aboutness relation.[1] The aboutness relation constrains the comment in the sense that it should be expressed with respect to topic. According to the 6th edition of the contemporary Chinese dictionary, *zhu* 'boil' is defined as "put foods or other things into pot with water to burn". In Standard Chinese, *zhucai* should not be translated as 'cook meal'. Actually, it is a common expression in Cantonese not in Standard Chinese. As a result, *zhucai* 'boil meal' and *kaoji* 'roast chicken' are not in an aboutness relation, since they are two different processes of cooking (for detailed discussion, see section 4). Normally, we can see the following expression *zuofan, wo shi chaoguo xihongshi, buguo bu haochi* 'As for cooking a meal, I have indeed stir-fried tomato. But it is not delicious '. The verb *chao* 'stir-fry' is a subcategory of the verb *zuofan* 'cook a meal', which can be used to specify *zuofan* 'cook a meal'.

There is another hypothesis adopted in Cheng and Vicente (2013)'s analysis, that is, topic is derived from movement. In the next section, we will demonstrate that topic is generated via linearity. The first verb is an actual anaphora structure based on the context.

III. TOPIC AND THE FIRST VERB IN VDCC

In this section, we will argue in the first place that topic is derived in line with the principle of linearity rather than movement based on the hierarchy structure. Second, we will propose that the first verb appearing in the initial position is actually semantically underspecified topic which needs to be enriched pragmatically.

A. The Linearity of Topic

Chao (1968) declares that "the grammatical meaning of subject and predicate in a Chinese sentence is topic and comment, rather than actor and action. Actor and action can apply as a particular case of topic and comment, as in *Goou*

---

[1] Aboutness relation means that the comment clause is always about topic. That is to say, topic expression has a semantic or pragmatic relation with comment. Portner and Yabushita (1998) provide a semantic account of aboutness, claiming that "the semantic representation of the topic phrase must be part of the sentence's background" (Portner and Yabushita 1998, p.149).

yeau ren 'Dog bites man" (p.19).Chinese has generally been considered a topic-prominent language, whereas English is regarded as a subject-prominent language (Li and Thompson, 1976, 1981).

Huang, et al. (2009) claim that "a topic structure refers to a sentence that has a phrase 'preposed' to the position before the subject. The use of the term 'preposed' is suggestive of movement"(p.202). Movement means that topic is derived by movement and related to a gap in the comment (cf. Huang, 1982, 1984; Shi, 1992, 2000). According to Huang (1982), Chinese topic structure is akin to English *wh*-questions in that they are both generated via movement. Under the movement analysis, both structures must obey a constraint, namely, island condition. Extraction is impossible from within certain domains, such as NP island and *wh*-island, as shown in (8) below:

(8) *小明，我认识[很多[e_i 讨厌]的]人]。

　　 *Xiaoming_i, wo renshi [henduo [e_itaoyan] de] ren].

　　　Xiaoming　1SG know　many　hate　DE　people

　　 *As for xiaoming_i, I know many people who e_ihates.

Xu and Langendoen (1985) argue that topic structures are not derived from movement:

(9) 这本书_i，买过 e_i 的人不多

　　 Zhe ben shu_i, mai guoe_i de ren buduo.

　　 This-CL book buy PRT DE people not many

　　 As for this book, there aren't many people who have bought.

Maiguo zhebenshu de ren 'many people who have bought this book' forms a NP island, which means that no element can be moved out. The acceptability of (9) demonstrates that Chinese topic structures are not subject to the island constraint.

In Standard Chinese, topic and its comment may have a syntactic relation as well. According to Chafe (1976), this type of topic can be classified as "English-style". In Chinese, the topic that does not have any syntactic relation with its comment is called "Chinese-style" (see Chafe, 1976), or "dangling" or "hanging" topic (cf. Shi 2000; Pan and Hu 2008):

(10)语言学，张三偏爱语义学。

　　 yuyanxue, *Zhangsan pianai yuyixue.*

　　 linguistics Zhangsan prefer semantics

　　 'As for linguistics, Zhangsan prefers semantics.

First, we need to emphasize that topic expression is essentially a discourse concept, as exemplified below:

(11)Speaker A: 您还甭说，这最近河南留住一个人才，这个人才当了郑州市规划局的什么副局长。

　　　 ninhaibengshuo, zhe zuijin Henan liuzhu yi ge

　　　 you know that　this recently Henan province keep one CL

　　　 rencai, zhege rencai dang le zhengzhoushi

　　　 qualified-person　this-CL qualified-person become EXP Zhengzhou city

　　　 guihuajü de shenme fujüzhang.

　　　 planning bureau DE what deputy director general

　　　 'You know that, Henan province recently keeps a qualified person, who becomes the deputy director general of Planning Bureau in Zhengzhou city.'

　　　 Speaker B: 逯军。

　　　　　　 Lu Jun.

　　　　　　 'Lu Jun is his name.'

　　　　　　 ……

　　 Speaker A:已经被网友们封为历史上最"牛"副局长。

　　　　　 Yijing bei wangyou men feng wei lishishang

　　　　　 already Passive netizen Plural grant as in history

　　　　　 zui 'niu' fujüzhang.

　　　　　 most arrogant deputy director general

　　　　　 'He has been granted as the most arrogant deputy director general in history by netizens.'

　　 Speaker B: 最"牛"副局长。

　　　　　 zui 'niu' fujüzhang.

　　　　　 most arrogant deputy director general

　　　　　 'the most arrogant deputy director general.'

　　 Speaker A: ……这位副局长，怎么说呢？……也倒霉。

　　　　　 ……*zhe wei fujüzhang, [zenmeshuone]?*

　　　　　　 this CL deputy director general what to say

　　　　　 ……*ye daomei.*

　　　　　　 also bad luck

　　　　　 '……This deputy director general, what to say? ……is in bad luck.' (Phoenix TV/Behind the healines with Wen Tao/2009-06-25)

(12)他的居室……怎么说呢？做饭炉子，空酒瓶子，锅碗瓢盆，垃圾煤堆，报刊杂志，床铺像个货摊。

    ta   de   jushi…… [zenmeshuone]? zuofan luzi,   kong   jiu   pingzi,
    he   DE   living room   what to say?   cook   oven   empty   wine   bottle
    guo   wan   piao   pen,   laji   meidui,
    pot   bowl   wooden dipper   basin   rubbish   coalpile
    baokan   zazhi,   chuangpu   xiang   ge   huotan.
    newspaper   magazine   bed   like   CL   booth
    'As for his living room……what to say? cooking oven, empty winebottles, pot, bowl, Wooden dipper, basin, rubbish, coalpile, newspaper and magazine are on the bed, which is like a booth.' (Yan Gang/*Think of GuoXiaochuan*)

Zhewei fujizhang 'this deputy director general' in the last utterance of (11) is a topic expression, which is elicited at the discoursal level. That is to say, the topic expression *zhewei fujizhang* 'this deputy director general' is constructed as the conversation develops. Interlocutors are familiar with it. *Zhewei fujizhang* 'this deputy director general' refers to and coindexes with *guihuajüfujizhang* ''the deputy director general of Planning Bureau and *zuiniu fujizhang* 'the most arrogant deputy director general', which have already occurred in the previous utterance. After the topic has been produced, *zenmeshuone* 'what to say' appears right behind it. *zenmeshuone* 'what to say' is a parenthetical construction, being self-sufficient and gapless in structure. No syntactic relation exists in the linguistic units appearing before and behind it. In (11) and (12), *zenmeshuone* 'what to say' is used to show speakers' uncertainty towards the topic expressions. (12) is a typical Chinese-style or dangling topic construction. *Tadejushi* 'his living room' is a noun phrase topic expression. The parenthetical construction *zenmeshuone* 'what to say' acts as a topic orientation marker to show the hesitation attitude towards the topic expression *tadejushi* 'his living room'. It is usually used in cases where, speaker shoots out a topic, and then gets stuck just like a recorder, that is, s/he has no idea how to find words to comment the topic. Technically speaking, when the topic expression first appears and holds the initial position of a sentence, the comment has not been formed. That is, the syntactic representation of comment actually does not exist. As a result, we cannot move any linguistic unit out of the comment.

As has been illustrated above, linearity is the fundamental basis on which topic structure in Chinese is generated. Frank et al. (2012) point out if language use is best explained by sequential structure, then linguistic phenomena that have previously been explained in terms of hierarchical syntactic relationships may be captured by factors relating to sequential constrains, semantic considerations or pragmatic context "(p. 4526).Thus, we can conclude that the linear order "Topic [Subject+VP]" is the basic syntactic representation of topic construction in Standard Chinese (for detailed discussion, see Yang and Wu, 2015).

B.   The First Verb in VDCC

In section 3.1.1, we claim that topic is essentially a discoursal concept (see also C. Huang, 1992), which is naturally elicited during the course of communicative interaction in line with the principle of linearity. Cheng and Vicente (2013) point out that the first verb in VDCC is a copied verb moved to the left periphery of the *v*P. In this section, we will argue that the first verb, as a VP anaphor, is also a topic, which will first occupy the initial position of a clause, following the principle of linearity.

During the course of communicative interaction, we can employ VP anaphor (henceforth VPA) to refer to the previous event. VPA is a cross-linguistic phenomenon existing in English, Hebrew, Chinese, Korean and Japanese (see de Boer, 1992). Hankamer and Sag (1976) make a distinction between surface anaphora and deep anaphora. Surface anaphors are syntactically controlled, in that they need a linguistic antecedent of a particular syntactic form. Deep anaphors are pragmatically controlled referents requiring the appropriate semantic type in context, as can be illustrated in below:

(13) A peace agreement in the Middle East needs to be negotiated.
    a. An agreement between India and Pakistan does too. (verb phrase ellipsis-surface anaphora)
    b. Hilary Clinton volunteered to do it. (event anaphora- deep anaphora)

In (13b), deep anaphora is interpreted with respect to a discourse model, that is, the semantic representation of the event "negotiate a peace agreement".

In VDCC, the first verb is an event anaphora elicited from the context, as can be seen in (5), repeated as (14):

(14) Q: 你吃过饭没有？
    Ni   chi-guo   fan   meiyou?
    you   eat-EXP   rice   not.have
    'Have you eaten already?'
  A: 吃，我是吃过，不过…
    [T *Chi*], [T *wo*]   *shi*   [F*chi-guo*],   *buguo*…
    Eat   I   COP   eat-EXP   but
    'As for eating, I have indeed eaten, but…'

In (14), the first verb *chi* 'eat' is semantically somewhat underspecified in the sense that some information seems missing and consequently the utterance seems incomplete. In this situation, the first verb must be enriched

pragmatically with reference to the linguistic context. Under this context, it is actually the representation of the event *chifan* 'eating', which has been expressed in the interrogative utterance above. Thus, we can say that the first verb in VDCC is a VPA dependent on the context. According to Kehler and Ward (2004), the reference to the antecedent event should account for two aspects of discourse understanding: The process of modeling the sources of information,[2] and the constraints on the use of referring expressions with respect to these knowledge sources. In VDCC, VPA is employed to refer to the previous event on the basis of the discourse status.[3] The event *chifan* 'eating' represented by the first verb in VBCC is discourse-old (see Prince, 1992), since it has previously been introduced, which means that the verb event is familiar to interlocutors in context. Based on source of information and discourse status, a VPA device can be employed to refer to the previous event.

The first verb in VDCC also corresponds to the principle of being efficient in grammar (see Hawkins, 2004). "Crucially, efficiency is an inherently relative notion that compares alternative form-property pairings for expressing the same proposition, and the (most) efficient one that has the lowest overall complexity in on-line processing" (Hawkins, 2004, p. 25). Minimize Forms (MiF) displays the concept of being efficient in grammar with the idea of "expressing the most with the least" (Hawkins, 2004, p. 25). MiF underlies the Economy Principle observed by Zip (1949). Hawkins (2004) also argues that a minimized form is also preferred as long as the intended contextually appropriate meaning can be recovered from reduced linguistic forms with more general meanings. Then the principle of Minimize Forms is defined as follows:

The human processor prefers to minimize the formal complexity of each linguistic form F (is phoneme, morpheme, word, or phrasal units) and the number of forms with unique conventionalized property assignments, thereby assigning more properties to fewer forms. These minimizations apply in proportion to the ease with which a given property P can be assigned in processing to a given F. (Hawkins, 2004, p.38).

Topic, as a discoursal concept, can be taken as a property given to a form. Linguistic form bears a property on what the sentence is about. When the topic has been mentioned in context, interlocutors intend to use a reduced form in performance, such as pronoun:

(15) A: 你看见小明了？

      Ni   kanjian Xiaoming le?

      you   see   Xiaoming LE

      'Have you seen Xiaoming?'

    B: 他呀，去图书馆了。

      Ta   ya,   qu tushuguan   le.

      He particle go library   LE

      'He went to the library.'

(15B) is the answer to (15A). The third personal pronoun *ta* is a reduced form topic to refer to *Xiaoming* in order to increase the efficiency in communication. Normally, compared with full NPs, pronouns are semantically under-specified in terms of reference resolution. When the discourse context makes an entity highly accessible, people prefer to using the minimal form rather than full NPs. Ariel (1990) and Brizuela (1999) also point out that more accessible entities are referred to by shorter and more reduced forms, e.g. by pronouns rather than full NPs via quantitative studies in English and other languages. (15) clearly shows that when interlocutors can recognize the topic, they often assign this property to a reduced form in performance.

Hankamer and Sag (1976) note that an explicit VP anaphor, as in "it is not clear that you will be able to do it", can have either a textual antecedent (I am going to jump over the wall) or a situational one (in which someone is trying to jump over the wall). This tellingly reveals the fact that a deep anaphor should be pragmatically enriched on the condition that a more accessible entity or event should be mentioned previously or existing in context. Otherwise, a minimal form would cause more processing effort in communication. Human processor prefers to copying syntactic and semantic content from a target onto a minimal form. The minimal form relies on the target for its enrichment. Kempson (1977) discusses the following sentences "one day I will kick the bucket and you will do so" and "one day I will kick the bucket and you will too". She points out that the anaphoric and empty VPs in the second conjunct must be interpreted with reference to the meaning of "kick the bucket" in the first conjunct. Enrichment of the minimal forms is made on the basis of the target. Compared with a full VP, a verb is a minimal form but under-specified in semantic content. Nonetheless, a verb is crucial to describe the meaning of a verbal event and determines the occurrences of other components of the event. When there is a highly accessible verb event mentioned previously, verb is the preferred reduced form to represent the event.

Now let us consider VDCC. In (14), the target is the event *chifan* 'eating'. *Chi* 'eat' is the minimal form whose

---

[2] Several sources of information constrain the use of referring expressions. First, speaker should have a belief about the knowledge of hearer. Second, speaker should have a belief about hearer's representation of the entities and eventualities in discourse. A third source is the context of discourse consisting of the entities and eventualities currently mentioned. Prince (1992) describes that the discourse-status of an entity or an event depends only on whether the entity or the event has already been introduced into the discourse. For example, *the book* in the second clause is discourse-old:

    (i) I borrowed a book from the library yesterday. The book is very interesting.

[3] Prince (1992) states that the discourse-status of an entity or an event depends only on whether the entity or the event has already been introduced into the discourse. For example, *the book* in the second clause is discourse-old:

    (i) I borrowed a book from the library yesterday. The book is very interesting.

syntactic structure and semantic content can be enriched from the target. It also manifests the concept of being efficient as the topic. In section 3.1.1, we demonstrate that topic structure is constructed in line with the principle of linearity, which means that topic occurs first and occupies the initial position of a sentence/utterance. This captures the "Express it earliest" intuition in performance, which is defined as Maximize On-line Processing (MaOP) (Hawkins, 2004, p.51):

The human processor prefers to maximize the set of properties that are assignable to each item X as X is processed, thereby increasing On-line Property to Ultimate Property ratios. The maximization difference between competing orders and structures will be a function of the number of properties that are unassigned or misassigned to X in a structure/sequence S, compared with the number in an alternative.

The notion of unassignment means that a specific syntactic or semantic property should be assigned earlier in a sequence. "Speech is a linear sequence of forms and properties, each of which contributes to the ultimate syntactic and semantic representation for a sentence" (Hawkins, 2004, p.28). The earlier the property is assigned, the more efficient the communication is. This predicts that distribution should favor earlier rather than later property assignments. Topic is a property assigned to the linguistic form occupying the initial position of a sentence. MaOP then predicts that the linearity of topic structure should be preferred, which would increase the efficiency in grammar and in communication. The linear order "Topic [Subject+VP]" would be associated with significant assignments on-line corresponding to the "Express it earliest" intuition. There could also be significant assignments of prior or highly accessible discourse entity or event to a minimal form as a topic.

To sum up, we can conclude that linearity is the basic principle under which the syntactic representation of topic construction in Standard Chinese is constructed, which corresponds to the principle of MaOP embodying the "Express it earliest" intuition in context. As a topical element, the first verb in VDCC, as a VPA anaphor, is the reduced minimal form used to refer to the previous event and occupies the initial position of a clause in line with the linear order.

IV. The Second Verb in VDCC

According to Cheng and Vicente (2013), the second verb in VDCC is the main verb occupying the subject position of a small clause. Then it is copied and then is extracted out of a small clause subject to the left periphery of the *v*P. In this section we will propose that the second verb is dependent on the frame of the event expressed by the first verb.

Dependency relation between two verbs

Jacobs (2001) lists several dimensions of topic-comment structure (TC). First, topic is informationally separated from the comment, where the topic is introduced and its semantic meaning is processed in a first step, and then, in a second step, the comment is added. Second, topic is the address for comment iff topic marks the point in the speaker-hearer knowledge where the information carried by comment has to be stored at the moment of the utterance that is produced. "Addressation can be viewed as an explication of the intuitive notion of aboutness" (Jacobs, 2001, p.655). Third, topic is the frame for comment in that it specifies a domain to which the proposition expressed by comment is restricted.

The first dimension embodies the linearity of topic construction. The second dimension stresses that topic is a discoursal concept. The third dimension demonstrates that comment is dependent on topic, not vice versa. "Ordering the topic first permits the parser to assign the dependent properties to the predication immediately as it is parsed, whereas ordering the predication first would delay assignment of these properties until the following topic is encountered" (Hawkins, 2004, p. 235). Topic introduces a background, against which an utterance will be interpreted. As pointed out in section 2, Cheng and Vicente (2013)'s proposal starts from the hypothesis of lexical identity effect, which suggests that the two verbs must be lexically identical. And it is impossible for one verb to specify the other (Cheng and Vicente, 2013). The frame-setting dimension can illustrate that lexical identity effect is not the basis for Cheng and Vicente (2013)'s analysis. Topic introduces a background and guides the semantic processing of the comment clause. In VDCC, the second verb alone is also semantically underspecifed. Without any specific context or any reference, we would be unable to comprehend what the second verb *chi* 'eat' in (14) is intended to mean. Its interpretation relies on the topic meaning represented by the first verb, which is a pragmatic process of enrichment dependent on the topic. Interpretively, the underspecified meaning expressed by the second verb will be substituted by the event conveyed by the first verb. In Standard Chinese, there are also similar examples showing the same dependent relationship between topic and comment:

(16) 这块地呀，麦子长得好。
    Zhe   kuai   di   ya,   maize zhang   de   hao.
    this piece land particle   wheat grow   DE   well
    'As for this piece of land, wheat grows well.'

In (16), predication is enriched by topic through providing the locative meaning. In VDCC, the second verb alone is also semantically underspecifed. Without any specific context or any reference, we would be unable to comprehend what the second verb *chi* 'eat' in (14) is intended to mean. Its interpretation relies on the topic meaning represented by the first verb, which is a pragmatic process of enrichment dependent on the topic. In VDCC, the first verb provides the frame or domain relative to which the second verb is interpreted, as in (17):

(17) Q: 你旅行过没有？
    Ni   lüxing   guo   meiyou?
    you   travel   EXP   not.have

'Have you travelled already?'

A: 旅行，我是乘火车去的，但是不舒服。

Lüxing,   wo shi   cheng huoche qu   de,
travel   I   COP take train go   DE
buguo hen   nanshou.
but   very uncomfortable

'As for travelling, I have indeed taken a train, but it is very uncomfortable.'

Lüxing 'travelling' sets a frame or domain for the second verb. We can then use the specific verb to further illustrate the first verb, such as the manner of traveling. Hence, the two verbs may not be lexical identical. They have to belong to the same domain. Normally, the first verb should be the general one, whereas the second one should be the specific one to further illustrate the event represented by the first verb.

The dependency relation between topic and comment also determines the *verum* focus of the second verb. Höhle (1992) carries out an in-depth investigation of *verum* focus in German. *Verum* focus emphasizes the truth of proposition of a sentence, as opposed to information focus or contrastive focus, as can be seen in below:

(18) A: I wonder whether John has finished his job.

B: John has finished his job.

(18) discusses John's status by A's question. B can use a focal stress on the auxiliary *has* to emphasize the truth of the proposition that John has finished his job. *Verum* is a cross-linguistic phenomenon (see Gutzmann and Miró, 2011). Compared with information focus, *verum* focus has no influence on the truth condition of the proposition. Gutzmann and Miró (2011) claim that *verum* focus is use-conditional instead of being truth-conditional (see also Romero, 2005). Thus, Romero and Han (2004, p. 627) defines that it is "used not to assert that the speaker is entirely certain about the truth of *p*, but to assert that the speaker is certain that *p* should be added to the Common Ground (CG)." According to this definition, we can conclude that the *verum* focus interpretation expressed by the second verb in VDCC must be dependent on the common ground represented by the first verb. This also adequately explains why (6b) listed in Cheng and Vicente (2013) is illicit. As has been pointed out, *zhucai* 'boil meal' is not a general verb phrase to mean 'cooking meal' in Standard Chinese. It is only a general verb phrase for boiling, which is a subcategory of cooking meal. If *zhucai* 'boil meal' is the topic, then it will set a frame of boiling for comment or predication. *Kaoji* 'roast chicken' cannot be used to specify *zhucai* 'boil meal' since it is not a subcategory of boiling.

V. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have presented an account of Chinese verb doubling cleft construction, with a particular focus on the two verbs' relations and their respective pragmatic functions in context. We have demonstrated with empirical evidence that two verbs in VDCC are not in A-bar movement relation on the basis of lexical identity effect proposed by Cheng and Vicente (2013). Rather, the first verb, as a topical element, is a VPA device used to refer to the previous event in context. The *verum* focus interpretation of the second verb is dependent on the frame expressed by the first verb. The occurrences of two verbs actually follow the principle of linearity, which is also the fundamental principle under which topic-comment structure in Standard Chinese is constructed.

REFERENCES

[1]   Ariel, Mira. (1990). Accessing Noun-Phrase Antecedents. London: Routledge.
[2]   Bastos, Ana. (2001). Fazer, eu faço! Topicalização de constituents verbais em portugues brasileiro [As for doing, I do! Topicalization of verbal constituents in Brazilian Portuguese]. M.A. thesis, Universidad Estadual de Campinas.
[3]   Brizuela, Maquela. (1999). Definiteness types in Spanish: A study of natural discourse. Ph.D. dissertation, Los Angeles: University of Southern California.
[4]   Chafe, Wallace. (1976). Givenness, contrastiveness, definiteness, subjects, topics and point of view. In Charles N. Li (ed.), *Subject and Topic*, 25-55. New York: Academic Press.
[5]   Chao, Yuen-ren. (1968). *A Grammar of Spoken Chinese*. Berkley: University of California Press.
[6]   Cheng, Lisa, L.-S. (2008). Deconstructing the *shi...de* construction. *The Linguistic Review* 25. 235-266.
[7]   Cheng, Lisa, L.-S., and Luis, Vicente. (2013). Verb doubling in Mandarin Chinese. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 22. 1-37.
[8]   De Boer, Ale. (1992). A cross-linguistic overview of VP-anaphora. In Bok-Bennema, Reineke and Roeland van Hou (eds.), *Linguistics in the Netherlands,* 49-60. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
[9]   Frank, Stefan L., Rens Bod, and Morten H. Christiansen. (2012). How hierarchical is language use?" *Proc. R. Soc. B*, 279. 4522-4531.
[10] Gutzmann, Daniel and Elena Castroviejo, Miró. (2011). The dimensions of verum. In Olivier Bonami, and Patricia Cabredo Hofherr (eds.), *Empirical Issues in Syntax and semantics 8*. CSSP.
[11] Hankamer, Jorge and Ivan Sag. (1976). Deep and surface anaphora. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 7. 391-428.
[12] Hawkins, John. (2004). Efficiency and Complexity in Grammars. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[13] Höhle, Tilman N. (1992). Über verum-fokus im Deutschen. In Jacobs, Joachim (ed.), *Informationsstruktur und Grammatik*, 112-141, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.
[14] Huang, Chu-ren. (1992). Certainty in functional uncertainty. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 20. 247-287.
[15] Huang, C.-T. James.(1982). Logical relations in Chinese and the theory of grammar." Ph.D. dissertation, Mass: MIT.

[16] Huang, C.-T. James. (1984). A Note on the Binding Theory. *Linguistic Inquiry* 14. 554–561.

[17] Huang, C.-T. James., Y-H. Audrey. Li and Yafei Li. (2009). The Syntax of Chinese. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[18] Jacobs, Joachim. (2001). The dimensions of topic-comment." *Linguistics* 39. 641-681.

[19] Kehler, Andrew and Gretory, Ward. (2004). Constrains on ellipsis and event reference. In Laurence R. Horn, and Gretory Ward (eds.), *Handbook of Pragmatics*, 383-403, Oxford: Blackwell.

[20] Kempson, Ruth. (1977). Semantic Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[21] Krifka, Manfred. (2007). Basic notions of information structure. In Caroline Fery, and Manfred Krifka (eds.), *The Notions of Information Structure*, 13-56, Potsdam: Uniersit äsverlag Potsdam.

[22] Li, Charles N and Sandra A. Thompson. (1976). Subject and topic: A new typology of language. In Charles N. Li (ed.), *Subject and Topic*, 457-489, New York: Academic Press.

[23] Li, Charles N and Sandra A. Thompson. (1981). Mandarin Chinese: A Functional Reference Grammar. Berkley: University of California Press.

[24] Portner, Paul and Katsuhiko Yabushita. (1998). The semantics and pragmatics of topic phrases. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 21. 117–157.

[25] Prince, Ellen F. (1992). The ZPG letter: Subjects, definiteness and information-status. In Sandra Thompson, and W, Mann (eds.), *Discourse Description: Diverse Analyses of a Fundraising Text*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

[26] Romero, Maribel, (2005). Two approaches to biased *yes/no* questions. In Alderete, John, Chung-hye Han, and Alexei Kochetov (eds.), *Proceedings of the 24thWest Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL)*, MA: Cascadilla Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

[27] Romero,Maribel and Chung-hye Han. (2004). On negative *yes/no* questions. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 27. 609–658.

[28] Shi, Dingxu. (1992). The Nature of Topic Comment Constructions and Topic Chains. Ph.D. dissertation, Los Angeles: University of Southern California.

[29] Shi, Dingxu. (2000). Topic and topic-comment constructions in Mandarin Chinese. *Language*, 76. 383–408.

[30] Xu, Liejiong and Donald T. Langendoen. (1985). Topic structures in Chinese. *Language* 61. 1–27.

[31] Yang, Xiaolong., and Yicheng, Wu. (2015). The linearity of topic structures in Chinese. *Waiguoyu*, 38. 55-63.

[32] Zipf, George K. (1949). *Human Behavior and the Principle of Least Effort*. Cambridge, Mass: Addison-Wesley Press.

Moying Li is currently a teacher in the Dongfang College, Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics. Her research interests include semantics and American literature.

Lian Zhang is currently a teacher in Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics. Her research interests include semantics and American literature.

Negation in Languages: A Urhobo Perspective

Iwuala, Zebulon Chukwudi

Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, National Institute for Nigerian Languages, Aba, Abia State, Nigeria

Imu, Famous Oghoghophia

Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, National Institute for Nigerian Languages, Aba, Abia State, Nigeria

Abstract—**This paper examines negation and types of tense negation in Urhobo. It also identifies negation marker(s) and the manner in which these negation marker(s) are used in sentences. Transformational generative grammar theory of analysis was used in the work. The aim of this study is to determine the syntactic characteristics of negation in Urhobo. The study shows that negative construction in the Urhobo language involves the doubling of the last vowel of the last word in sentences; or what may be called the lengthening of the last vowel of the lexical item in the sentence. Also, the low-high tone can do the same function as the lexical or grammatical tone. It was observed that negation is a natural phenomenon that cuts across Urhobo, and that the orthographic representation of the low tone, which is the copying of the final vowel, is written contiguously while other negative markers are written separately. It was also observed that Urhobo operates suffixation. Finally, the study work reveals ejo, je, odie and and oyen as negative markers in Urhobo.**

Index Terms—**Negation, negative marker, syntactic characteristics, tense, Urhobo**

I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Negation is language universal and exists in one form or the other in natural languages, because at one point or the other, the need to negate, refute, deny, contradict or lie arises. It is used to distinguish positive statement and its negative counterparts. The importance of negation as it affects all natural languages cannot be under estimated, and so Urhobo is not an exception.

Negation has been studied in English, Igbo, Yoruba, and Isekirin in such works as Ahamefula (2010), Anagbogu (2005) Manda, (2012), Ndimele, (2005,) Nwaozuzu, (2008), Nwarungwa, (2013), Odii, (2016). Teke, (2004) and Zeijista, (2004)). Some of these studies range from lexical negation to sentence negation. Research has shown that more studies have been done on grammatical negation by the above scholars. Negation as an aspect of Urhobo syntax is yet to receive proper attention. Taiwo (2009) in class discussion confirmed this in the following observation; "Urhobo is one of the minority languages in Nigeria that its syntax is yet to be explored". Although earlier works have been done on negation in the Urhobo language, much has not been done on negation as it operates in Urhobo. Negation has been studied from two types: lexical negation and grammatical negation.

Lexical negation is the type of negation that negates one or more constituents in a construction e.g

1. Wo je hwa osa na je wo fi igho
   You NEG pay that NEG you spray money
   You have not paid your debt and you are spraying money.

While grammatical negation is that type of negation that negates a whole sentence. e.g

2. Ititi vwe ogoo
   Name get respect NEG
   Ititi is not respectful.

In Urhobo, negation could be found in statements, commands and questions (see Aziza 2004).

There are two basic tones in Urhobo, namely, the low (L) tone and the high (H) tone. It should be noted that only vowels bear tones in Urhobo. The tone marking system used in this study is as popularised by Aziza (2006) with the claim that Urhobo Language operates two basic tones; the high and the low tone. This tone marking system has been used in Aziza (2006)**.** This tone marking system is preferred because of its economy of diacritics. The two basic tones are marked as follows: The high tone is marked by "H" while the low tone is marked by "L"

The aim of this study is to look at the phenomenon of negation with emphasis on Urhobo. Thus, this research tries to examine:

i. the syntactic characteristics of negation in Urhobo with a view to ascertaining whether there are peculiar tonal properties associated with the phenomenon of negation.
ii. whether the phenomenon of negation cuts across Urhobo.
iii. the lengthening of negative particles in sentence construction
iv. the functions of the low-high tone and
v. the negative markers in Urhobo

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Studies

Phrase structure rules of the generative grammar are an amalgam of the subject-predicate and parsing systems of the traditional grammars and the immediate constituent analysis of the structural grammar. They are framed to derive a `kernel' sentence (Chomsky 1957), or `underlying (deep) strings (Chomsky 1965). These rules define basic grammatical relations that function in the deep structure. Phrase structure grammar was founded by Noam Chomsky in his book *Syntactic Structures* in (1957). PSG is a re-write grammar with finite rules that generate infinite sentences in human language ((Mbah 1999 and 2006), Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010) and Asogwa, Nwaozuzu and Mbah (2013). The phrase structure of a sentence is generally represented by a tree diagram. The points that are joined by the lines or branches are called `nodes'. Each of the nodes, except those on the bottom line (which are the terminal nodes) is given a label that represents grammatically definable constituent - N, V, NP, VP, etc. where one mode is higher than another and joined to it by branches. PS grammar does not have the precision, simplicity, elegance, power, insight, and competence of the TG grammar. PS grammar is very complex, cumbersome and clumsy with so many constraint**s.** PS grammar fails to account for negation process.

Consequently, because of the above shortcoming of PSG, Chomsky came up with a revision which he called Transformational Grammar in (1957). Transformational generative grammar refers to the grammar based on the observation of languages and theories about the general principles involved in producing language. The theories are subjected to a series of tests based on observed phenomena about language. Transformational Grammar (TG) is the foundation upon which other generative theories and approaches are built. Transformational grammar accounts for clarity of meaning (Kelly 2013).

Mbah (1999 and 2006), asserts that 'transformation' or 'change' is an aspect of the syntactic component of language. Thus, it is always the inadequacies of one theory that gives birth to a fresh or new theory. In other words, the grammar of a language could merely consist of a catalogue of the number of its grammatical sentences.

Chomsky (1957, 1964 and 1965) disagrees with a grammar listing sentences in a language as weak and nonviable. He maintains that a grammar must be projective and generative. Projective grammar contains rules which generate the number of infinite possible grammatical sentences in a language whereas generative grammar has rules capable of generating sequence of lexical items that are grammatically accepted by the speaker-hearer of the language even when they have not come across such grammatical statement(s). As part of his linguistic revolution, Chomsky (1957) modifies the Standard Theory and named it the Extended Standard Theory (EST): The theory tries to solve the challenges or the differences between the deep and the surface structures of sentences. It distinguishes between syntax and semantics and makes each autonomous. The autonomy of syntax in Extended Standard Theory (EST) means that we can explain the structure of a language without any reference to semantics.

However, it should be noted that several versions of syntactic theories have sprung up since it was first presented by Chomsky in 1957. Right from 1965, it has witness four major revisions. The 1965 version which was represented in Chomsky's monumental book *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* was referred to as Standard Theory (ST).

By the beginning of the 1970s, there was need to modify (ST) by the fact that surface structure also contributes to meaning, hence the version transformational generative (TGG). At a point in time, it was called the Extended Standard Theory (EST). In the late 1970s, there was also the need to modify the version, so as to account for traces at the argument level; the dominant model of syntactic analysis during the period was referred to as the Revised Extended Standard Theory (REST).

In the early 1980s, Chomsky felt the need to revise the theory again, hence the model was known as Government and Binding Theory (GB). The more advanced generative grammar has become the more it has tried to raise its goals. TGG accounts for negation classification, description and movement transformation as affix hopping. (see Anagbogu, Mbah and Eme (2010), Kelly (2013) and Zeijlstra (2004).

With advances in analytical techniques and the range of languages examined, generativists felt that they were gradually in a position to make claims about grammar as it applies to all languages. This is the technical meaning of the term *universal grammar*. Mbah (2011) sees universal grammar as the body of structure which is common to all languages and specific to none. Universal grammar is furthermore concerned not just with saying that languages have certain structural features but with accounting for why this is the case. The details of universal grammar are quite complicated as they involve a highly formal analysis of possible syntactic structures and terminology with which the reader is not initially acquainted. Any model of universal grammar, if it is to achieve the higher goal of explanatory adequacy, must have three attributes: 1) Universally valid, 2) Psychologically real 3) Maximally constrained.

The first feature is obvious and refers to the fact that universal grammar applies to all human languages, both present-day languages and those which are extinct as well as possible future languages. It maintains that the universal grammar must be in keeping with what one knows about the psychology of language (see Ndimele, 1992). The last attribute explain that the model must ban rules which are universally impossible (Crystal, 2008).

B. Theoretical Frame Work

This study is carried out using the frame work of transformational generative grammar. Its aims is not only to classify and describe utterances but to also capture regularities that underlay them, thereby making predictions of what may be

expected and what may not be expected. Transformational generative grammar was propounded by Naom Chomsky; the theory has undergone series of changes since its inception in 1957. This syntactic theory, made popular in *Syntactic Structures* (Chomsky, 1957) is widely seen as the heart of modern theoretical linguistics (Newmeyer, 1980).

However, since the introduction of Standard Theory, a model published in the *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (Chomsky, 1965). In a nutshell, since the early 1970, Standard Theory has undergone four major modifications: The Extended Standard Theory (EST), the Revised Extended Standard Theory (REST), the Government and Binding Theory (GB) and currently the Minimalist Program (MP).

The essence of the different versions of the theory is to find a simple tool for describing adequately man's natural languages. Each of the above mentioned versions of the theory is a model in the quest for an appropriate linguistic theory in the transformational generative theoretical frame work. This frame work is relevant to this study because TGG accounts for what the native speaker has in mind, which conveyed to the surfaces structure. TGG accounts for the description of negation process of the Urhobo language, Universal grammar is relevant to this study, using a descriptive approach.

C. Empirical Study

Donwa (1982), and Omamor, (n.d.) investigate negation in Southwestern Edoid languages such as Isoko, Urhobo and Okpe, languages considered as having single form of negation. The aim of the research was to investigate whether it was possible to work out a single method of negation in Southwestern Edoid languages. Their findings show that it is possible to work out a single analysis for negation in SWE.

Aziza and Mowain (2006) investigate yes/no questions and sentence negation. A descriptive method of analysis was used. Their aim was to find how tone interacts with syntax in the derivation of yes/no questions and sentence negation, their findings show that yes/no questions and sentence negation exhibit peculiar tonal characteristics, it also provides evidence of phonology-syntax interface in the classification of certain sentence types. This work differs because we are looking at tense negations and negative markers in Urhobo using TGG as a theoretical framework.

Aziza (2005) and Ukere (2004) in a class discussion faulted the use of hyphen and countered the position of the hyphen saying it cannot be accounted for syntactically. The Urhobo Study Association, Delta State University saw reasons in their argument, and adopted the orthographic representation of the low-high tone negative marker, and that it should be written contiguously without the hyphen.

Aziza (2010) studies negation in Urhobo, She carries out a descriptive study of negation in Urhobo. She identifies the types of negation to include; negation in statement, command and negation in question. The aim of the study was to determine the status of some suprasegmental features noticeable in negative constructions in Urhobo, and to highlight a common ground for a single description of the phenomenon of negation in southwestern Edoid. Again this research differs from the formal because we will examine tense negation and, identify grammatical negators in the Agbarho, dialect of Urhobo, using TGG as a theoretical framework.

D. Summary of Literature Review

This section of the paper reviews scholarly works in the area of study. Objectively the review shows that much has been done on negation in other languages, works on negation as they operates in Urhobo are either negligible or non-existence, hence the need for this research. Therefore, this research is relevant because, it will add to the existing literature on the grammar of the Urhobo language.

III. NEGATION IN URHOBO

Negation is a universal phenomenon applicable to all human languages. Negation can be seen as the grammatical process by which the truth of clause or sentence is defined, involving the use of negative words. Negation implies the assertion that certain proposition is false, the act of contradicting a statement or allegation. In this paper, we shall examine tense negation, negation in interrogative constructions, identify negation markers and describes how the phenomenon operates in Urhobo.

A. Tense Negation

Tense is the relationship between the form of the verb, the time of the action and the state the verb describes, while Odii (2016), defines tense as the relationship between the verb, the time it expresses, the condition it describes and the negator that contradicts the time and the action expressed by the verb. Therefore, tense is the agreement or the relationship between the subject(s) and object of a sentence. Aziza (2005) identifies the present tense, past tense and the future tense in Urhobo, these types of tense shall be considered in conjunction with negative construction in the Urhobo language.

1. Present tense negation

The present tense construction in Urhobo is used to convey habitual as well as present or continuous situation/action. The morpheme marking the tense is a floating high tone which occurs at the subject noun phrase. The data below illustrate present tense and their negated counterpart in Urhobo. e.g

H L H L L L   4) a.   H L H L L L H
3) a   Ese e de obe   Ese e de   obee
        Ese pres buy book   Ese pres buy book NEG
        Ese buys/is buying a book   Ese is not buying a book.
        LH L HL   b.   LH L HLH
    b. Mi i kpe eki   Mii kpo ekii
        I pres go market   I pres go marketNEG
        I am going to the market   I am not going to the market
        L L H LH   L L H LLH
    c   O me e eto   c.   Omee etoo
        She plait pres hair   She plait hair NEG
        She is plaiting hair   She is not plaiting
        L L L H L L L   L L L H L LLH
    d. Okoro o se ebe   d.   Okoro o se ebee
        Name read book   name press read book NEG
        Okoro reads/is reading a book   Okoro is not reading a book

In present tense negative, there is the presence of a high floating tone in the positive form. This floating high tone is mapped on the final vowel of the affirmative form causing it to be lengthened in order to accommodate the tone sequence via transformation process (affix hopping), this is the case as seen in example (4a-d), while example (3a-d) are the positive forms with the presence of high tone indicating the construction to be in the present tense.

2. Past tense negation

The past tense construction in Urhobo is used to convey past tense situation/action. Tonally, the past tense construction assigns a tomorph which is segmentalized on the vowel segment of a monosyllabic verb stem or on the final vowel of a disyllable verb stem. This is clearly shown in the example below.

H L L H   H L L LH
5).a   Ese de re   6).a   Ese de ree
        Ese buy pst   Ese de re NEG
        Esebought it   Ese did not buy it
        L L L   H L L   L L L L L LH
    b. Onime kpe eki   b. Onime kpe ekii
        Mother my go market   Mother my go market NEG
        My mother went to market   My mother did not go to market
        L L L   H L L H   L L L L L L LH
    c. Okoro kwe omo na   c. okoro kwe omo naa
        Name kill child that   Name kill child that NEG
        Okoro killed /beat the child   Okoro killed /beat the child

Urhobohas modal morphemes used to express moods, they are verbal, and part of the auxiliary verb. e.g *fobo* (be early, quick), *ghwa* (just, already) *pha* (condition) ma(deliberate)

L L L LH
    e. Wo fobo rhee
        You quick come NEG
        You did not arrived early

In the past tense negative construction, the presence of the high tone does not spread onto other vowel segments within the verb stem like the present tense construction does. In example (5a-c) the presence of the floating tone is noticeable, while in example (6a-c) the high floating tone get segmentalised on the final vowel in the suffix position, causing it to accommodate the tone sequence.

3. Future tense negation

The future tense is marked by a particle, which occurs between the subject noun phrase and the verb stem of the sentence. This particle is realized in two forms /che/ and /cha/ depending on the vowel harmony rule based on the verb stem vowel. If the verb stem vowel is (+ART), it selects (che) and if is (-ART), it selects (cha). This future tense is used to indicate an action that is yet to commence or one that is being contemplated (Aziza 2005). This is clearly illustrated in the data below.

L H H   L H HH
7).a   O cha de   8).a   O cha dee
        He/She particle buy   He/She particle buy NEG
        He/She will buy it   He/She will not buy it
        L H   H L L H   L H H L L HH
    b. O cha kwe evwe na   b.   O cha kwe evwe naa
        He/She particle kill/beat goat that   He/She particle kill/beat goat that NEG
        He/She will kill/beat the goat   He/She will not kill/beat the goat

      L L LH   L L LHH

c.   O che ruo   **c.**   O che ruoo

         He/She particle work   He/She particle work NEG

         He will do it   He will not do it

          L   L L H L L H   L L L H L L HH

d.   O che chere emu na   d.   O che chere emu naa

         He/she particle cook food that   He/she particle cook food that NEG

         She will cook the food   She will not cook the food

Example (7a-d, and 8a-d), shows that the negative particles that mark the future tense negation are realized, depending on the vowel harmony selected. The future tense negation markers show that tonal alternation in example (8a-d) result from the segmentalsation of the two tones marking the future tense.

4. Perfect tense negation

The perfect tense construction in Urhobo is used to indicate an action or state that has been completed at the present time in the past, or will be completed in the future. The morpheme marking the tense is a floating high tone which occurs at the subject noun phrase. The data below illustrate perfect tense negation in Urhobo. e.g

      L H L L LH   L L L L H LH

9)a.   Mi se obe nure   10).a   Mi je se obe nuu

       I read book finished   I have read book finish NEG

       I have finished reading the book   I have not finished reading the book

      L H L L L HLL   b.   L H H L L HLLH

   b.   Mi re emu okieeje   Mi re emu okiejee

       I eat food time all   I eat food every time NEG

       I eat food all the time   I do not eat food all the time

Negation in Urhobo is marked by the presence of a floating LH tonal morpheme which is realized on the final vowel of the affirmative form causing it to be lengthened in order to accommodate the tone sequence (Example 9a-b), while negative adverbs always occur clause finally and bear the tomorph (example 10a-b), negation particles follow immediately after the subject of the clause and, just like pronouns, always occur in two phonological forms depending on the vowel harmony associated with the verb stem vowel. eg *ocha dee* (he will not buy, *oche ruoo* (he will not do it), (see example 9 and 10).

B. Imperative Negation

An imperative sentence is used to express a command, or make a request. The command may be positive or negative. In positive commands, there is no overt subject at the surface form and nouns and verbs retain their tones as in the citation form but with a lot of force in the voice, the final low tones are not raised and final high tones do not fall. This is a type of negation where part of a sentence is negated such as the noun phrase.

     L H L H L L   L H L H L L H

11a.   Wo vren ne etine   12a.   Wo vren ne etinee

       You(sg) leave here   You(sg) leave here NEG

       You leave here!   You don't leave here!

      L   L H L L LH   L   L H L LH

   b. Wan hworhe iko   b.   Wan hworhe ikoo

       You wash (pl) cup   You (pl) wash cups NEG

       You wash cups!   You don't wash cups!

      L L H LLH L H H L H   L   LH LLH L H H L H L

   c.   Wo hwe fikiridie okpako Ekru   c.   Wo hwee fikiridie okpako Ekru

      You kill because elder family   you kill NEG because elder family

      Kill him because he is an elder in the family!   Do not kill him because he is an elder in the family.

Example (11a-c) is the positive form of imperative negation. The negative counterpart is realised by the introduction of a negative particle which entails the lengthening of the vowel on the suffix. This is the case in example (12a-c).With the introduction of a high floating tone on the suffix, the entire sentence becomes negative. It should be noted that imperative sentences are derived from declarative sentence through transformational process.

C. Negation in Interrogative Constructions

Questions, whether negative or positive, are marked by an L question tomorph which gets segmentalised on the final vowel. This question tomorph does not displace the lexical tone borne by the final vowel but contracts with it, if they are identical, or forms a HL contour if they are not. Thus, all questions end on a low tone. In questions construction, the last but one H tone of the construction is realized on an extra high pitch (H) and its effect is that final Ls begin to fall from this height thereby preventing a final downglide where the statement already formed ends on a L tone. In negative questions, another floating L which marks NEG also gets segmentalised finally and results in final vowel lengthening, although the length of the final vowel is shorter in negative questions. The presence of two L tomorphs, i.e. the question and negative tomorphs side by side results in a final downglide (Aziza and Mowarin 2006). E.g

		H L H H H HL		H L H H H HLL
(13)	a.	Ese de oka naa?	14)a	ejo Ese de oka naaa
		Name buy maize NQ		No name buy maize that NQ
		Didn't Ese buy maize?		No, Ese didn,t buy maize.

		L L H HLL		L L L L H HLL
	b.	Wo de udii?	b	Ejo mi de udiii
		You drink wine		No I drink wine NQ
		Are you drunk?		No, I am not drunk

		L H H H L L H(L)		L L L H L L L L L H H L L HLL
	c.	tivo mi da re onee?	c.	Odie enu imedge oyen mi da re oneee
		Where I Aux eat yam Q		NEG top table I Aux eat yam NQ
		Where did I eat yam?		I didn't eat yam on the table

From example (13a-c and 14a-c), we notice that negation in question is marked by a floating L-H tone sequence, which is mapped unto the final vowel in the phonetic realisation. However, negativisation occurs when a negative marker is introduced into the asserted sentence (Aziza 2005). One of the major negative markers in example (14a-b) is '*ejo*' which means "no". *Ejo* is used to give a negative respond or statement. It is a lexical item for negation that has an affirmative counterpart "E" which implies "yes". "E" according to Urhobo-English dictionary by Ukere is used to give response to most greetings and directive. Ejo is used to express the rejection of a suggested preposition i.e it is a rejective type of negation. While '*Odie*' and '*oyen*' negative markers are often used for negating whole sentences in constructions where '*odie*' appears in the initial position 'oyen' appears at medial position (see example 14c).

From the evidence presented in the foregoing sections, it could be concluded that negation in Urhobo is manifested mainly through tones with intonation superimposed on the surface realizations of these tones in various construction types. Although negative adverbs and particle also exist, they are used mainly for emphasis and for extra information and occur conjointly with tones.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The research reveals that negative markers in Urhobo are associated with a low- high tone on the final vowel; in the present, past, future and perfect tense constructions and in the suffix position. This is shown in example 3-12 above; with the use of the L-H tone all sentences can be negated.

This paper also reveals that negation is a natural phenomenon that cuts across Urhobo which is the copying of the final vowel, which is written contiguously, while other negative markers are written separately. This is the case of example 3-12 and 13 above.

It also, reveals that the low-high tone can function as lexical or grammar tone in negative constructions. This means that the L-H tone could bring about change in meaning of words. (See example 3-12 above.) In addition, there is doubling of the last vowel of the last word, what we could call vowel lengthening. The low-high tone can do the same function as the lexical or grammatical tone. This means that lengthening of the negative particle can make a construction either positive or negative. (see example 3-12.)

The study also identifies je, *ejo, odie* and *oyen* as negative markers in the Urhobo language. *Ejo, odie* and *oyen* negative markers are often used for negating a whole sentence. The study reveals that these types of negative markers occur at sentence initial and medial positions. Finally, where *odie* appears in the initial position *oyen* appears in medial position (see example 13a-c) .

V. CONCLUSION

This research has shown that negative sentences are derived by the introducing negative marker(s) which occurs with tone and the lengthening of the last vowel of the last word(s). In natural languages, negation may be achieved using various strategies and a particular language may utilise more than one way in sentence construction. Common ways by which negation is achieved include phonological conditioning, morphological forms, negative auxiliaries, verbs or adverbials constructions.

REFERENCES

[1]   Ahamefuna, N.O. (2010). Negator in Igbo syntax. M.A seminar paper, Department of linguistics, Igbo and other Nigerian languages, University of Nigeria Nsukka.
[2]   Anagbogu, P. N. (2005). The negativizing prefixes of Koring. In O. M. Ndimele (Ed). *Treds in the study of languages and linguistics in Nigeria: A festschrift for Philip Akujuoobi Nwachukwu* (pp. 574-582). Port Harcourt: Grannd Orbit communications and Emhai press.
[3]   Anagbou, P.N., Mbah, B.M. & Eme, C. A. (2010). Introduction to linguistics (2[nd]ed.). Anambra: Amaka Dreams Ltd.
[4]   Asogwa, P.N., Nwaozuzu, G.I. & Mbah, B.M. (2013). Syntactic constraints in Igbo. *Nsukka Working Paper in Language, Linguistics, and Literature (NWPLLL),* 1(1&2) 108-144.
[5]   Aziza, R.O. (2004). Negation in Southwestern Ediod: The case of Urhobo. *Proceeding, 4th world congress of African Linguistics, New Brunswick,* in A. Akinlabi and O. Adeola (Eds.), pp. 165-174, kolin: Rudiger Koppe.

[6]   Aziza, R.O. (2005). Phonological process in Urhobo. Lecture Note Abraka, Delta State University.
[7]   Aziza, R.O. & Mowarin, M. (2006). Phonology-syntax interface in derivation of yes/no question and sentential negation in Urhobo. *JOLAN: Journal of the Linguistics Association of Nigeria* No. 9 2005/2006.
[8]   Chomsky, N. (1957). Syntactic structures: The Haggue Mouton. Massachussels, MIT press.
[9]   Chomsky, N. (1964). Formal discussion on. The development of grammar in child language by W. Miller & S. Ervin, in B. Belligi & R. Brown (Eds). *The Acquisition of language.* (Monographs of sociology for research in child development 92) Child Development Publication
[10]   Chomsky, N. (1965). Aspect of the theory of syntax. Massachussels, MIT Press.
[11]   Crystal, D. (2008). A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics. Oxford: Blackwell.
[12]   Donwa, E. (1982). The sounds system of Isoko. Ph.D thesis, University of Ibadan.
[13]   Kelly, N. (2013).Transformational generative grammar and biblical studies. www.tgg research-paper-final-for-blog.pdf. retrieved on 15/01/17.
[14]   Manda, I. M. (2012). Negativisation in Bassa language. *UJAH: Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities, 3 (1) 92-105.*
[15]   Mbah, B.M. (1999). Studies in syntax: Igbo phrase structure. Nsukka Prise Publishers
[16]   Mbah, B.M. (2006). G.B. syntax: Theory and application to Igbo. Enugu. Enugu: St. Jon-Afam Publications
[17]   Newmeyer, F. J. (1980). Linguistic theory in America. London and New York: A.P.I
[18]   .Ndimele, O. M. (1992). The parameters of universal grammar. A G. B. Approach. Owerri: African Education Services
[19]   Ndimele, O.M. (2005). Negation marking in Igbo, in O.M. Ndimele (Ed.), *Trens in the study of languages and linguistics in Nigeria: A festschrift for Philip Akujuoobi Nwachukwu (pp. 939-956).* Port Harcourt: Grand Orbit Communication and Emhai Press.
[20]   Nwarungwa, J. O. (2013). Negation i0#n Nwa dailect. M.A seminar paper, Department of Linguistics, Igbo and other Nigerian Languages, Nsukka. University of Nigeria Nsukka.
[21]   Nwaozuzu, G.I. (2008). Dialects of the Igbo Language. Nsukka: University of Nigeria, Nsukka Press Ltd.
[22]   Odii, B.C. (2016). Negation in the Okposi Lect of Igbo. Ph.D seminar paper, Department of linguistics, Igbo and Nigerian languages, Nsukka. University of Nigeria Nsukka.
[23]   Omamor, A.P. (n.d). Introduction to the phonology of Okpe. Ms, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.
[24]   Taiwo, B.O. (2009). Advanced syntax. A class discussion. Ibadan, University of Ibadan.
[25]   Teke, G.T (2004). Negative polarity in Metta (Uta). In O. Ndimele (Ed.) *Language and culture in Nigeria: A festschrift for Okon Essien* (pp, 823-830). Port Harcourt: Emahi Printing and Publishing Co
[26]   Ukere, A. O. (2004). Syntax of Urhobo. A class discussion. Abraka, Delta State University.
[27]   Zeijistra, H.H. (2004). Sentential negation and negative concord. Amsterdam: JK Utrecht.

Zebulon Chukwudi Iwuala hails from Ogwa in Mbaitoli Local Government Area of Imo State Nigeria. He is an Associate Professor of Language Education in the National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) Aba in Abia State of Nigeria. He obtained his Ma.Ed and Ph.D in Language Education at the University of Nigeria Nsukka. He has written many national and international journals.

Imu Famous Oghoghophia was born in Arhagba-Okpe, on the 27th may, 1985. He obtained his B.A, Linguistics (syntax) in the year 2010, from the Delta State University Abraka, Delta State Nigeria. He also earned his M.A Linguistics (syntax) and Ph.D Linguistics (Syntax and Semantics), from the University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nigeria, in the year 2015 and 2019 respectively.

He is a Lecturer in the National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN), Aba, Abia State. He is the Acting Head of Department, in the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages Aba, Abia State. He currently teaches Syntax, Semantics and Sound System of the Urhobo Language in the National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN), Aba Abia State Nigeria. He is the Author of the following Articles: Imu, F. O. (2019).Verb of harvesting in Urhobo. In C. Okeke (Ed.), Semantics and study of language. Linguistics and Culture: *Ugo gbuzou, A festschrift in Honour of Professor* G. I. Nwaozuzu. University Press. And Imu, F. O. (2020). Argument structure of verb compounding in Urhobo. *Journal* of *Nigerian Languages in a Globalised World: Description and Present Status.* NILAS Vol. 4, no. 2

Dr. Imu is a member of LAN (linguistics association of Nigeria and Nigeria Language Project.

Challenges of Distance Learning in Language Classes: Based on the Experience of Distance Teaching of Arabic to Non-native Speakers in Light of the Coronavirus Pandemic

Dalal Moh'd Al-Assaf

Arabic Language to Non-native Speakers Department, Languages Center, The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan

Abstract—This study aims to investigate the challenges that learners and teachers of a language face during distance learning classes, especially learners and teachers of the Arabic language as a second language, based on the results of a distance learning experiment on non-native speakers of the Arabic language at the University of Jordan during the second term of 2019-2020. The study seeks to introduce the proper solutions that may mitigate these challenges to achieve the educational goals through distance learning while teaching the Arabic language as a second language. This study used the applied descriptive approach in identifying these challenges. It concluded that these challenges significantly impact the language learning process, including mastering it, the extent of benefit, and the influence on students' linguistic progress. This study recommends that these challenges are considered when adopting distance learning as a language education method at teaching language classes as a second one. These challenges need to be considered when planning for direct and indirect lessons in Arabic language educational classes, primarily via the Internet.

Index Terms—distance learning, challenges, Arabic language education to non-Arabic speakers

I. INTRODUCTION

The continuous interest in teaching and learning languages, especially the Arabic language as a second language, resulted in establishing many schools, institutes, and centers interested in teaching languages to non-native speakers. Furthermore, there is more interest in the ways and methods of language education to keep up with the developments over time in different fields of education. The educational sector has utilized technology in language education. Teachers adopted technology to provide a suitable interactive environment to learn a language in a functional way, helping the student learn the language and acquire its various vocabularies, structures, and skills at all different levels. Wherein this environment motivates and attracts the students in the learning process and goal achievement, as well. Also, the technology proved its effectiveness in many educational programs and classes.

Moreover, many websites and online platforms took the lead in distance learning of languages, including teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers. Teachers considered the virtual classes instead of the real classes at schools. This modern educational phenomenon came up with new technological development in the world. The goal was to provide an educational opportunity for students who cannot obtain it in the traditional circumstances due to the remoteness, the lack of enough money for studying abroad, or the inability to enroll in the regular class because it doesn't match the student's time or due to the inconvenient financial and health conditions of the student.

The interest in distance learning has increased in light of the world's current situation with the emergence of the coronavirus pandemic. Despite this, educational institutions attempt to maintain the education's progress in different ways by adopting distance learning to ensure the educational process's pertinacity due to the issue of attendance at the educational sites because of the preventive actions which the governments imposed. Distance learning has become a suitable way for various educational institutions to continue their academic goals. Despite the benefits that distance learning or E-Learning can bring, many challenges emerged in the distance learning field, particularly language teaching.

Accordingly, this study attempts to answer the following questions:
1- What are the challenges that face the language learner through distance learning?
2- What are the challenges that face the language teacher through distance learning?
3- What are the challenges related to language teaching?
4- What are the challenges related to distance learning?

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study investigates the challenges of distance learning in language classes, essentially teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. Moreover, it suggests some solutions that can mitigate the challenges and alleviate the negative impact

on language distance learning and goal achievement.

The virtual learning and teaching environment may pose a great challenge to both students and teachers alike, specifically in the language classes, whether in terms of the availability of technological capabilities required for distance learning or psychological conditions for this type of education. Many students prefer to learn the language in an in-person environment and its cultural and linguistic community. It has a positive impact on gaining the language and practicing its skills or conformity of the school's curriculum and its linguistic and cultural content with distance learning nature, in addition to the teaching methods and their suitability to the students' different learning strategies in light of peculiarity of teaching methodological and stylistic languages, especially teaching the Arabic language in terms of its composition, structure, semantic and cultural dictionary, and a phonemic, morphological and grammatical system, in addition to other challenges.

III. Previous Studies

Many studies have dealt with E-Learning and educational technology in the context of discussing the development of education trends and methodologies, its benefits and its positive impacts on teaching and learning inside the classroom, its strategies, and the computerization of education as an indicator of the development of education strategies in this century, particularly at universities and other learning places. Some of these studies addressed obstacles to distance learning, whereas most of these studies focused on the economic factor and the extent of the necessary tools' availability. Besides, the technical support in schools and universities for this type of education, the teacher's unfamiliarity with distance learning techniques, and the need for suitable training to be utilized at their classes are obstacles to making distance learning successful.

I did not find – within the limits of my research – a study that focused on distance learning challenges for language classes, especially those related to teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. Still, I found two studies that discussed the positive results of E-Learning and using technology in the classes of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

1- Al Qudum, Mashael, "The Impact of Technology, and Modern Means of Communication on the Non-Arabic Speaking Learners" (2016). It is a doctoral thesis that consisted of three chapters to identify the impact of technology and the modern communication of non-Arabic speaking learners by identifying the level of technology use by learners. The thesis also seeks to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in the study sample when using technology in learning the Arabic language. This study used the descriptive analysis approach by distributing a questionnaire to a sample of 100 students from the languages center at the University of Jordan and 100 female students from the institute of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers at the Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University in Saudi Arabia. This study concluded that the use of technology and the modern means of communication by non-Arabic speaking learners were moderate. Moreover, the study recommended that it is necessary to teach the Arabic language to non-native speakers from the traditional level to the online level. In addition to teaching Arabic teachers to use websites specializing in teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, it leads to positive results in improving teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

2- Al Haisa, Sharif. "The Impact of Using Interaction Patterns in the E-Learning Environment on Developing the Reading Skills of the Non-Native Speakers – Beginner Level" (2019). This Master's thesis consisted of five chapters to identify the learning styles in the E-Learning environment and the impact on teaching reading skills in Arabic to non-native speakers at the beginner level. The sample consisted of 32 male and female students from the Languages Center at the University of Jordan and the University of Islamic Sciences. The study adopted the experimental method. The sample was divided into two experimental groups; the first group was taught through asynchronous interaction via e-mail, while the second group was taught through the synchronous interaction method (chat rooms). The study concluded that the members of the synchronous learning group via chat rooms were learned more than the members of the asynchronous learning group via e-mail. This was concluded by the students' ability to read letters, shapes, and locations, learn the skill of synthesizing words from scattered letters, and compose sentences from scattered words.

This study investigates the challenges of distance learning in language classes, especially Arabic education classes, as it is not limited to the challenges of using technology and E-Learning within the classroom only. Still, instead, it tries to identify the challenges of teaching the language in virtual classes through the researcher's experience in teaching the Arabic language online in light of coronavirus pandemic; this is followed by proposed solutions to try to overcome these challenges and reduce their negative impact on the success of the distance learning process and the achievement of its objectives.

IV. Distance Learning and E-learning

Many people compare distance learning with E-Learning, and some believe that distance learning is the equivalent of E-Learning. E-Learning is much broader than distance learning. E-Learning is used inside and outside the classroom, and it invests technology in direct and indirect classroom lessons. This type of education came as a step in developing teaching methods, which used to rely on memorization as a basis for transferring knowledge to the student. In this way, students became an effective part of the educational process. They acquired knowledge through interactive activities and technology – the computer and its various programs and the use of the Internet, including educational websites and

various programs, made the students rely on themselves in the learning process. New learning patterns and teaching appeared, and the teacher became the supervisor and the guide for the student and this educational process. (For more, see: (Salem, 2004, Al-Khan, 2005, Al-Omari, 2014)

Today, many universities are turning to the blended education that combines E-Learning and the traditional methods of teaching in regular classes (for more, see: Abu Musa, 2012, Al-Kilany, 2011)

Distance Learning is limited to virtual classes in which the teacher meets their students over the Internet, synchronously or asynchronously. The geographical distance is a fundamental reason for the emergence of this type of education, i.e., the presence of the learner in a place or country that differs from the location of the source of learning, whether it is a teacher, an educational institution, or a group of students in training courses (For more, see: Farkouh, Souad; 1989, Amer, Tariq Abdel-Raouf; 2007). Perhaps the recent global health crisis has contributed to the increased use of this type of education. Instead, distance learning has become an essential method to continue the educational process in schools and universities, especially since this health crisis began in the middle of the semester.

This sudden and rapid transition from the traditional classes that gather the teacher and the student in one place to the virtual classes in which they meet via the Internet posed a challenge to them at the same time, especially for those who are not accustomed to using this method.

Perhaps this matter is less difficult for students and teachers in the same country as students attending local schools and universities. We find a bigger challenge for the institutions whose programs teach languages, especially teaching Arabic – in the context of our Arab society – to students who came to study the language in its environment and society, but the circumstances forced them to return to their countries in light of coronavirus pandemic. The challenges related to the geographical distance, which necessitated distance learning - have become more prominent and their association with the time difference between the students themselves and the teacher.

Teaching a language to non-native speakers has a specificity and depends on many foundations (see: Brawn, 1994, Nageh, 2018). It has special considerations that ensure its success and achievement of goals. The most important of them are students' interaction and in the societal, educational environment and the interactive functional activities and exercises that help them acquire language skills in listening, reading, writing, and speaking, in addition to practicing these skills in an appropriate environment and performing their functions across the different linguistic levels. Besides, it seems more difficult in light of teaching the Arabic language: linguistically, synthetically, culturally, and socially.

V. CHALLENGES OF DISTANCE LEARNING IN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Language learners and teachers face many challenges when using distance learning, especially language learning for non-native speakers. These challenges can be divided into the following categories:

A. Challenges Related to Students

Psychological challenges:

There is no doubt that the psychological factor plays an important role in the success or lack of success in this learning method. The psychological readiness of students to use distance learning after they were in a real class meeting with the teacher, and their acceptance of the surrounding circumstances regardless of the differences that occur, and the subsequent change like the educational class in light of this global health crisis is reflected in the success of distance learning process. Students may be less motivated to learn under these circumstances, and students may feel frustrated or anxious about not being able to benefit from the language class and achieve their educational goals. The surrounding conditions of the family and health may affect the psychological readiness to learn the language and practice its skills and carry out the teacher's duties; this is especially true if the students started their studies in the language and its society, then circumstances forced them to return to their countries. Therefore, the psychological readiness to learn a language online is necessary for everyone who wants to learn in this way, regardless of the surrounding circumstances. The student must be aware of the consequences of this type of learning in terms of spending time in front of a computer screen without interaction with the learning environment, and his inability to attract the teacher's attention and receive direct and continuous follow-up on his performance as if he were in a normal classroom which is different from the virtual class's environment.

Technological challenges:

The technological and technical readiness of students is also very important. This type of education is mainly based on the use of technology and modern means of communication. We cannot be certain that all students have this readiness, possess the same capabilities, technological means, and technical skills. Therefore, language teachers may use several programs, platforms, or websites to create a successful interactive classroom; this may not be easy if the student cannot use these programs and sites. It may require additional time and effort from the teacher to help the student familiarize himself with these technical matters and how to use them to integrate the student into the educational classroom and benefit from its processes and activities and achieve the goal of joining it. It is learning the language and its skills, and the ability to communicate with it, and the progress in language performance that define language learning success.

Geographical Distance:

The geographical distance and the difference in time are challenges for the student and the teacher alike. The

language class usually includes students from different nationalities and countries united by the physical class within a study program with a fixed time suitable for all. Whereas shifting to distance learning in light of this global health crisis and students returning to their countries cost the students and the teacher the trouble of searching for a time that suits everyone, and if the classes went in their normal time, some students were deprived of the opportunity to continue joining the classes because the time was not suitable for them. Besides, the Internet connection problems due to the geographical distance and the time difference between different parts of the world are difficult to manage.

Learning method and strategies:

Learners face some challenges that are related to the learning strategies. Students generally differ in how they receive and acquire information, whether visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc. Perhaps, the traditional classroom provides greater diversity in the way students are presented with information and educational content. It may accommodate these different strategies and better meet students 'needs that distance learning or E-Learning.

B. Challenges Related to the Teacher

Language teachers face several challenges in the distance learning process, and most of them are related to the challenges that students face. These challenges are:

Psychological conditions:

The psychological conditions that the student is going through will face the teacher in his country as well, as this health crisis is global. Many teachers may be concerned about the possibility of achieving the planned educational goals under these circumstances, in light of the rapid transition to distance learning, and, in light of the psychological and technological conditions that students experience, in addition to the change in location for many students and the changes in the classroom time. Moreover, tension and psychological pressure about the students' benefit from the language class and their ability to meet their language needs consider their differences and the appropriate learning method.

The teacher should not be tense when meeting his students via the Internet. Still, he must be their role model in facing these psychological conditions, encouraging them to continue the learning process, and motivating them through his cheerful, optimistic facial expressions, his words of encouragement, and launching the virtual classroom with energy and enthusiasm. This is in addition to creating an interactive class that includes language activities that make the student feel the value and the importance of the language class, even if it is online.

Technological Readiness:

Students' technological and technical readiness to complete the distance learning process will be reflected in their communication with the teacher and their ability to follow the lessons. Any technical or technological problem will affect communication with the teacher and the continuation of the classes. Perhaps technological readiness and having technical skills are not limited to students alone, as many teachers do not have sufficient knowledge of using technological means and modern means of communication and how to employ them in their classrooms (see: Al-Otaibi, 2006; Al-Hawamdeh, 2011). In particular, distance learning is not limited to direct contact between the teacher and his students to provide lessons in an instructional manner, as this will not help achieve educational goals, and there is little value for learning in this way, especially in language lessons and acquiring its skills. Rather, the teacher should use educational programs and platforms that provide design services for educational materials and interactive activities to improve distance learning quality in the concurrent direct and indirect classes.

Therefore, the teacher must develop his technical capabilities and improve his technological skills to succeed in the distance learning process. The use of online platforms, websites, the available programs on the Internet, and the design of study materials may greatly benefit achieving linguistic and cultural educational goals. In addition to providing the student the opportunity to practice the language and its skills through chat rooms, participatory groups for discussion, performing language tasks, language games, and other means can contribute to language learning success.

Academic Materials and Educational Content:

The teacher may face another challenge related to adapting the course materials to prepare for the virtual classes' traditional in-person classes. Teaching the skills of reading and listening through distance learning and exercises to measure comprehension and teaching and analyzing them will differ from teaching and presenting them to students in the direct classes that bring together the teachers and students in one educational environment. Besides, teaching vocabularies to activate and employ them in different contexts, such as using cards, pictures, stories, and tangible language games, will need to be reformulated and restructured through online programs, educational platforms, or sites to suit these activities and exercises for the virtual class. The teacher may need to double the effort and time to prepare his online materials compared to preparing his materials for the traditional classrooms, especially if he is not used to using educational websites and various technological programs.

There is a need to adapt the nature of the materials taught in language classes for non-native speakers, especially educational materials for Arabic language classes, its skills, methods of presenting and teaching them with the nature of virtual classes. For instance, the Arabic language grammar and teaching its linguistic and cultural structures are difficult for the student to understand and employ in his linguistic performance if they are not presented clearly and appropriately in its cultural context far from memorization, and taking into account the common challenges when teaching a new language and the challenges related to distance learning methods. All this requires the teacher to devote a lot of time and effort if he is truly seeking to achieve educational goals at the required level as in his natural

educational environment or at least at its lowest levels. Therefore, teaching a second language is not easy and needs extra skills and preparation; this reflects the difficulty of online teaching of languages.

C. Challenges Related to the Nature of Language Teaching

Methods of language teaching:

Teaching a language has an educational, methodological, and stylistic feature that distinguishes it from other educational fields, especially teaching the language to non-native speakers (see: Kharma, 1988; Al-Musa, 2003; Aref, 2015; Abdul Karim, 2017). It is necessary to consider the functional principles in choosing educational content and presenting and teaching it to students, as functional principles represent the goal and teaching language (Abdo, 1990). It is also necessary to consider the international standards such as ACTFL standards and the European framework, which divides students into levels according to their linguistic competencies and ability to perform language functions and the curriculum's design and the educational activities. Thus, teaching the language to non-native speakers has directions, methods, curricula, and considerations that must be taken into account through the educational process in its natural conditions in the traditional classes that bring together the teacher and the student in the classroom. All of this must be considered in distance learning. Teachers find it challenging to pay attention to these principles in distance teaching, especially the method of presenting educational materials and displaying their content, which facilitates students' learning of the language and acquiring its skills, vocabularies, structures, and linguistic performance cultural development.

In addition to neglecting the practical aspects of language in distance learning, the student will not practice the language in its community or its cultural environment. Therefore, most of the student's time will be limited to the theoretical side of learning the language. As a result, teachers will be responsible because it requires them to provide interactive educational material and create opportunities to interact with the language's culture in various means to compensate for the lack of in-country learning through distance learning classes.

Linguistic and Cultural Peculiarity:

The linguistic and cultural peculiarity of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers is one of the main challenges of distance learning. This is represented in teaching its grammar, structure, vocabularies, and language skills, which should be integrated when teaching them to ensure successful learning that leads the student to achieve the goal of language acquisition and practice it in the community. Teaching language sounds through distance learning and pronouncing the vocabularies through direct or indirect lessons may not be appropriate or useful for some students, especially for junior students. Many of them need to closely see the teacher during phonetics classes, especially for the adjacent sounds that are difficult to distinguish, such as SIEN and SAD / DAL and DAAD, and the sounds that are not used in their languages as AIN, GHAIN, and DAAD.

Teaching vocabularies, especially the intangible vocabulary, may be useful in expressing it as body language or acting in the classroom or other methods that may not be possible through distance learning or may need to explain it for a longer time than the regular class.

Also, teaching grammar structures, which many students complain about the difficulty of acquiring in the normal situation, may seem more difficult on the Internet, even if some platforms and programs provide an electronic board or the possibility of sharing the presentation. The visual and written interaction between the professor and students may facilitate learning grammar better in regular classes. Some students may face challenges in understanding and learning grammar, and some teachers may experience challenges in presenting them to students online and preparing their materials, which may require double the time than regular classes.

The role of interactive and cooperative learning among students in practicing language and its skills, its positive impact on improving their language level, and practicing what they learn in the classroom in an interactive cultural format should not be overlooked. Although some educational platforms provide the Breakout Room feature as in the Zoom app, they do not achieve the same result as real interaction between students in regular classes in a real linguistic and cultural learning environment that has a clear impact on students' communication using the language and acquiring its skills.

Correcting students' mistakes and continuous evaluation:

Teaching a language to non-native speakers requires a continuous evaluation of students' performance and language production by observing their performance in direct classes or performing oral and written assignments; this also requires correcting students' linguistic and structural errors while practicing the language performing their duties. It includes masculinization and femininization errors, articles, mistakes in formulating and synthesizing the sentence elements, or not using the appropriate preposition or the appropriate verb tense, and this is in addition to the errors related to pronouncing vocabularies or using it in inappropriate contexts and many other errors that learners of Arabic and other languages make while practicing the language.

Perhaps this correction takes many forms, including direct or explicit correction, reformulation, request clarification, repetition, etc. Many teachers find it difficult to follow up on their students' correction and constantly evaluate distance learning. Virtual communication does not allow the possibility of continuous correction for students or visual communication difficulty. The teacher intends to draw his attention to his mistake without embarrassing him in front of his colleagues, especially through oral performance. Whereas this procedure may take more time to correct mistakes than the regular classes, it is less difficult to correct and evaluate a student's written production. Therefore, some

teachers avoid the correction process in distance learning of language or correct less than usual or less than they are supposed to. Thus, it is difficult to achieve the goal of conducting the necessary correction process in language education classes, especially language teaching to non-native speakers, but somewhat essential to improve the student's level of linguistic production and achieve linguistic accuracy in producing the learned language, which is no less important than attaining language fluency.

D. Challenges Related to the Nature of Distance Learning

The most important challenges of this learning type intersect with the challenges of E-Learning (see: Rodny, 2002; Al-Hawamdeh, 2011; Al-Otaibi, 2006; Al-Jamlan, 2009). It includes:

1-Financial Cost:

The student and teacher need technological tools such as computers or smartphones, Internet packages, a camera, and other equipment to be used in the virtual classroom directly or indirectly. There is also a need to conduct lectures on websites and online platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Canvas, and Zoom, which take at least an hour of uploading written and visual materials such as texts, presentations, and educational videos on Google Drive or downloading it from YouTube. In addition to that, there is a need to form participatory activities on some sites such as Vialogues and designing an educational video using websites and software like Camtasia, or designing a language game using websites like Kahoot and Quizizz. All of them need internet data packages and devices to be used in distance learning, which is costly for the teacher and students.

2-Internet Speed:

Teachers and students may face problems with internet speed or signal strength, which negatively affects the communication process's achievement and sustainability.

3-Information security and confidentiality, and preserving the privacy of classrooms and their educational materials, as cyber attacks may occur, especially during the performance of online exams.

4- The reliability of examination results, especially if there is no direct supervision on students during the written exams, as students may resort to various means of assistance or cheating. Therefore, the test result does not measure the real level of students 'performance in these examinations.

5- Students will be tired by sitting for long periods in front of a computer screen or phones to follow their classes, especially since many language programs have no less than 4 hours of daily teaching hours apart from performing the tasks and duties that are required outside the class time.

VI. SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The presence of such challenges in distance learning of language classes may impede the lesson's continuation. Thus, failure to achieve the planned goals or achieving the lowest levels could be an outcome. Then students will not receive the benefit that they pursue through direct language classes. As a result, students will not improve their language skills or their linguistic and cultural level. These challenges have a clear impact on the language learning process and how students benefit from the language classes online. There are some solutions and suggestions that would meet these challenges and mitigate their negative effects on the success of the language class:

1- To motivate students and encourage them during this type of education, psychological preparation is necessary for distance learning success under the current circumstances. It is preferable if the first lesson of each week to be a direct lesson in which teachers motivate students and encourage them to continue learning.

2- The use of synchronous and non-synchronous distance learning did not pressure students to adhere to direct attendance and consider the geographical and time differences.

3- Teachers must set their goals and plan well for this type of education to ensure success. They can decide the appropriate way to present the subject and achieve their goals. If completing the goal requires a direct meeting with students, it will be better to do. Otherwise, asynchronous distance learning methods will do the trick.

4- Using diverse teaching methods in direct classes so that students do not feel bored. The interactive element is required, and if it is not available, then using indirect classes is better. Moreover, teachers must organize the teaching process in the indirect classes by setting a weekly schedule. The students are assigned to perform tasks and duties related to the educational materials they receive during the week, whether they are texts, educational videos, or academic, cultural activities.

5- It will be useful to use the recording feature on online platforms and communication programs to record simultaneous language lessons so that students can refer to them in case of any technical problem that prevents them from continuing the lesson.

6- The language lesson's objectives must be clear to the student before embarking on direct lessons and the tasks to focus on during the lesson time and not get distracted. Students need this in the virtual classes more than the regular classes due to the inability to interact.

7- It is more useful to turn the camera on when talking with students during direct language classes, whether it is listening, reading, grammar lesson, or vocabularies. Many students try to pay attention to the way the words are pronounced and the phonetics or the teacher's expressions during the speech, and they may try to understand it from lip movement or body language; this is linked to the students' learning strategies.

8- To follow language lessons simultaneously and non-simultaneously with an oral or written activity to ensure that students understand the language lessons presented. They can then assess their experience to improve the level of activity and plan for the new lesson.

9- Ensure that the audio and video lesson materials are ready and that they can be run via communication programs or online educational platforms before starting the class to avoid any technical problem that may occur. Teachers have to be flexible in dealing with any problem that may occur when dealing with alternative plans.

10- Using diverse activities of language lessons and training so that students do not feel bored, and providing various interactive activities that employ the lesson's content and invest it in linguistic activities that motivate students to the upcoming classes. Teachers may use original videos or design educational videos by using applications such as a screencast and Camtasia. Furthermore, teachers may create a text for listening and make a group discussion among students by answering written questions as in the Vialogues website, using a presentation, Linguistic videos, pictures, or games like Kahoot Quizlet. Simultaneously, teachers can share it with their students in synchronous or asynchronous classes to interact with the educational content and draw their attention and facilitate the acquisition of language skills and its elements to practice the language quickly.

11- Educational institutions must train their teachers for this type of education by holding training courses and developing teachers' technological and technical skills. Schools and universities should also train their students on this type of education by using it in the classrooms regularly.

12- Workshops should be held for language teachers to exchange their experiences in distance language teaching and develop useful means and easier ways to present the language and its skills to students in a better educational and cultural format. Teachers need to learn how to benefit from other language experiences and educational sites to teach languages online and develop them according to educational institutions' goals.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study showed the most critical challenges that face the language learner and teacher, especially the Arabic language, through distance learning classes. Also, it identified the challenges related to the nature of teaching languages generally and the Arabic language in particular. It also discussed the most critical challenges associated with distance learning and its impact on the language class's success and objectives. Furthermore, this study presented several solutions and suggestions that could help face these challenges and mitigate their negative impact on the language class and achieve its desired goals.

REFERENCES

[1]   Abdo, D. (1990). Toward functional teaching of the Arabic language (2nd Edition.). Al Karmel House, Amman.
[2]   Abu Musa, M., & Al-Sous, S. (2012). Blended education between traditional and E-Learning (1st Edition). Academics for publication and distribution. Amman.
[3]   Al- Kilany, T. (2011). Blended Learning Strategies (1st Edition.). Lebanon Library. Beirut.
[4]   Al Qudum, M. (2016). The impact of technology and modern means of communication on learners of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers. Ph.D. thesis. Supervision of Muhammad Al-Qudah. The University of Jordan.
[5]   Al-Hawamdeh, M. (2011). Obstacles to using E-Learning from the point of view of faculty members at Al-Balqa Applied University. Damascus University Journal of Educational Sciences, Volume 27 (Issues 1 and 2). http://www.damascusuniversity.edu.sy/mag/edu/images/stories/803-831.pdf.10 Sep2020.
[6]   Al-Jamlan, M. (2009). E-Learning: Issues and Challenges (1st Edition). Arab Network for Open and Distance Learning. Amman.
[7]   Al-Khan, B. (2005). E-Learning Strategies. Shua'a for Publishing & Science. Aleppo.
[8]   Al-Mousa, N. (2003). Methods: Approaches and Models in Teaching the Arabic language (1st Edition). Alshrouq House. Amman, p.61.
[9]   Al-Omari, M. (2014). E-learning and its modern technologies. Deanship of Scientific Research and Postgraduate Studies, Yarmouk University. Irbid. Jordan.
[10] Al-Otaibi, N. (2006). Obstacles to E-Learning in the Ministry of Education from the viewpoint of educational leaders. Unpublished Master's thesis, Mu'tah University. Jordan.
[11] Amer, T. (2007). Distance and Open Education (1st Edition.). Al-Bazouri Scientific Publishing House, Amman. Jordan.
[12] Aref, H., & Bougamlin, L. (2015). Modern approaches to teaching Arabic, from language education to teaching language communication. Al-Athar Magazine, Volume14 (Issue23) , p.21-30 https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/47754. 25Aug 2020.
[13] Bin Abdul Karim, B. (2017). Foundations and principles in teaching and learning Arabic according to the textual approach. *Journal of Studies of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Constantine*, Volume 4 (Issue 7). https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/37782 .12 Sep2020.
[14] Brawn, D. (1994). Foundations of language learning and teaching. Translated by Abdo Al-Rajhi and Ali Ahmed Shaban. Arab Renaissance House for Printing and Publishing. Beirut.
[15] Farkouh, S., & Attiyat, M. (1989). Distance Learning: Its concept and Usage. Ministry of Education, Oman. Jordan.
[16] Haisa, Sh. (2019). The effect of user interaction patterns in the E-Learning environment on developing reading skills for non-native speakers, "beginner level." Master Thesis. Supervision of Abdullah Muhammad Ahmad. The University of Jordan.
[17] Kharma, N., & Hajjaj, A. (1988). Foreign languages are taught and learned. Knowledge world. Kuwait.

[18] Nageh, A. (2018). The foundations of learning the second language and ways to achieve it between familiarity and investigation. *International Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies,* Issue 2, p.180 https://www.democraticac.de/?p=55275 .17 Aug 2020.

[19] Rodny, s. (2002). The integration of instructional technology into public education- Promises and challenges. Education technology. 1(5), 11. https://www.jstor.org/stable/44428716?seq=7#metadata_info_tab_contents 20 Sep 2020.

[20] Salem, A. (2004). Education and E-Learning Technology (1st Edition). Al-Rashed Library. Riyad

Dalal Mohammad Al-Assaf was born in Amman / Jordan, in 1987. She obtained a master's degree in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers with excellent grade from the University of Jordan in 2012. She obtained a BSc. Arabic Language from the University of Jordan - Merit Excellent in 2009.

She has been working in the field of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers from 2010 to now, during which She taught several levels of beginner, intermediate and advanced levels in classical and colloquial. She working now as a faculty member at the Language Center at the University of Jordan, and She worked in the summer program of Columbia University / Amman from 2010 to 2015, and She worked in the Middlebury / Jordan program from 2013 until now, and She worked in the summer program of the University of Middlebury / California in 2019, and worked Trainer for teachers of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers at the University of Jordan. She participated in preparing the educational curricula in the Middlebury program, as well as participating in conferences, workshops and training courses locally and internationally. She has obtained an International Examiner Certificate in Oral Proficiency from the American Council on Language Teaching (ACTFL) since 2015.

She has published a book and a number of peer-reviewed scientific papers in local and regional magazines, as well as several articles in electronic journals. Such as:

- Published book, Investment of *Colloquial* in the teaching Grammatical Method FOR NON-Arabic Speakers, Dar Jlis al-Zaman, 2015, a master's thesis under the supervision of Dr. Suha Nuja / 2012
- A research paper , Investing Jordanian Colloquial in Teaching Classical
  Arabic Morphological Structure (Agent Noun as an Example) / Journal of Studies - Humanities and Social Sciences / University of Jordan / Volume 43 / Issue 3/2016.
- Research a joint publication, Using Linguistic Games in Teaching Vocabulary Items for Non-Native Speakers of Arabic, Journal of Studies Ammar Thalji University / Laghouat University - Algeria, Issue 60, 2017.

Needs Analysis of Chinese English Majors in EGP Courses

Kexin Xu

School of English, Tianjin Foreign Studies University, Tianjin, China

Abstract—**Based on the needs analysis model outlined by Li (2007), this study investigates the needs of Chinese English majors enrolled in EGP courses and identifies the gender differences in their needs from linguistic, cognitive, and affective perspectives. SPSS 23.0 was used in this study to analyze data obtained from 221 Chinese English majors through a revised version of Li's (2007) questionnaire. The results showed that: 1) from the linguistic perspective, students revealed the strongest desire to practice pronunciation and speaking in class, attached the greatest importance to vocabulary and speaking, and had a conflict opinion of vocabulary. 2) from the cognitive perspective, students manifested aspirations for the teacher's positive feedback, a harmonious English learning environment, communicative learning activities, and the opportunity to practice in class. 3) from the affective perspective, students recorded the usefulness of English as their primary learning motivation, showing a broadly positive attitude and adequate confidence when learning English. 4) males preferred using the grammar-translation method to learn English and were more likely to be motivated by their desires to understand the information in English; females favored adopting the communicative method to learn English and were more likely to be stimulated by school's requirement and their cravings for good grades. This research endeavor is considered significant because its finding can be used to assist Chinese teachers and course designers to develop the rarely-examined EGP courses provided for Chinese English majors based on the often-overlooked students' needs.**

Index Terms—**needs analysis, learners' needs, Chinese English majors, English for General Purposes**

I. INTRODUCTION

English courses at the tertiary level in China are often divided into two categories: English for General Purposes (EGP) courses and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses (Liu, Chang, Yang & Sun, 2011). ESP courses primarily teach students fluent English concerning specific disciplines or for communicative purposes in specific situations (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In comparison, EGP courses focus on cultivating wider knowledge of the English language and improving the overall linguistic ability of students regarding their accurate and proficient uses of English in general situations (Munby, 1978).

To meet the demand for international talents following China's entry into the World Trade Organization, in 2000 China proposed the *National English-teaching Curriculum for English Majors in Universities* (hereafter referred to as the *Curriculum*). The *Curriculum* determines the key teaching objective for English majors as the cultivation of interdisciplinary English talents who can use English proficiently in specific subjects (Cai, 2019). Due to this proposed teaching objective, courses for English majors in Chinese universities are predominantly ESP-based (Hu, 2014). Nevertheless, problems of this interdisciplinary cultivation mode have been gradually revealed with the continuous expansion of enrollment of English majors in Chinese universities: 1) excessive emphasis is paid to the instrumental nature of English, with Cha (2017) stating that "this pragmatic and utilitarian approach towards English education differentiated this discipline from other humanities" (p. 18). 2) time allocated for students' learning English is reduced since more time must be spent on learning other professional knowledge, with a subsequent decline in the students' mastery of basic English ability and knowledge (Wen & Wei, 2018). Hence, numerous scholars begin to reexamine the rationality of this cultivation mode (Cha, 2017; Hu, & Sun, 2006; Lan, 2009; Wen & Wei, 2018).

As a result, "the cultivation of interdisciplinary talents has been finally excluded" from the newly released *The National Quality Standards for Foreign Language Majors* (hereafter referred to as the *National Standards*) in 2018 (Cai, p. 6, 2019). Instead, the *National Standards* resets the teaching objective, with focus placed on cultivating English majors who have both solid basic English language skills and interdisciplinary English skills. The importance of building a diversified English courses system is highlighted to achieve the all-round cultivation of English majors. This suggests the necessity of developing both ESP and EGP courses, thereby enabling students to use English proficiently in both specific and general situations. However, influenced by the previous interdisciplinary cultivation mode, most domestic studies concerning English major courses are conducted in ESP courses while scarce are the studies carried out in EGP courses. As such, it is essential to focus on the development of EGP courses for English majors.

The initial and crucial step in developing language courses is needs analysis (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Needs analysis, according to Brown (1995), is "the systematic collection and analysis of all subjective and objective information necessary to define and validate defensible curriculum purposes that satisfy the language learning requirements of students within the context of particular institutions that influence the learning and teaching situation"

(p. 36). The vital role played by needs analysis in designing, evaluating, and optimizing nearly all aspects of English courses demonstrates the necessity for course designers and teachers to develop English courses through needs analysis (Munby, 1978). Therefore, this study will conduct needs analysis in EGP courses provided for Chinese English majors to collect key data that course designers can reference.

II. Literature Review

A. Learners' Needs as Data Sources for Needs Analysis

Society, teachers, and students are the primary data sources for needs analysis (West, 1994; Shu, 2004). Social needs refer to the normative requirements of social company concerning the linguistic ability expected of students by the time their courses culminate; teachers' needs concern the expectations of educators regarding the linguistic knowledge that students should learn; learner needs are the personal desires of students regarding what they need and want to learn on their courses (Long, 2005). Numerous scholars have emphasized that the needs of learners — the subjects undertaking the courses — should arguably be the focus of needs analysis (Shu, 2004; Dudley-Evans & John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Nunan, 1988). Addressing the needs of learners is a prerequisite of developing student-centered English courses (Liu, et al., 2011; Nunan, 1988). However, many Chinese scholars have highlighted in their researches that the needs of students are frequently ignored by Chinese universities (Li, 2007; Zhao, Lei & Zhang, 2009; Zhu, 2015). Because English teaching departments in these institutions tend to design courses from a top-down perspective, with ideas from teaching staff and employers adopted and prioritized while the opinions of students regarding their courses are neglected (Zhao, Lei & Zhang, 2009).

Nevertheless, basing needs analysis on the objective observations and expectations of teachers and employers may cause the fact that the aspirations of learners cannot be fully comprehended (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Nunan, 1988; Liu, et al., 2011). By neglecting the needs of learners, the language courses that students need and the actual courses may be mismatched (Li, 2007). For example, a study conducted by Oanh (2007) identified significant gaps between the materials used in English courses and the needs reported by students. The material was deemed by the students as outdated, too theoretical, and ultimately conflicted with their overall linguistic proficiency. Similarly, a study conducted by Nouri and Mazdayasna (2014) revealed the frustration felt by students regarding their English courses and their corresponding desires for a systematic, contemporary and student-centered pedagogical framework. The dissatisfaction of English majors regarding the translation course was highlighted in the study of Wang (2014), in which students stipulated that more authentic materials and more learning activities which could increase interactions between teachers and students were required on their courses. Zhang (2018) found that redundant content was excessive in college English courses with the same knowledge repeated, resulting in a misalignment with the desires of students for new content and course innovation.

As highlighted by these studies, the conflict between the actual English syllabus and what Li (2007) terms the "learners' syllabus" (p. 17) may result in the decreased learning motivation and interest of students, subsequently leading to the declining efficiency of foreign language courses, undesirable teaching results, and wasted teaching resources (Long, 2005). Therefore, to help instructors and course designers understand students' desires, thereby making English courses more student-centered, it is essential to conduct needs analysis in which the data sources are the needs of learners (Liu, et al., 2011).

B. Needs Analysis in ESP and EGP Courses

As ESP courses have specific purposes in language teaching, learners tend to understand their needs more accurately and ESP specialists "are often needs assessors first and foremost, then designers and implementers of specialized curricula in response to identified needs" (Belcher, p.135, 2006). Hence, needs analysis is often conducted in ESP courses to investigate learners' needs (Liu, et al., 2011; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In contrast, EGP courses are "more usefully considered as providing a broad foundation rather than a detailed and selective specification of goal like ESP" (Far, p. 3, 2008). Thus, EGP courses seem to lack the same concerns of learners' needs because of "an erroneous belief that it is not possible to specify the needs of general English learners" (Seedhouse, p. 59, 1995).

However, numerous studies have proved that learners' needs in EGP courses can be specified. Seedhouse (1995) conducted a study investigating the needs of Spanish teenagers enrolled in EGP courses. He discovered that the students were driven to learn English by specific psychological and social needs, such as for travel purposes or by their desires to obtain a better job. Liu, et al. (2011) and Ahour and Mohseni (2015) used the same questionnaire to examine the needs of EGP students in Taiwan and Iran respectively. These two studies both determined that students regarded speaking and writing as the most necessary skills taught in EGP courses, with the latter being the skill the students desired most to learn but the one at which they felt most insufficient. Students also possessed clear short-term and long-term academic goals, which significantly influenced their perceived needs. Behzadi and Lashkarian (2015) and Mehrdad (2012) revealed the desire of the Iranian students enrolled in an EGP course to extend their vocabulary and strengthen grammar. Similarly, students from Moiinvaziri's (2014) study considered vocabulary, grammar, and reading to be the most essential English components to learn, on which they felt they should have the most practice. The students further identified the completion of their studies to be the top reason for learning English, while reporting the communicative learning as their preferred learning style.

These studies suggest the feasibility of applying needs analysis to investigate students' needs which are generally believed as less discernable in EGP courses (Nunan, 1988; Liu, et al., 2011).

C. Related Needs Analysis Studies on Courses for Chinese English Majors

Needs analysis studies concerning Chinese English majors mainly focus on their ESP courses.

Many scholars conducted needs analysis to optimize the content of ESP courses. Su's (2011) study found that consecutive interpretation courses in mainland China failed to focus on the cultivation of students' Chinese proficiency which was needed by students. He proposed that the courses should add content like Chinese culture and applied Chinese to improve students' ability to apply Chinese when doing the interpretation. Li (2014) and Xie (2016) both emphasized in their studies the importance of combining business knowledge, English language ability, and comprehensive quality in business-focused English language courses which could better cultivate business English talents that meet the society's needs. Ye and Wang (2019) proposed that the interdisciplinary legal English courses should scientifically integrate legal professional knowledge and English language skills to meet the learning needs of students.

Various researchers used needs analysis to improve the teaching materials and teaching methods in ESP courses. A study conducted by Guiyu and Yang (2016) highlighted the frustration of business English majors in Guangdong University of Foreign Studies regarding the simplicity of the teaching materials which were unable to meet their expectations. The study determined the desire of students for updated textbooks with practical, targeted, interesting, and communicated-focused material. The necessity of combining online and offline teaching was mentioned in a study conducted by Lü, Fu, and Ruan (2014), which established an innovative method for teaching English film courses to undergraduates in the Communication University of China. Xie (2019) proposed that teachers must realize the importance of electronic media in addition to print media in English teaching, thereby satisfying students' needs for diversified ways of learning. Based on the needs of English undergraduates enrolled in Electric English courses at Shanghai Electric Power University, Yu (2011) proposed a flexible teaching method that combined methods of grammar-translation, register analysis, and computer-assisted teaching.

With needs analysis studies mainly conducted in ESP courses, few of them have focused on EGP courses provided for English majors in China. Nevertheless, ESP and EGP courses are designed to meet students' different needs for learning English and develop their different English abilities (Liu, et al., 2011). Both ESP and EGP courses are deserving of research attention to achieve the all-round cultivation of English majors outlined by the *National Standards*.

D. Theoretical Background: Li's (2007) Needs Analysis Model

The needs analysis model of Li (2007) which is initially applied in the Chinese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context, further employed by Moiinvaziri (2014) when examining the needs of Iranian students in EGP courses, will be used in this study. Li (2007) proposes that the needs of students can be analyzed from linguistic, cognitive, and affective perspectives.

1) The linguistic perspective addresses the viewpoints of students regarding what they need to learn in their English courses. For subjects of this study — English majors at Tianjin Foreign Studies University, the content of their EGP courses is mainly the teaching of three English components (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) and four English skills (listening, speaking, writing, and reading), all of which will be considered in this study.

2) The cognitive perspective investigates the cognitive variables of learners during the English learning process. Language learning is an internally-generated process in which the cognitive processing mechanism may play a vital role, thus highlighting the necessity of including cognitive variables in the needs analysis model (Li, 2007). Cognitive variables examined in Li's (2007) study, such as students' preferred learning styles, students' preferred learning activities, and students' expectations on the role of teachers will be explored in this study.

3) The affective perspective examines the affective variables of learners during the English learning process. As Li (2007) suggests, "Learning a language is an emotional experience, and the feeling that the learning process evokes will have a crucial bearing on the success or failure of the learning" (p. 21). As such, Li (2007) investigated the motivation, attitude, and confidence of learners when learning English, and these three variables will also be included in this study.

III. RESEARCH PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In response to the aforementioned research gaps, this study aims to investigate the needs of Chinese English majors engaged in EGP courses from linguistic, cognitive, and affective perspectives based on Li's (2007) needs analysis model. Considering that many studies have proven gender's influence on the needs of students (Moiinvaziri, 2014; Pourshahian, Gholami, Vaseghi & Kalajahi, 2012; Zhu & Ma, 2014), this study will further examine how gender affects the reported needs of students.

This study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1) What are Chinese English majors' views of English components (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) and English skills (listening, speaking, writing, and reading) that they need to learn in EGP courses? (linguistic perspective)

2) What are Chinese English majors' preferred learning styles, favored learning activities, and expectations on the

role of teachers in EGP courses? (cognitive perspective)

3) What are Chinese English majors' learning motivation, attitude, and confidence in EGP courses? (affective perspective)

4) Is there any difference in these three perspectives between male and female students?

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

Participants of this study were comprised of 221 first-year and second-year Chinese English majors (73 males and 148 females) from Tianjin Foreign Studies University (TFSU). Their demographic information is documented in Table 1. According to the educational policy of TFSU, EGP courses are compulsory for freshman and sophomore English majors, making them suitable subjects for this study.

TABLE I
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Demographic	Subcategories	N	Percentage
Gender	Male	73	33.0%
	Female	148	67.0%
Grade	Freshmen	110	49.8%
	Sophomores	111	50.2%

B. Instrumentation

This study adopted Li (2007) questionnaire which was made based on his needs analysis model and consisted of four parts: Part A was used to obtain the background information of students; Part B was designed from the linguistic perspective, aiming to investigate students' opinion of what they need to learn in their language courses; Part C and Part D were devised from the cognitive and affective perspective, hence the former concerned students' cognitive variables while the latter explored students' affective variables.

Several adjustments to the questionnaire were made: Questions 8-10 in part B were deleted because linguistics courses were not provided for first-year and second-year English majors, hence they failed to know technical terms like stress, intonation, and usage. Besides, the low-grade students were not proficient enough to have an in-depth knowledge of grammatical rules. Questions 11 and 12 in part B, as well as question 4-8 in part C — which respectively concerned problems that students encountered when learning English, the opinions of students regarding the benefits of learning English, students' reactions to mistakes, students' views regarding the necessity of planning study, and students' responses to class test and feedback — were omitted due to these questions' irrelevances to the research questions of this study. The revised questionnaire (Appendix A) was examined by two experts for comprehensibility and then piloted among 30 students. This questionnaire enjoyed high reliability with the Cronbach-alpha of 0.875.

C. Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher gave paper questionnaires to students in their classrooms and, with the teacher's assistance, collected the questionnaires following their completion. Students were assured that all answers would be kept confidential and no personal information would be divulged. 221 questionnaires were collected with a return rate of 100%. The process of collecting and administering the questionnaires took roughly two weeks.

Data from the collected questionnaires were typed into SPSS 23.0. Descriptive analysis methods were employed to compare means for all questions. Independent samples t-test (questions 1-7, question 9, and question 12-13) and chi-square test (question 8 and questions 10) were then adopted, at a significant level of .05, to determine the impact of gender on the needs of students.

V. RESULTS

A. Linguistic Perspective

Question 1 to question 3 asks, respectively, the views of students on the importance, expected practice, and difficulty of English components (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation). The results in Table 2 reveal that students regard vocabulary as the most important component of English ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.88$) and view grammar as the most difficult component to learn ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.07$). The results further show that students want to practice pronunciation most in class ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 0.96$). Significant gender differences have been found: females ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.80$) demonstrate higher recognition than males ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.96$) regarding the importance of vocabulary, t (219) = - 3.58, $p < .05$; females ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.92$) also attach more importance than males ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.89$) to pronunciation, t (219) = - 2.11, $p = .035$.

TABLE II.
THE VIEWS OF STUDENTS REGARDING ENGLISH COMPONENTS

Q1 (Importance)	Gender	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	3.81	0.95			
Grammar	Female	3.81	1.07	219	-.02	.986
	Total	3.81	1.03			
	Male	4.05	0.96			
Vocabulary	Female	4.49	0.80	219	-3.58	.000
	Total	4.35	0.88			
	Male	4.07	0.89			
Pronunciation	Female	4.34	0.92	219	-2.11	.035
	Total	4.25	0.92			
Q2 (Practice)	Gender	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	3.90	0.96			
Grammar	Female	3.89	0.95	219	.09	.929
	Total	3.90	0.95			
	Male	3.79	1.09			
Vocabulary	Female	3.87	0.94	219	-.54	.588
	Total	3.85	0.99			
	Male	4.00	0.97			
Pronunciation	Female	4.20	0.95	219	-1.48	.141
	Total	4.14	0.96			
Q3 (Difficulty)	Gender	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	3.63	1.14			
Grammar	Female	3.68	1.04	219	-.34	.734
	Total	3.67	1.07			
	Male	3.53	1.14			
Vocabulary	Female	3.40	0.97	219	.92	.358
	Total	3.44	1.03			
	Male	3.49	1.16			
Pronunciation	Female	3.26	1.08	219	1.50	.135
	Total	3.33	1.11			

Question 4 to question 7 asks, respectively, the importance that students place on four skills of English (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), the frequency of their engagements with these skills, and their proficiency and expected practice of each skill. Table 3 shows that speaking is regarded as the most crucial skill ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.08$). Students also show that they engage most frequently with the listening ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.15$), choose speaking as what they want to practice most in class ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.07$), and record listening as their most highly proficient skill ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.02$). One particularly significant difference between males and females is that males record higher proficiency in their uses of all four English skills.

Normally, in the process of learning English, what students consider most indispensable should align with what they are most eager to practice. As the results in Table 3 show that students choose speaking as the most crucial English skills and they also want to spend most of their time practicing it. However, the results in Table 2 establish the conflict in students' views of English vocabulary: students regard vocabulary as the most important component while they report the fewest desire to practice vocabulary in class. This similar conflict is also found in the studies of Moiinvaziri (2014) and Li (2007). This suggests that it may be a common phenomenon that students are unable to "make valuable decisions for their language development and progress to some extent" (Moiinvaziri, p 63, 2014).

TABLE III.
THE VIEWS OF STUDENTS TOWARDS ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Q4 (Importance)	Gender	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	4.04	0.95			
Listening	Female	3.79	1.28	186.33	1.64	.104
	Total	3.87	1.19			
	Male	4.25	0.83			
Speaking	Female	4.03	1.18	192.91	1.60	.111
	Total	4.10	1.08			
	Male	4.08	0.88			
Reading	Female	3.79	1.07	171.23	2.16	.033
	Total	3.89	1.02			
	Male	4.19	0.91			
Writing	Female	3.67	1.13	173.92	3.71	.000
	Total	3.84	1.09			
Q5 (Frequency)	Gender	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	3.56	1.31			
Listening	Female	3.39	1.05	119.13	1.00	.319
	Total	3.44	1.15			
	Male	3.59	1.05			
Speaking	Female	3.05	1.07	219	3.52	.001
	Total	3.23	1.09			
	Male	3.73	0.89			
Reading	Female	3.28	1.03	219	3.14	.002
	Total	3.43	1.00			
	Male	3.45	1.17			
Writing	Female	2.84	1.02	128	3.83	0.00
	Total	3.04	1.11			
Q6 (Proficiency)	Gender	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	3.60	1.01			
Listening	Female	2.98	0.97	219	4.44	.000
	Total	3.19	1.02			
	Male	3.52	1.06			
Speaking	Female	2.91	1.00	219	4.17	.000
	Total	3.11	1.06			
	Male	3.52	0.91			
Reading	Female	2.76	0.94	219	5.74	.000
	Total	3.01	1.00			
	Male	3.66	0.92			
Writing	Female	3.19	0.92	219	3.56	.000
	Total	3.01	1.00			
Q7 (Practice)	Gender	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	3.58	1.20			
Listening	Female	3.46	1.08	219	.72	.470
	Total	3.50	1.12			
	Male	4.12	0.88			
Speaking	Female	3.72	1.14	179.38	2.88	.004
	Total	3.86	1.07			
	Male	3.73	1.08			
Reading	Female	3.29	0.99	219	2.98	.003
	Total	3.43	1.04			
	Male	3.82	0.96			
Writing	Female	3.37	1.03	219	3.13	.002
	Total	3.52	1.03			

B. Cognitive Perspective

Question 8 examines the expectations of students regarding different teachers' roles (Appendix B). Students rank "The teacher responds to students positively" (71.5%) as the primary role of teachers. This suggests that students regard encouragement and positive comment to be the more effective way of teaching than giving negative responses, such as reprimand and disappointment. Besides, the aspiration of students to learn in a stress-free environment in which they are offered a more active role and more freedom, rather than being governed by authoritative teachers, is shown in the statement ranked second-highest, "The teacher should create a harmonious and pleasant learning environment" (67.9%), and the option ranked lowest, "The teacher is the 'authority' in the classroom" (10.4%). Question 8 reveals significant gender differences regarding teachers' roles: more males (20.5%) report being accustomed to authoritative teachers in the classroom than females (5.4%), $\chi^2 = 12.02$, $df = 1$, $p = .001$; more females (77.7%) report a strong desire than males (58.9%) for teachers' providing positive responses, $\chi^2 = 8.48$, $df = 1$, $p = .004$; more females (74.3%) also want teachers to create a pleasant learning environment than males (54.8%), $\chi^2 = 8.55$, $df = 1$, $p = .003$.

Question 9 asks students to choose the most helpful learning activities out of 17 items provided, thereby investigating their preferred learning activities (Appendix C). They report "Reciting dialogues from a textbook" ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 0.69$)

to be the least helpful learning activities and they also score relatively low in 'Memorizing bilingual words list' ($M = 2.30$, $SD = 0.63$). This shows students' disfavor of learning English by rote memorization. On the contrary, students report "Talking to English speakers whenever I have the opportunity" ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.61$) as the most beneficial learning activity. Apart from conversing with English speakers, students also give a high score to other activities that involved English communication, such as 'Chatting through the Internet in English' ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 0.67$) and 'Talking to friends in English' ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.71$). This reveals the strong desire of students to be involved in communicative learning activities, which correlates with the results of Moiinvaziri's (2014) study. In terms of significant gender differences, males ($M = 2.42$, $SD = 0.60$) have higher recognition than females ($M = 2.20$, $SD = 0.61$) of "Practicing drills on grammar patterns", $t(219) = 2.57$, $p = .011$; males ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 0.70$) also prefer "Doing English-Chinese exercises" than females ($M = 2.19$, $SD = 0.54$), $t(115.45) = 2.09$, $p = .039$. This indicates that males are more in favor of studying English by using the traditional grammar-translation method.

TABLE IV.
THE PREFERRED LEARNING STYLES OF STUDENTS

Q10	Gender	Agree	df	χ^2	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
The teacher gives lectures to which I listen.	Male	35.6%			
	Female	25.0%	1	2.70	.100
	Total	28.5%			
The teacher gives lectures and also provides me with opportunities to practice.	Male	60.3%			
	Female	80.4%	1	10.24	.001
	Total	73.8%			
I study individually.	Male	31.5%			
	Female	27.7%	1	.34	.558
	Total	29.0%			
I discuss with my desk-mates.	Male	34.2%			
	Female	36.5%	1	.11	.744
	Total	35.7%			
I discuss with my group members	Male	52.1%			
	Female	56.8%	1	.44	.509
	Total	55.2%			

Question 10 collects information about the learning styles preferred by students. According to the results in Table 4, students' most unfavorite learning style is "The teacher gives lectures to which I listen" (28.5%). This result is in line with their responses to teachers' role in question 8, that is, the class should not be totally dominated by teachers. Their most favored one is "The teacher gives lectures and also provides me with opportunities to practice" (73.8%) which females (80.4%) favor more than males (60.3%) significantly, $\chi^2 = 2.70$, $df = 1$, $p = .001$. This result shows that except for teachers' explanations of the knowledge, students also need the chance to practice so that they can consolidate what have learned in the English course. It can be inferred that students need a classroom where they can benefit from both the teacher's guidance and the student's autonomy, rather than an excessively teacher-centered or student-centered classroom that offers either total authority or complete freedom.

C. Affective Perspective

Question 11 is concerned with the students' English learning motivations (Appendix D). The usefulness of English is the primary motivation chosen by the most students (68.8%), which demonstrates students' strong instrumental motivation (Gao, et al., 2003). In contrast, only 7.2% of students choose "Because my parents want me to learn English" and 21.7% of students select "Because the school requires me to study English", which demonstrates that most students' disfavors of the pressure from schools and parents. As for significant gender differences, more females (34.2%) are motivated by schools' requirements of learning English than males (15.5%), $\chi^2 = 10.06$, $df = 1$, $p = .002$; more females (35.8%) are stimulated by their expectations of getting decent academic performances than males (15.1%), $\chi^2 = 10.22$, $df = 1$, $p = .001$. On the other hand, more males (54.8%) view "Because I want to understand English book" as their motivation than females (35.6%), $\chi^2 = 8.19$, $df = 1$, $p = .004$.

TABLE V.
STUDENTS' ATTITUDE AND CONFIDENCE WHEN LEARNING ENGLISH

Q12	Gender	Never	Sometimes	Often	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	8.2%	60.3%	31.5%	2.23	0.59			
	Female	16.2%	60.8%	23.0%	2.07	0.62	219	1.89	.061
	Total	13.6%	60.6%	25.8%	2.12	0.62			
Q13	Gender	No	Sometimes	Yes	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	16.4%	52.1%	31.5%	2.15	0.68			
	Female	20.3%	63.5%	16.2%	1.96	0.60	129.40	2.04	.044
	Total	19.0%	59.7%	21.3%	2.02	0.64			

Students' attitude and confidence when learning English are explored by question 12 and question 13 respectively. According to the results in Table 5, only 13.6% of students never regard studying English as enjoyable while only 19%

of students record having no confidence in making progress in English (Table 5). This shows students' overall positive attitude and strong confidence in learning English. One significant gender difference is that males ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 0.68$) are more confident than females ($M = 1.96$, $SD = 0.60$) in learning English, t (129.40) = 2.09, $p = .044$.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Discussions and Implications for EGP Courses Development and Teaching

To start with, there should be an attempt to satisfy the needs of students revealed in this study. More pronunciation exercises and speaking activities could be adopted to meet students' desires of practicing pronunciation and speaking in the class. More communicative tasks could also be included in the EGP courses in view of students' preference for communicative learning activities, such as information gaps, role-plays, and simulations, thereby providing students with more opportunity to use English to communicate in diverse situations (Nunan, 2015). Further to this, to align with the needs of students, teachers should attempt to create a harmonious learning environment and offer positive feedback to students during the teaching process. The results further highlight the importance placed by students on both the leading role of teachers and the central position of students in the classroom. Therefore, teachers could adopt the blended "teacher-led and student-centered" teaching model, with an equal emphasis placed on both learning and teaching (He, p. 3, 2004).

In addition, the conflict in students' opinions of vocabulary should be noted. The results show that students' perceptions of vocabulary as the most indispensable English component contradict their choices of vocabulary as the component they are least eager to practice in class. There are two possible reasons for this. Firstly, the relatively short period of systematic English learning may result in low-grade students failing to comprehend the future direction of learning, leading to their decreased ability in making beneficial decisions regarding language development and progress. Teachers could resolve this issue by providing each student with an individual and appropriate learning plan according to their specific learning habits or characteristics, which would enable students to arrange their English vocabulary learning more successfully. Following the learning plan and the teacher's instruction may help students to clarify appropriate ways of scheduling English vocabulary learning and improve their ability to adjust the current learning plan or create a new one in recognition of their own decisions and needs. Secondly, students may deem it unnecessary to contribute extra time to learning vocabulary in a traditional classroom. The continuous development of mobile learning theory and cellphone application technology has led to many English vocabulary learning apps appearing. In comparison to traditional vocabulary books, these apps offer many new and irreplaceable advantages. For example, the "Scallops English", a popular English vocabulary app in China, is beneficial for students in many ways: 1) learners can find the words they need easily while the relevant example sentences illustrate the usage and collocation of the word comprehensively; 2) convenience is offered through its instant automatic pronunciation function which enables learners to imitate, read and repeat words at any time; 3) the automatic review function provides students with review plans based on Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curves[1] to help them form long-term memory of words (Li & Wang, 2012). The advantages of learning apps may incite students to learn English through technology rather than through traditional classroom. However, technology and classroom learning do not need to be mutually exclusive. Teachers could cater to the preference of students by using apps to set up online vocabulary learning tasks and assign homework, which may lead to a better teaching result.

Finally, separate teaching strategies for males and females could be adopted based on several essential gender differences found in this study. Males reported higher recognition of the authoritative role of teachers in the classroom, alongside higher preference for practicing drills on grammar patterns and undertaking English-Chinese exercises. This suggests that when teaching male teachers could adopt a traditional teacher-centered classroom in which grammar-translation teaching methods could be used more frequently. General belief stipulates that the teacher-centered classroom is not conducive for improving the positivity of students, while the grammar-translation teaching method is further criticized for being monotonous with excessive emphasis placed on the prescriptive rules of language (Luo & Shi, 2004). However, teachers need not be bound by these ideas and should instead seek to adopt the teaching strategies preferred by students. Because teaching attuned to the needs of students may, in turn, stimulate their interests in learning English and immerse them more deeply in the class (Nunan, 1988). In contrast, females reported a higher desire for a stress-free learning environment, positive feedback from teachers, and the opportunity to practice. This requires teachers to develop a student-centered English classroom when teaching females, in which harmonious relationships with students are prioritized and formed, with more time set aside for students to practice the English knowledge learned in class. During this practice, teachers may frequently encourage students and offer positive comments to build their confidence.

As one of the few needs analysis studies concerning the needs of Chinese English majors in EGP courses, it is expected that this study can stimulate the interest of other researchers regarding the critical issue of considering the importance of students' needs to develop EGP courses for Chinese English majors.

B. Limitations and Suggestions

---

[1] Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curves refer to the law of peoples' loss of learned information.

First, the sample size of this study is relatively small, with only 221 English majors selected, all of whom study at Tianjin Foreign Studies University. The subject of this study, therefore, is not wholly representative of Chinese English majors enrolled in EGP courses. Any future study may enlarge the sample source to generalize the result, selecting English majors from a range of universities to establish a more comprehensive identification of their needs.

Second, this study is not continuous. However, the on-going needs analysis is deemed crucial because course development is a dynamic process, meaning the intermittent variances of course requirements must be acknowledged and considered (Chen & Wang, 2009). Needs analysis should navigate each stage of the entire process, including course setting, implementation, adjustment, and evaluation. By doing this, educators will be able to identify new needs and evaluate the course while ensuring that the developed course does not deviate from the original teaching goals established.

Third, this study fails to analyze the needs of students from a triangulated perspective. According to the Needs Analysis Triangle (West, 1994), the ideal data source for needs analysis contains three principal parties: teacher-perceived needs, student-perceived needs, and company-perceived needs. By regarding only one data source, research results become relatively tendentious (Long, 2005), while cooperative interaction of these three parties would provide a more comprehensive and reliable identification of needs (West, 1994). Therefore, future researchers may carry out triangular mutual certification by collecting and comparing data from different sources, which may produce a more inclusive and dependable result.

APPENDIX A.   QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS' ENGLISH NEEDS

The purpose of the questionnaire is to see what your language needs are, and whether your needs are being met and, if not, what can be done better. Please let your true feelings and opinions be known when filling out this questionnaire. It would be appreciated if you complete this questionnaire, which would take approximately 15 minutes.

Part A

Please fill in the blanks with your personal information.

1．Age:
2．Gender:
3．Grade:

Part B

Please circle the corresponding number according to your actual situation. Only one number can be selected for each question. **The larger the number you choose, the more in line with your actual ideas.**

	1=Low	2=Relatively Low	3=Moderate	4=Relatively High	5=High

1.   In your study of English, how important is grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation to you?

Grammar	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Pronunciation	1	2	3	4	5

2.   How much practice of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation do you expect to get in class?

Grammar	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Pronunciation	1	2	3	4	5

3.   How difficult is grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation to you?

Grammar	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Pronunciation	1	2	3	4	5

4.   How important to success in your study of English are the following skills?

Listening	1	2	3	4	5
Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
Reading	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5

5.   How often are you engaged in the following activities?

Listen to English	1	2	3	4	5
Speaking English	1	2	3	4	5
Reading English	1	2	3	4	5
Writing English	1	2	3	4	5

6.   What is your proficiency in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing?

Listening	1	2	3	4	5
Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
Reading	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5

7.   How much practice in listening, speaking, reading, and writing do you expect to get in class?

Listening	1	2	3	4	5
Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
Reading	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5

Part C

8. Choose the statements that best describe your opinions on what the English teacher should do. **(You can choose more than one answer)**

1）The teacher gives lectures and delivers knowledge．

2）The teacher is the "authority" in the classroom．

3）The teacher talks for most of the class time．

4）The teacher gives time for students to talk．

5）The teacher corrects every mistake that students make．

6）The teacher responds to students positively.

7）The teacher tries different activities in class．

8）The teacher encourages the students to ask questions．

9）The teacher should create a harmonious and pleasant learning environment．

10）The teacher should pay attention to students' needs．

11）The teacher uses the textbooks only．

12）The teacher teaches the students some learning strategies．

9. How useful are the following activities in studying English from your perspective?

	1= Not useful	2= Moderate		3= Useful		
(1) Memorizing bilingual words list.				1	2	3
(2) Studying the grammar rules of English.				1	2	3
(3) Practicing drills on sounds, stress, and intonation of English.				1	2	3
(4) Practicing drills on grammar patterns.				1	2	3
(5) Reciting dialogues from a textbook．				1	2	3
(6) Doing English-Chinese exercises.				1	2	3
(7) Doing role play activities.				1	2	3
(8) Watching English movies.				1	2	3
(9) Listening to English music．				1	2	3
(10) Reading English novels and magazines.				1	2	3
(11) Writing English diaries.				1	2	3
(12) Writing emails in English.				1	2	3
(13) Chatting through Internet in English．				1	2	3
(14) Talking to friends in English.				1	2	3
(15) Talking to English speakers whenever I have the opportunity．				1	2	3
(16) Searching for learning resources out of class.				1	2	3
(17) Participating in English camp.				1	2	3

10. What kind(s) of learning style(s) do you like? **(You can choose more than one answer)**

1）The teacher gives lectures to which I listen.

2）The teacher gives lectures and also provides me with opportunities to practice.

3）I study individually.

4）I discuss with my desk-mates.

5）I discuss with my group members.

Part D

11. Why do you study English? **(You can choose more than one answer)**

1）Because I like English.

2）Because English is an useful language.

3）Because the school requires me to study English.

4）Because I want to get a good school grade.

5）Because I want to travel to other countries.

6）Because I want to speak to foreigners.

7）Because I want to understand English pop songs.

8）Because I want to understand English movies.

9）Because I want to understand English books.

10）Because my parents want me to learn English.

12. Do you think studying English is an enjoyable experience? Please circle the appropriate response.

Never	Sometimes	Often
1	2	3

13. Do you feel confident about the progress of your English? Please circle the appropriate response.

No	Sometimes	Yes
1	2	3

APPENDIX B.   TABLE REGARDING STUDENTS' OPINIONS TOWARDS THE ROLE OF ENGLISH TEACHERS

Q8	Gender	Agree	df	χ^2	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
The teacher gives lectures and delivers knowledge.	Male	43.8%	1	22.91	.000
	Female	76.4%			
	Total	65.6%			
The teacher is the "authority" in the classroom.	Male	20.5%	1	12.02	.001
	Female	5.4%			
	Total	10.4%			
The teacher talks for most of the class time.	Male	30.1%	1	2.27	.132
	Female	20.9%			
	Total	24.0%			
The teacher gives time for students to talk.	Male	61.6%	1	.76	.383
	Female	67.5%			
	Total	65.6%			
The teacher corrects every mistake that students make.	Male	37.0%	1	.63	.427
	Female	42.6%			
	Total	40.7%			
The teacher responds to students positively.	Male	58.9%	1	8.48	.004
	Female	77.7%			
	Total	71.5%			
The teacher tries different activities in class.	Male	60.3%	1	.16	.687
	Female	57.4%			
	Total	58.4%			
The teacher encourages the students to ask questions.	Male	60.3%	1	1.38	.241
	Female	68.2%			
	Total	65.6%			
The teacher should create a harmonious and pleasant learning environment.	Male	54.8%	1	8.55	.003
	Female	74.3%			
	Total	67.9%			
The teacher should pay attention to students' needs.	Male	56.2%	1	.44	.508
	Female	60.8%			
	Total	59.3%			
The teacher uses the textbooks only.	Male	12.3%	1	.14	.704
	Female	14.2%			
	Total	13.6%			
The teacher teaches the students some learning strategies.	Male	64.4%	1	.03	.865
	Female	65.5%			
	Total	65.2%			

APPENDIX C. TABLE REGARDING THE PREFERRED LEARNING ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS

Q9	Gender	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Male	2.45	0.62			
Memorizing bilingual words list	Female	2.22	0.62	219	2.59	.010
	Total	2.30	0.63			
	Male	2.51	0.58			
Studying the grammar rules of English	Female	2.39	0.60	219	1.43	.153
	Total	2.43	0.60			
	Male	2.53	0.63			
Practicing drills on sounds, stress, and intonation of English	Female	2.33	0.60	219	2.34	.020
	Total	2.40	0.61			
	Male	2.42	0.60			
Practicing drills on grammar patterns	Female	2.20	0.61	219	2.57	.011
	Total	2.28	0.61			
	Male	2.16	0.75			
Reciting dialogues from a textbook	Female	1.98	0.65	128.04	1.80	.074
	Total	2.04	0.69			
	Male	2.38	0.70			
Doing English-Chinese exercises	Female	2.19	0.54	115.45	2.09	.039
	Total	2.25	0.60			
	Male	2.21	0.73			
Doing role play activities	Female	2.06	0.63	126.99	1.45	.148
	Total	2.11	0.67			
	Male	2.40	0.70			
Watching English movies	Female	2.26	0.58	122.66	1.48	.142
	Total	2.30	0.63			
	Male	2.40	0.62			
Listening to English music	Female	2.24	0.62	219	1.81	.071
	Total	2.29	0.62			
	Male	2.51	0.60			
Reading English novels and magazines	Female	2.28	0.56	219	2.81	.005
	Total	2.35	0.58			
	Male	2.27	0.67			
Writing English diaries	Female	2.21	0.67	219	.67	.503
	Total	2.23	0.67			
	Male	2.33	0.67			
Writing emails in English	Female	2.16	0.73	219	1.64	.093
	Total	2.22	0.71			
	Male	2.47	0.60			
Chatting through Internet in English	Female	2.27	0.70	219	2.05	.042
	Total	2.33	0.67			
	Male	2.52	0.67			
Talking to friends in English	Female	2.35	0.73	219	1.67	.096
	Total	2.41	0.71			
	Male	2.58	0.60			
Talking to English speakers whenever I have the opportunity	Female	2.50	0.62	219	.86	.393
	Total	2.52	0.61			
	Male	2.55	0.58			
Searching for learning resources out of class	Female	2.39	0.62	219	1.87	.063
	Total	2.44	0.61			
	Male	2.42	0.66			
Participating in English camp	Female	2.20	0.74	219	2.23	.027
	Total	2.27	0.73			

APPENDIX D.   TABLE REGARDING MOTIVATIONS OF STUDENTS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

Q11	Gender	Agree	df	χ^2	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
Because I like English.	Male	52.8%			
	Female	64.9%	1	3.36	.067
	Total	60.6%			
Because English is an useful language.	Male	65.8%			
	Female	70.3%	2	2.33	.312
	Total	68.8%			
Because the school requires me to study English.	Male	15.5%			
	Female	34.2%	1	10.06	.002
	Total	21.7%			
Because I want to get a good school grade.	Male	15.1%			
	Female	35.8%	1	10.22	.001
	Total	29.0%			
Because I want to travel to other countries.	Male	54.8%			
	Female	52.0%	1	.15	.698
	Total	52.9%			
Because I want to speak to foreigners.	Male	52.1%			
	Female	54.1%	1	.080	.779
	Total	53.4%			
Because I want to understand English pop songs.	Male	35.6%			
	Female	33.8%	1	.07	.787
	Total	34.4%			
Because I want to understand English movies.	Male	53.4%			
	Female	54.1%	1	.01	.930
	Total	53.8%			
Because I want to understand English books.	Male	54.8%			
	Female	35.6%	1	8.19	.004
	Total	56.1%			
Because my parents want me to learn English.	Male	6.8%			
	Female	7.4%	1	.03	.875
	Total	7.2%			

REFERENCES

[1]   Ahour, T., & Mohseni, F. (2015). Investigate EFL Learners' Perception of Needs: Necessities, Wants, and Lacks in Different Language Skills Taught in General English Courses. *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods*, 5(1), 236-241.

[2]   Behzadi, A., & Lashkarian, A. (2015). Iranian Undergraduate Students' Needs in English Courses for General and Specific Purposes. *International Journal of English and Education*, 4(3), 67-80.

[3]   Belcher, D. D. (2006). English for Specific Purposes: Teaching to Perceived Needs and Imagined Futures in Worlds of Work, Study, and Everyday Life. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(1), 133-156.

[4]   Brown, J. D. (1995). The Elements of Language Curriculum: A Systematic Approach to Program Development. 20 Park Plaza, Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

[5]   Cai, J. (2019). Conflicts over Foreign Language Policies: Interdisciplinary English Talents or Pure English Talents. *Journal of Northeast Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*(04), 1-6.

[6]   Cha, M. (2017). On the Humanistic Nature of the English Discipline and the Significance of the Humanities-Based Curriculum for English Majors Based on the *National Guideline. Foreign Language and Culture*, 1(1), 18-26.

[7]   Chen, B., & Wang, H. (2009). A Critical Review of Needs Analysis Studies in Foreign Language Teaching in China. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching* (07), 18-21.

[8]   Dudley-Evans, T., & John, M. J. S. (1998). Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[9]   Far, M. M. (2008). On the Relationship between ESP & EGP: A General Perspective. *English for Specific Purposes World*, 7(1), 1-11.

[10] Gao, Y., Zhao, Y., Chen, Y., & Zhou, Y. (2003). Motivation Types of Chinese College Undergraduates. *Modern Foreign Languages*, 26(1), 28-38.

[11] Guiyu, D., & Yang, L. (2016). An Empirical Study on Business English Teaching and Development in China — A Needs Analysis Approach. *Higher Education Studies*, 6(2), 142-153.

[12] Hu, W. (2014). On the Training of English majors in China: Retrospect And Prospect. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research (bimonthly)*, 46(01), 111-117.

[13] Hu, W., & Sun, Y. (2006). On Strengthening Humanistic Education in the English Language Curriculum. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research* (05), 243-247.

[14] He, K. (2004). Viewing the New Development of Educational Technology Theory from Blending_Learning (a). *E-education Research* (03), 1-6.

[15] Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). English for Specific Purposes: A learner-centered approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[16] Lan, R. (2009). On the Disciplinal Affiliation and Cultivating Aim of Foreign Language Discipline at Higher Education. *Foreign Languages in China*, 6(06), 4-8.

[17] Li, C., & Wang, J. (2012). The Effect of Scallop English Apps on the Junior High School Students' Memory of English Word of and its Countermeasures. *Journal of Teaching and Management* (36), 135-136.

[18] Li, J. (2014). Needs Analysis of Business English Undergraduates and the Implications to Business English Curriculum Design. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 5(4), 33-37.

[19] Li, S. (2007). Situation analysis and needs analysis in Chinese EFL context: A case of a senior high school in south-west China. *Celea Journal*, 30(4), 17-28.

[20] Liu, J., Chang, Y., Yang, F., & Sun, Y. (2011). Is what I need what I want? Reconceptualising college students' needs in English courses for general and specific/academic purposes. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 10(4), 271-280.

[21] Long, M. (2005). Second Language Needs Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[22] Luo, L., & Shi, X. (2004). The historical review, current situation and prospect of grammar translation teaching method. *Foreign Language Education* (01), 84-86.

[23] Lǚ, X., Fu, J., & Ruan, Y. (2014). A Probe into the Teaching Mode of Film and TV Courses for English Majors Based on Needs Analysis——An Case Study of Communication University of China. *Modern Communication*, 36(09), 137-139.

[24] Mehrdad, A. G. (2012). A subjective needs assessment of EGP students. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 31, 546-554.

[25] Moiinvaziri, M. (2014). Students' Voice: A Needs Analysis of University General English Course in Iran. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 14(01), 57-75.

[26] Munby, J. (1978). Communicative Syllabus Design. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[27] Nouri, M., & Mazdayasna, G. (2014). Tracking down the Academic Target Needs of Undergraduate Students of English Language and Literature in a Non-Native context. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Translation Studies*, 3(1), 54-73.

[28] Nunan, D. (1988). The Learner-centered Curriculum. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[29] Nunan, D. (2015). Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: An Introduction. New York: Routledge.

[30] Oanh, D. T. H. (2007). Meeting Students' Needs in Two EAP Programmes in Vietnam and New Zealand: A Comparative Study. *RELC journal*, 38(3), 324-349.

[31] Pourshahian, B., Gholami, R., Vaseghi, R., & Kalajahi, S. A. R. (2012). Needs of an ESL Context: A Case Study of Iranian Graduate Students. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 17(7), 870-873.

[32] Seedhouse, P. (1995). Needs analysis and the General English classroom. *ELT Journal*, 49(1), 59-65.

[33] Shu, D. (2004). Foreign Language Teaching Reform: Problems and Countermeasures. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

[34] Su, W. (2011). An Investigation of the Needs of Interpretation Professional Courses from the Perspective of Learners——A Case Study of Consecutive Interpretation Courses for Undergraduate Translation Majors in 4 Chinese Universities. *Foreign Language World* (05), 84-92.

[35] Wang, H. (2014). An Analysis of EFL Learners' Needs for Student-Centered Translation Course Design. *Study in English Language Teaching*, 2(1), 76-94.

[36] Wen, X., & Wei, X. (2018). From Compound Talents to Holistic Education: Rethinking the Cultivation of Foreign Language Talents. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching* (03), 50-60.

[37] West, R. (1994). Needs analysis in language teaching. *Language Teaching*, 27(1), 1-19.

[38] Xie, Q. (2016). Business Communication Needs of English Major Undergraduates and Curriculum Development in a Chinese University. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 25(4), 667-676.

[39] Xie, Q. (2019). English Major Undergraduates' Needs and Perceptions of Business English Activities and Resources in a Chinese University. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 10(4), 757-768.

[40] Ye, H., & Wang, K. (2019). Needs Analysis and Curriculum Development for Legal English Majors Under the Guidance of 2018 *National Standards. Foreign Language and Literature*, 35(06), 1-10.

[41] Yu, Z. (2011). Research and Enlightenment of English for Specific Purpose Teaching Practice——Taking "Electricity English" as an Example. *Foreign Language World* (05), 88-96.

[42] Zhang, J. (2018). The Construction of College English Curriculum Group. *Heilongjiang Researches on Higher Education* (2), 152-155.

[43] Zhao, Q., Lei, L., & Zhang, M. (2009). College English Teaching from the Perspective of Students' English Learning Needs. *Foreign Language World* (04), 14-22.

[44] Zhu, X. (2015). College English Curriculum Design Based on Learner Needs Analysis. *Journal of Beijing Normal University (Social Sciences)* (01), 97-103.

[45] Zhu, X, & Ma, W. (2014). Analysis on the Needs of Learners in Curriculum Setting——Based on the Research of College Public English Course. *Foreign Language World* (06), 48-56.

Kexin Xu is currently an undergraduate majoring in English translation at Tianjin Foreign Studies University. His research interests include applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and curriculum design. Email: xukexinlq@outlook.com

A Constraint-based Analysis of Obligatory Contour Principle in Anaang Morphological Constructions

Unwana Akpabio
Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Olusanmi Babarinde
Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

George Iloene
Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Abstract—**The obligatory contour principle forbids identical consecutive features in the underlying representation. This work undertakes a description of the Anaang tonal structure, the tonal behaviour of compounds and reduplicates in the language, bearing in mind their sensitivity to the OCP and the environments that trigger the adherence. An adapted Ibadan wordlist of 400 Basic Items (Trial) English version was used via interview for data collection from six men and six women within Abak Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State. The data were analysed using optimality theoretical framework. The analysis shows that Anaang compounds as well as reduplicates exhibit cases of tonal modifications in line with OCP. For compounds, the tone of the second noun changes depending on the tonal sequence. In the HH noun base, the second-high tone of the second noun changes to a low tone, in the LH noun base, the tone of the second noun is raised to a down-stepped high tone, the LL noun base sees the tone of the second noun being raised to a high tone. For reduplication, the tone of the L verb base changes when the reduplication is partial. When the reduplication is complete, the high tone of the second noun is down-stepped.**

Index Terms—**Annang language, obligatory contour principle, compounds, reduplicates, tone**

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of language has proven that language is one of the most versatile areas of human research, yet one cannot say that linguistic researches are enough as there are countless languages that little or nothing have been done in and on them. Also, new areas of concerns and interests such as the Obligatory Contour Principle henceforth (OCP), a concept that is applied at different levels of linguistics has been ongoing. In autosegmental phonology, Leben (1973) pioneered a principle to forbid two identical tones from being adjacent at the tonal level in the analysis of Tiv verbal systems. He was of the opinion that a sequence of tones such as a High High Low (HHL) is impossible in the language since the principle rules it out. Goldsmith (1976) calls this phenomenon the "Obligatory Contour Principle" and states thus: at the tonal level of the grammar, any two adjacent tones must be distinct. Therefore, HHL is not an impossible tone pattern, it automatically simplifies to HL. The status of OCP has been debated in autosegmental phonology and Goldsmith (1995) concludes that because the OCP is a 'soft' universal principle, the problem of the universality of OCP is not resolved within the framework of autosegmental phonology. Oostendorp (2005) had made a typological study of the OCP in features and examined the OCP in autosegmental phonology. He discussed OCP in optimality theory (OT). In OT, the case of the universality of the OCP constraint as a property of UG which is so central to autosegmental phonology is not a problem within the OT framework. According to him, this is because OT allows for constraint violation, therefore the OCP will be expected to be achieved when it is ranked highly enough to be respected, while it will be violated when it is ranked lower than some other constraints that must be satisfied. The OCP can be studied at different levels: segmental, featural, or suprasegmental.

Tone which is the use of pitch to distinguish the meaning of words is used in some 70% of the world's language (Yip, 2006). It is controlled by the larynx. Language may contrast at least four level tones, and at least two different rises and falls which are high ['], low (`) high low (^), low high (ᵛ). In phonology, tone operates at a different level independent of the segments of the word, showing remarkable mobility and stability under segmental selection. Rising and falling tones are not indivisible but arise when two different level tones appear on the same syllable. Conversely, one tone can spread over several syllables, creating a tonal plateau.

Udoh, (2012) states that the Anaang language is a member of the Lower Niger Congo language. It belongs to the (New) Benue Congo subfamily of the Niger Congo phylum. This research work intends to look at the tonal behaviour

of two morphological constructions namely: compounds and reduplication and to identify the phonological environment that triggers its sensitivity in the language.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research design is qualitative. The purposive sampling method was employed. Twelve aged native speakers who reside permanently in the Anaang speech community were sampled. Data were collected through structured interview and carefully analysed using the tenets of optimality theory.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. SPE Generative Phonology

The grammar of a language is an explicit theory of the intrinsic linguistic ability of the ideal speaker-hearer of that language. This grammar must generate the infinite number of well-formed sentences and must assign a structural description of such sentence. Generative phonology (GP henceforth) is a theory of phonology within the framework of generative grammar. The tenets of this approach were made prominent in Chomsky and Halle's (1968) *The Sound Pattern of English* (SPE). Generative phonology is concerned with principles that guide the pronunciation of words, segments, phrases and even sentences and how they are derived from more general principles, which are operative in all languages. Mainly, the suppositions of generative phonology are that:

    a. phonological structure portrays the linguistic competence of the individual native speaker to work out a phonetic representation for the possible infinite number of sentences which can be generated through the syntactic component of the grammar of the language; and

    b. this competence can be scientifically investigated.

The weaknesses of generative phonology lie in its linearity condition where sound segments are sequentially treated, one after the other. As a result of this, suprasegments which cannot be separated from the segments in utterances are not accounted for in generative phonology of SPE.

B. Lexical Phonology

Lexical phonology developed by K.P. Mohanan and P. Kiparsky in the early 1980s is most similar to classical generative phonology (Udema, 2004). In this theory, the lexicon plays a key role and that characterises a significant departure from classical models. Lexical phonology is an approach that accounts for the interactions of morphology and phonology in the word-building process and the approach is based on the insight that much of the phonology operates together with the word formation rules in a cyclic fashion to define the class of lexical items in a language. Word-formation rules relate to the formation of words. These rules then combine morphemes to create new words and they are also called morphological rules.

Udema (2004) explains that the term lexicon simply means 'dictionary', but in the linguistic perspective the lexicon also represents information about pronunciation, meaning, morphological and syntactic properties so that it could be called a 'mental lexicon'. Moreover, in lexical phonology, the lexicon is considered as being more than just an appendix to the grammar, containing unpredictable idiosyncratic phonological, grammatical, semantic and lexical information about morphemes and lexical items. Prior to the development of lexical phonology, another theory was trending in the study of linguistics called generative phonology.

C. Autosegmental Phonological Theory

Autosegmental phonology is a 'nonlinear' or multi-tiered approach to phonological analysis. Rather than restricting an analysis to a single linear representation and being unable to effectively force suprasegmental phenomena, such as tone, onto a given segment's representations, Goldsmith proposes that linguistic data are more effectively analysed as parallel sequences in which one tier represents suprasegmental data (e.g. tone). These tiers are tied together by means of association lines. The key concepts of the theory according to Goldsmith include '*segment, feature, rule, and association*'. The theory includes a well-formedness condition that applies to derivations which writes, adds or deletes "association lines at any point throughout the derivation".

The basic assumption of autosegmental phonology is that phonological features or units whose relationship "is merely one of simultaneity in time" can be separated into different levels, also called tiers, and their relationship indicated by association lines. Autosegmental phonology was originally developed to describe the behaviour of tone, but it was also found to be useful in describing other phonological phenomena, such as vowel harmony. Since the initial development of autosegmental phonology forty years ago, the theory has been used almost exclusively to describe the behaviour of tone in language.

**Interaction of some basic properties assumed in autosegmental phonology**

(i). Assimilation as spreading: Hyman (2013) states that, whether concerning tone, vowel harmony or other processes, assimilation is captured by spreading a feature from one anchor to another, represented by a clashed association link. This goes against the earlier view represented by SPE (Chomsky & Halle 1968) where assimilation was expressed through feature copying, as seen in below:

1.   a. X X   b.   X X   c. X   X
                   | / | | |
                   | / | | |
                  [+f]   [+F]   [+F]   [+F]
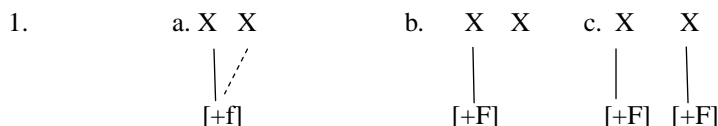
(ii). No Line Crossing: Goldsmith (1976a, b) has it that a second property concerns the prohibition against association lines crossing each other. Hyman, (2015) mentions that this view by Goldsmith has been critically evaluated by Coleman & Local (1991) that most practicing phonologists continued to assume that assimilation by spreading could not produce representations.

(2)   X₁   X₂   X₃
                                           | |- - -
                                           | - - |
                                          [+F]   [+F]
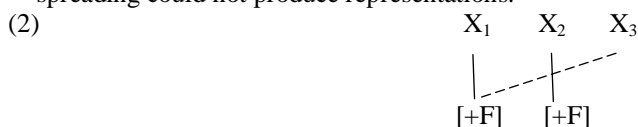
(iii). A branching element: a succession of two identically linked elements. The third property made possible by autosegmental phonology was the distinction between the representations, Hyman (2013).

(3) a   X   X   b)   X   X
                   \   / | |
                    \   / | |
                    [+F]   [+F]   [+F]
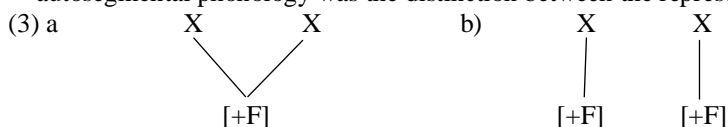
D. Optimality Theory

In contrast to autosegmental phonology, OT is not primarily a theory of representations, but a theory of how well-formedness conditions on how representations interact to account for phonological processes (Downing, 2009). An optimality grammar can be thought of as a function that maps underlying forms to surface forms. The emergence of optimality theory has introduced new ways of thinking about these fundamental issues in phonology and syntax. OT consists of some basic elements; a generator (Gen) which generates or manipulates the actual linguistic form to produce a number of forms which serves as inputs, but it is not deterministic of individual languages but that of the typological space of all-natural languages. Whichever structure is selected as the output of a particular grammar is determined by the relative strength of very general but violable constraints external to GEN, given the language particular constraints strengths. Two different kinds of constraints are identified by McCathy, (2007:1);

    i.   processes can be blocked by input constraints.
    ii. process can be triggered by output constraints.

Despite the fact that blocking and triggering relationships between the processes and output constraints are easy to grasp, it is not obvious how to express these relationships formally in linguistic theory. McCarthy, (2007) avers that this is in fact, the point where phonological and syntactic theory diverged.

The fundamentals of Optimality Theory

McCarthy (2007) outlines some questions OT seeks to answer and their answers as well.

    i.   How are constraints on the output of the grammar satisfied?
    ii. What is the relationship between constraints on output structures and the operations that transform inputs into outputs?
    iii. How are triggering and blocking effects accounted for?
    iv. What is the relationship between the universal and the language-particular constraints?
    v. How can constraints differ in their activity from language to language? (p. 4).

The answers to these questions, according to McCarthy (2007) follow directly from the fundamental properties of OT.

- OT places severe limits on the abstractness of phonological analyses. In classic OT, there are only two levels of representation; the input and output. This contrasts with pre-OT derivational theories, which placed no limit on the number of intervening levels.

- A set of *faithfulness* constraints evaluates the identity of inputs and outputs.

- Differences between input and output must be motivated by higher ranked *markedness constraints.*

- Predictable input features cannot be underspecified in OT; instead, all forms of output predictability must be expressed as markedness constraints. Only unpredictable and/or invariant features of the input can be inflexibly specified. For these reasons, the relationship between inputs and outputs is necessarily more transparent in OT than was required in derivational theories constraints.

- OT also places severe limits on the arbitrariness of phonological processes. Processes are motivated by markedness constraints: testable, cross-linguistically valid hypotheses about output well-formedness. Because faithfulness constraints penalise changes between the input and the output, and markedness constraints are the only motivation for changes.

- OT makes the strong claim that phonological processes should result in improvements in output well-formedness.

- The role of morphology in conditioning phonological processes has also become more prominent and explicit.
- Prosody-morphology alignment constraints play an important role in OT analyses of prosodic morphology processes like infixation and reduplication and prosodic phonology processes like featural affixation.
- A principle of OT which makes the theory of particular interest to comparative linguists is the proposal that OT analyses yield testable factorial typologies. What is meant by this is that a language–particular grammar consists of a ranked set of universal constraints. Re-ranking the constraints developed to account for any specific language yields a set of alternative grammars which should, in fact, define a typology of existing grammars for other languages. Alternative cross-linguistic or cross-dialectal outputs for identical inputs should also be analysable by re-ranking a shared set of constraints. Factorial typologies derived by constraint re-ranking are then, intended to be not only a way of testing particular OT analyses, but also provide a way of formalising the range of possible cross-linguistic variation for a particular process.
- Finally, even though OT is not a theory of representations, we do find innovations in the representation of tone which are most sensibly implemented in OT, as Leben (2006) points out. It has also led to innovations in the representation of vowel harmony and reduplicative morphemes (Downing, 2009).

IV. Tone

Tone languages are defined by Hyman (2001) as languages in which an indication of pitch enters into lexical realisation of at least some morphemes. This infers that tone may be part of the lexical information of words themselves but that it can also carry information on other levels of linguistic analysis, including phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics (YIP, 2002, p. 12). The functions of tone are generally subdivided into lexical and grammatical functions. Lexical tones refer to pitch differences that distinguish the meanings of lexical items from one another. This makes tone a crucial part of the lexical representation (YIP, 2002). Morphological tone is described as tone that in itself carries a measure of independent meaning. Taking this line of thought further, syntactic tone can be seen as pitch patterns that carry a measure of independent functions when it indicates for example syntactic functions or syntactic boundaries. Pragmatic tone can be seen as tone that might distinguish statements from questions (see Salffner, 2009).

The Obligatory Contour Principle

The obligatory contour principle is a phonological concept that states that consecutive identical tones are banned in underlying representations. Two adjacent tones must be distinct. While OCP allows tonal structures like 'H', 'HL', 'L', 'LH', 'LHL', etc., depending on the syllable structure of the language in question, it disallows structures like 'HH', or HLHLLH'. Therefore, in a situation where vowels in one word are pronounced at the same pitch there is only one way out: these vowels are linked to the same tone.

Oostendorp (2005) in his manuscript entitled *Obligatory contour principle* gives an OCP related rule in some Bantu languages which is called Meeussen's Rule (named after The Belgian Bantuist Achilles Emile Meeussen, (1912-1978). This rule can be illustrated by the following example from Kirundi.

1 a. n á-rá-zì-bá rì ì rà
    (I-PAST-them-to sew)
    'I was sewing them'
  b. n à-r á-b ár ìr à
    (I-PAST-to sew)
    'I was sewing'

In (1a), the high-toned tense marker *rá* and the stem *b ár ìrà*, which also starts with a high tone, are separated by a low tone agreement marker '*zi*'. Nothing happens here; we may assume that this form represents the underlying state of affairs quite faithfully. In (1b), on the other hand, the tense marker '*ra*' and the stem '*barii*' are adjacent. As a result of this, the second-high tone has to go. Oostendorp boldly avers that it is quite obvious that Meeussen's Rule is an OCP effect: two high tones which are adjacent are not allowed. The way to solve the OCP problem here as he continues is to turn one of the two 'bad' tones into a good tone, giving an alternation of high and low tones.

V. Data Presentation and Analysis

A. Anaang Tonal Structure

Anaang has both register and contour tones. It displays five tonal structures viz, the high register tone {H}, the low register tone, {L}, the rising and falling contour tone {HL}, the falling and rising contour tone {LH} and the downstep high tone {!H}.

the high tone
The high register tone in Anaang can be seen in deferent syllable patterns. Let us consider the following;
2 a. /tád/ 'unlock'
  b. /dád/ ' take'
the low tone
3 a. /nìm/ 'keep'

   b. /bɔ̀/   ' take'
the rising and falling contour tone
4 a. /kâ/   'go'
   b. /àŋwêŋwèn/   'black'
the falling and rising contour tone
5 a. /a̋kpǒ/   ánon- initiate
   b. / íkpɔ̌/   árope used to climb trees
the down-step high tone
6 a. /á!bɔ́ŋ/   ' king'
   b. / ú!bɔ́ŋ/   ' glory'

Out of these five patterns, three are register tones while two are contour tones. The examples below show the high register tone.

   7 a. /tá /   'chew'
   b. /ébód /   'goat'

Looking at the data presented above from (7a&b), we observe that the high register tone can be found in all syllable types, that is, both the light and the heavy syllables.

The following exemplifies the low register tone;
8 a. /tèm/   'cook'
   b. /èkpàd/ 'bag'

The examples above show that the low tone is found in monosyllabic words as well as disyllabic and trisyllabic words and even more.

The rising and falling contour tone is illustrated thus;
   9 a. /ka /   'go'
   b. /àŋweŋwen/ 'black'

Let us consider the falling and rising tone instances below;
10 a. /a̋kpo/   ánon- initiate
   b. /íkpo/   árope used in climbing trees
The falling and rising contour tone appears on monosyllabic and disyllabic words.

Examples from the downstep tones are seen below;
11a. /ŋ́k!eéŋ / 'dregs'
   b. /ú!bɔ́ŋ/   'glory'

The downstep high tone is a unique feature of the Anaang tonal structure because not all tone languages have the downstep. In Anaang, a high tone is lowered slightly so that the second-high tone is not as high as the first one and not too low to become a low tone. This tone is seen in disyllabic words only as seen in the examples above.

B. Morphological Constructions in Anaang

1. compounds

This morphological process is very productive in Anaang as it is used to form lots of new words. The combination in compounding can be that of noun + noun, verb + noun, noun + verb, noun + adjective, noun + adverb etc. It is worthy of mention that the derived words may be endocentric or exocentric. In endocentric compounds, meanings are derived from the meaning of the individual words combined to form it. Consider;

12 a. /íkpá/   +   / úkót/   ⟶   /íkpáukòt/
       N   N   N
       'leather'   'leg'   'shoe'
   b. /ŋ́wɔ́ɔ́ŋ /   +   /ájét/   ⟹   /ŋ́wɔ́ɔ́ŋájèd/
       N   N   N
       'water'   'cry'   'tears'

According to Bloomfield (1933), Williams (1981), Selkirk (1982) Spencer (1991), Lieber (2010), an endocentric compound's meaning is easily derivable from its head, therefore a word like *ŋ́wɔ́ɔ́ŋ* 'water' is easily known by the language users since the head *ájét* 'cry' has a great contribution to the whole meaning of the newly formed word. Let us now consider another set of compounds known as exocentric.

13a. /ínuà/   +   /èkpàd/   ⟶ /ínuàèkpàd/
      'Mouth'   ' bag '   'talkative'
   b. /àʧɔ́p/   +   /íʧàŋ/   ⟶ / àʧɔ́ßíʧàŋ/
      'Fast'   ' movement'   ' prostitute'
   c. /ìlíp/   +   /énàŋ/ ⟶ /ílìßénàn/
      'Belly'   'cow'   ' glutton'

Exocentric compounds as observed by Katamba (1993) are those whose meanings are opaque that are quite different from their respective heads and Lieber readily observes that this kind of compounds are less attested compared to its endocentric counterpart. Let us consider the compound word */àʧɔ́ßíʧàŋ/* 'prostitute' one especially (those who do not have the language in question as their first language) would not readily know that the word is referring to a 'prostitute'

since its parts /àʧɔ́p/ 'one who moves fast' and '/íʧàŋ/ movement' do not have any bearing as regards the word 'prostitute,' also linking 'bag' èkpàd' and 'mouth' ínuà in view of the word *talkative* is quite opaque. Exocentric compounds are often used to relate derogatory circumstances. Therefore, to some extent, they are euphemistic because *àʧɔ́ßiʧàŋ* is lighter than 'àpàrà for *prostitute*.

However, some word classes that can be compounded. Based on our data, we discovered that Anaang compound words can have N + N combination to form an N as in;

14a. /àkpó/   +   /ébód/   ⟶   /àkpóébòd/
        'Male'   'goat'   'he-goat'
         N   N   N

   b. /ìtóŋ/   +   /úbɔ́k/   ⟶   /ítóŋúbɔ̀k/
        'Neck'   'hand'   'wrist'
         N   N   N

We can also have such combinations as V + N as seen in the following examples:

   c. /bɔ̀/   /úfèn/   ⟶   /bɔ̀úfèn/
        'Take'   'punishment'   'suffer'
         V   N

   d. /tɔ́k/   +   /ŋ́kúm/   ⟶   /tɔ́kŋ́kúm/
        'Urinate'   'urine'   'urinate'
         V   N   V

Adjectives can also combine with nouns to form new words as the following examples show

   e. /ŋʧɔ́ŋ/   +   /íɪ́em/   ⟶   /ŋʧɔ́ŋílèm/
        'Strong'   'body'   'healthy'
         Adj.   N   Adj

   f. /ínném/   +   /éʧìd/   ⟶   /innèmeʧìd/
        'Sweet'   'heart'   'happiness'
         Adj   N   N

Examples above show that only content words are used in Anaang compounds.

2. Tone in compounds

It is observable from the examples above that OCP is prevalent. It manifests in the N2 of the compound; the first set of the base changes from HH to HL. Here the change in the contiguous tone is manifested in the last tone of the compound word – that is, its environment. The following examples demonstrate our claims.

15a. /áwó/   +   /ékɔ́ŋ/   ⟶   /áwóékɔ̀ŋ/
        'person '   'army/war'   'soldier '

   b. /íké/   +   /ékpó/   ⟶   /íkéékpò/
        'hemp'   'ghosst'   'marijuana'

   c. /ńnɔ́ŋ/   +   /ító/   ⟶   /ńnɔ́ŋítò/
        'maggot'   'toilet'   'toilet maggot'

The data above show four tone-bearing words and it is observed that OCP lowers the last tone of the second compound thereby making it a low tone.

a. The HL-LL sequence

Though OCP in Anaang is mostly manifested on the N2 but there are exemptions in which, for instance, the first tone is affected. There are also cases where the second or third tone is affected. In the above-mentioned sequence, that is, the HL – LL sequence, the LL sequence changes to an HL. Consider the following examples;

       HL   +   LL   HL HL
17a. /úfɔ́k/   +   /ǹwèd/   ⟶   /úfɔ̀kńwèd/
        'house'   'book'   'school'

   b. /ífiɔ̀k/   +   /ǹwèd/   ⟶   /ífiɔ̀kńwèd/
        'wisdom'   'book'   'intelligence'

   c. /úfɔ́k/   +   /àkàm/   ⟶   /úfɔ̀kákàm/
        'house'   'prayer'   'prayer house'

Examples given above demonstrate the rising of a low tone to a high tone. Tableau 1 below shows how this is made possible:

TABLEAU 1

	úfɔ̀k – ákàm	OCP_ N2 TI	IDENT-10(S)	IDENT-10(Tone)
a.	ùfòk – áɪàm		*	*!
b.	úfɔ̀k – àkàm	*!		*
c.	úfɔ̀k – àkám			*!
d.	☞ufɔ̀k – ákàm			*
e.	úfɔ̀k – àkám	*!		**

Clearly the optimal candidate from tableau 1 is (d) because it violated only once. Constraints are arranged across the top of the tableau in a hierarchy of decreasing importance from left to right. It did not also violate the highest ranked constraints. OCP-N2T1 simply says, assign a violation sign if the candidate fails to change its tone from low to high. The optimal candidate, that is, the well-formed compound in Anaang for this set is (d). Having considered cases and environment of OCP in compounds, let us now examine the environment of OCP in reduplicates.

b. The RED-base

Anaang manifests OCP in reduplication when the base has a low tone. The reduplicated form changes from a low tone to a low-high tone. Consider the following:

	L		LHL
18 a.	/mùm/	→	/mùúmùm/
	'hold'		'just hold'
b.	/dùd/	→	/dùúdùd/
	'drag'		'drag (emphatic)'
c.	mèn/	→	/mèémèn/
	'give birth'		'give birth instead'

The data presented explicate the workings of OCP in Anaang reduplicates. The constraint that allows or denies this environment is given thus;

TABLEAU 2

	RED – mèn	LH← L (RED)	*σN	NO CODA
a.	☞mèé-mèn			*
b.	mèè-mèn	*!		*
c.	méè-mén	*!		*
d.	mén-mèn	*!		*
e.	mê-mén	*!	*	*

The optimal candidate for this competition is candidate (a) since it did not violate the highest ranked constraint. All others were knocked out for fatal violation. Anaang partial reduplicates of monosyllabic words with low tones exemplifies neatly for OCP.

3. Sensitivity of Anaang compounds to the OCP

a. The H.H base

Considering the sensitivity of OCP in Anaang compounds, we have seen the change from a HH sequence to a HL sequence in the second noun of the compound. Consider the following examples

	H		H		HH HL
19a.	/ákpá/	+	/ŋwɔɔŋ/	→	/ákpáŋwɔɔ̀ŋ/
	'body'		'water'		'ocean'
b.	/íkpá/	+	/úkód/	→	/íkpáúkòd/
	'skin'		'leg'		'shoe'
c.	/íkpá/	+	/ítʃin/	→	/íkpáítʃin/
	'leather'		'waist'		'belt'

From examples given above, observe a pattern in the second noun (N2). In the noun *ákpá* 'body' and *ŋwɔɔŋ* 'water', all have high tones but when compounded, the tone of the second noun changes. The tone instead forms a high (H) and Low (L) pattern. The descriptive generalisation we can give here is that in Anaang, during compounding, a HH sequence becomes HL.

The constraint responsible for the alternation is basically a markedness constraint (MCON). The MCON can be stated thus; HH becomes HL (N2 compound). This is read as the HL sequence of the surface form obtained from the HH base in the N2. We generate five candidates that will undergo the constraint test and see the well-formed structure considering OCP. Recall that in all the tableaux used in the analysis, the constraints are ranked in the order of decreasing importance.

TABLEAU 3

	íkpá –úkód	HL←HH (N2 compound)	MAX-10 (s)	IDENT-10(TONE)
A	kpá-úkòt			*!
B	kpá-kòt	*!	*	**
C	kpá–úkót	*!		*
D	íkpá –úkòd	*!		**
E	☞íkpá –úkòd			*

Candidate (e) in Tableau 3 satisfied OCP by turning the consecutive high tone */íkpá/ + /úkód/* to a low tone on the last syllable */íkpáúkòd/*. The CON formed constraints that aid the EVAL to evaluate and bring out (e) as the optimal candidate. The first column had the candidates, followed by the MCON HL← HH (N2 compound) and the FCON-MAX-10(s) and IDENT-10 (tone). The MCON was explained earlier but let us now explain the two others. FCONs. MAX-10(s) means, do not delete the segments of the base while IDENT-10(tone) means that the tones in the output

should be identical with that of the input. Using the three CONs, we are able to arrive at the optimal candidate (e). The HH base is very sensitive to OCP as demonstrated earlier.

b. The LH base

Another interesting work of the OCP is seen in its ability to raise a low tone to a down-step high tone.

$$\begin{array}{cccc} & H & LH & H!H \\ 20\ a. & \text{/íkpá/} & \text{/ə̀ɲɔ́ŋ/} & \longrightarrow & \text{/íkpá!áɲɔ́ŋ/} \\ & \text{'skin'} & \text{'up'} & & \text{'sky'} \end{array}$$

Here, a LH base changed to a H!H (N$_2$ compound). It is very common to have sounds and suprasegments to undergo changes when in connected speech. This is simply what we observed here where a low tone is raised to a down-step high tone. This change can be represented in tableau 4 below.

<center>TABLEAU 4</center>

	Íkpá- áɲɔ́ŋ	LH H!H(N2 compound)	MAX-BR(S)	DEP -10(S)	IDENT-10(TONE)
A	☞íkpá – áɲóñ				*
B	íkpàt - áɲóñ	*!	*	*	*
C	íkpà– àwóñ	*!			**
D	íkpà- áɲóñ	*!			*

The optimal candidate for tableau 4 is (a) because it has not violated the highest ranked constraints {MAX-BR{S}}.

c. The LL base

Words with the LL base are also affected by OCP because we observe that in the course of their undergoing compounding, there are changes in their tonal pattern. The LL sequence changes to a HL pattern. The following examples can suffice for our claims;

$$\begin{array}{cccc} & LL & LL & L\,L\,H\,L \\ 21a. & \text{/èkpàd/} & \text{/ǹwèd/} & \longrightarrow & \text{/èkpàdŋ́wèd/} \\ & \text{'bag'} & \text{'book'} & & \text{'schoolbag'} \\ b. & \text{/ènɔ̀/} & \text{/àwàʃì/} & \longrightarrow & \text{/ènɔ̀áwàʃì/} \\ & \text{'gift'} & \text{'God'} & & \text{'God's gift'} \\ c. & \text{/àwàʃì/} & \text{/ènɔ̀/} & \longrightarrow & \text{/àwàʃiénɔ̀/} \\ & \text{'God'} & \text{'gift'} & & \text{'God the giver '} \end{array}$$

The data above show a situation where all the tone bearing units especially of the N2 carry low tones but during compounding, there is an observable change in such tone from LL to HL. Explaining these changes too using OT, we observe that OCP raises an underlying low tone to a high tone.

<center>TABLEAU 5</center>

	ènɔ̀ - áwàʃì	*LLL(N2 compound)	IDENT-10(tone)	MAX-10(tone)
a	énɔ́ – àwá	*!	*	*
b	☞ènɔ̀ - áwàʃì		*	
c	ènɔ̀ – áwásí		**!	
d	énɔ́ - áwáʃis		**!*	
e	ènɔ̀ – àshì		*!	*

Using McCarthy's way of explaining constraints and violation, he says, assign a violation sign (*) if the candidate fails to meet a certain constraint. Now, considering our tableau 5, the first MCON states that a violation sign should be assigned to any candidate that has an LLL sequence. Candidate (a) violated the constraint. The FCON-IDENT-10 (tone) had many violations. The following FCON – MAX-10 (tone) decided the optimal candidate for the competition, the violation by candidate (e) left candidate (b) the winner of the completion. Therefore, candidate (b) is the acceptable and well-formed compound in the Anaang language. From our analysis of compounds so far, we have seen that they are quite sensitive to OCP.

C. Reduplication in Anaang

Reduplication is yet another fertile process in the Anaang morphology. It is a morphological process whereby the root or stem of a lexeme (or part of it) or even the entire word is repeated or reduplicated exactly or with a slight change. Reduplication is used in inflections to show a grammatical function, such as plurality, intensification etc., and in lexical derivation to create new words (Dutta & Jindal, 2016).

In Anaang, reduplication is used when a speaker adopts a tone more 'serious' or figurative than ordinary speech and is also often, but not exclusively, iconic in meaning, Reduplication in this language can be described phonologically when discussing reduplicated segments (that is, sequence of consonants/vowels) or reduplicated prosodic units (syllables or moras). In addition to the phonological description, it is often described morphologically as a reduplication of linguistic constituents (i.e. words, stems, roots). The base is the word (or part of the word) that is to be copied, the reduplicated as RED. Reduplicated form is repeated only once as seen in table 1 below.

TABLE 1

Verb Base	Reduplication
/fómmóʼ/ 'slice'	/foófómmóʼ/ 'just slice'
/kɛ́rɛ́ʼ/ 'think'	/kekɛ́rɛ́ʼ/ 'think' (emphatic)
/tɛ́yɛ́ʼ/ 'remember'	/teɛ́iɛ́yɛ́ʼ/ 'just remember'
/támmáʼ/ 'jump'	/taátámmáʼ/ 'jump'
/lɔ́kɔ́/ 'tell'	/lɔ́ɔ́lɔ́kɔ́/ 'tell' (emphatic)

Considering the data from table 1, we observe that the base of the RED is verb. We observe from our data that verbs undergo partial reduplication compared to their noun counterpart. Again, from the table we could see that there is lengthening which points to the fact that Anaang is interested in a heavy syllable than the light syllable. It is important also to note that not all the reduplicates conform to the OCP constraint on tone while others do. Adjectives in Anaang also undergo a partial reduplication as demonstrated thus;

TABLE 2

Adjective	Reduplication
/làd/ 'be red'	/làálàd/ 'be red' (emphatic)
/ɲɔ́ŋ/ 'be long'	/ɲɔ́ɔ́ɲɔ́ŋ/ 'be long' (emphatic)
/tʃád/ 'be dry'	/tʃáátʃád/ 'be dry' (emphatic)
/mèm/ 'be soft'	/mèémèm/ 'be soft' (emphatic)

As observed earlier, adjectives tend to reduplicate partially. There are of course cases of complete reduplication. Though, Udoh (2010) argues otherwise. He opines that since there is a slight or glaring difference in the tone of the reduplicate, then it should not be called complete. When the complete form of all the segments is copied, it is a complete reduplication. Nouns fall into this category.

TABLE 3

NOUN	REDUPLICATION
/úwiák/ 'pain'	/úwiák!úwiák/ 'full of pain'
/átú/ 'heap'	/átú!átú/ 'full of heaps'
/ítʃó/ 'face'	/ítʃó!ítʃó/ 'just the face'
/ɛ̀bód/ 'goat'	/ébɔ́ɾ!ɪ́ébód/ 'full of goats/foolishness'

Table 3 shows copying of all the segments of the base to that of the reduplicated form. As noticed also from the data, we see that the first high tone of the second morpheme is down-step, hence the sign (!). This process seems to cut across the complete reduplication and holds well for our concept of OCP. Having looked at some of the morphological constructions in Anaang, let us now consider the applicability of OCP in Anaang.

1. Sensitivity of Anaang reduplicates to the OCP

a. *the L-base in reduplication*

There are observable cases of OCP in Anaang reduplication. This is because the reduplicated form has a change in its suprasegment (tone), a reason Udoh (2012) argues that there is no complete reduplication since the reduplicated does not copy everything exactly. The L-base in the reduplicated form refers to as reduplication with the low-tone base in partial reduplication. In these set of constructions, the last tone of the RED is dissimilar with the initial tone of the base. Also, the H base in total reduplication confirms our claim. Consider the following examples:

22 a. /kɔ̀ŋ/ 'knock' /kɔɔ́kɔ́ŋ/ 'a command to knock'
   b. /kàk/ 'bury' /kàá-kàk/ 'a command to bury'
   c. /boòd/ 'hatch/peel /bòóbòd/ 'just peel/hatch'

The constraint that allows for this form would be;

TABLEAU 6

	RED - kàk	*LRED	MAX-10(S)	IDENT-10(tone)	*ØN	NOCODA
a.	kàk - kàk	*!				**
b.	kà– kák	*!		*	*	*
c.	☞kàá-kàk					*
d.	kàá– kà		*!		*	
e.	kàá– kák					*!

Considering the data in tableau 6, we formulate our MCON as * LRED syntactically defined as, anywhere a RED has only a low tone, the violation mark should be assigned. That is why candidates (a) and (b) lost out early in the competition. Our *ØN (NO mono moraic syllable is important because the RED has to have more than a mora to be able to carry the LH contour. The optimal candidate for this competition is candidate (c) because it satisfies or has not violated the higher ranked constraints though it violated the NOCODA CON, it still emerged the winner. The violation of the NOCODA CON by the optimal candidate shows that the NOCODA CON is not too important to the language compared to other CONs in the tableau. This of course is why it is least ranked in the tableau. If for instance the NOCODA CON was ranked higher, then our optimal candidate may not have emerged the winner.

VI. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

From the data analysed, Anaang can be classified as having register and contour tones; the high tone, the low tone, the rising and falling tone, the falling and rising and the down-stepped high tone. The high register tone is seen in all syllable types, that is, both the light and the heavy syllables. The low register tone too can be seen in monosyllabic, disyllabic, trisyllabic words and even more. There is also the rising and falling contour tone that appears on words with one or more syllables. A special feature in Anaang tone is the down-step high tone, a feature the language shares with Ibibio. This happens when one of the tones of a disyllabic word is down-stepped but not to the extent of becoming a low tone. Here, the first tone is the one that is lowered. The down-stepped high tone is represented using an exclamation mark.

Furthermore, Anaang compounds are sensitive to the OCP, nevertheless, the concept works differently in the language. From literature, OCP states that, two identical adjacent tones are not allowed at the morpheme boundary, in our case, it is mostly the second tone of the second morpheme that changes;

> HH   HH   HH HL
>
> 23. /íbɔ́k/   +   /ídáp/ → /íbɔ́Rídàp/
>
>   'drug'   'sleep'   'sleeping pill'

Though, we still have a case where the first tone of the second word changes;

> LL   LL   LLHL
>
> 24. /èlèm/   +   /èsà/ = /èlèmésà/
>
>   'Back'   'yard'   'backyard

The foregoing corroborates Oostendorp (2005) that gives an instance where OCP works differently in some Bantu languages. This lowering of tones is seen in Anaang in tonal structures like; the HH base, the LH base, the LL base, all in compounds. Therefore, we can say that this is an instance of OCP in the Anaang language.

Concerning the sensitivity of reduplication to the OCP in Anaang, we found out that it is attested in both total and partial reduplication. For partial reduplication, OCP is observed when the tone of the base is low while in total reduplication, OCP occurs when the base has a high tone as shown below;

> 25. a   /mèn/   'swalllow'   /méémèn/   'just swallow'
>
>   b.   /kùk/   çlose'   /kùúkùk/   çlose'(emphatic)

We also have cases where the OCP is not attested during reduplication in Anaang for both complete and partial reduplication. It is important to note that when the tone of the base is high in disyllabic words during partial reduplication, OCP is absent. See below;

> 26 a. /támmá/   'jump'   /táátámmá/   'jump (emphatic)
>
>   b. /fóómmó/   'slice'   /fóófómmó/   'just slice'

This also holds true for complete reduplicates of disyllabic words;

> 27 a. /ǹnàn/   'blind'   /ńnànǹnàn/   'blindly'
>
>   b. /ǹsia/   íntestine'   /ǹsiaǹsia/   'full of intestines'

As we have seen immediately above in 27a, OCP is seen in the first tone of the second word and in the second tone of the second word in compounds as exemplified above. For reduplication, OCP is prevalent in partial and total reduplication. In partial reduplication, the tone of the base must be low while in total reduplication the tone of the base must be high. In a nutshell, OCP is a very unique feature of the Anaang language because tones in the language are modified depending on the environment they occur especially when they occur at post-lexical constructions.

REFERENCES

[1] Chomsky, N. & Halle, M. (1968). The sound pattern of English. New York: Harper & Row.

[2] Dutta, K. & Jindal, A. (2016). System for Identification and Analysis of Reduplication Words in Hindi Corpus. *International Journal of New Technology and Research (IJNTR)*, 2(4), 18-21.

[3] Downing, L. (2009). On pitch lowering not linked to voicing: Nguni and Shona group depressor. *Language Sciences*, 31, 179-198.

[4] Goldsmith, J. (1976a). Autosegmental phonology. Ph.D thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

[5] Goldsmith, J. (1976b). An overview of autosegmental phonology. *Linguistic Analysis*, 2, 23- 68.

[6] Goldsmith, J. (1995). Autosemental and metrical phonology. Oxford: Basic Blackwell.

[7] Hyman, L. (2001). Tone systems. In M. Haspelmath et al. (Eds.), *Language typology and language universals: An international handbook.* New York: Walter de Grutyer.

[8] Hyman, L. (2013). African languages & phonological theory. Bekerley: University of California.

[9] Hyman, L. (2015). How autosegmental is phonology? UC Berkeley Phonology Annual Report.

[10] Katamba, F. (1993). Morphology. London: The Macmilan Press Ltd.

[11] Leben, W. (1973). Suprasegmental phonology. PhD thesis, MIT, Massachusetts.

[12] Lieber, R. (2006). Introducing morphology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[13] McCarthy, J. (2007). What is optimality theory? Faculty Publication Series 93, University of Massachusetts – Amherst.

[14] McCarthy, J. (2009). OCP effects: Gemmination and antigemmination. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 17, 207- 263.

[15] Oostendorp, M. (2005). Obligatory contour principle. Unpublished manuscript.

[16] Prince, A. & Smolensky, P. (1993). Optimality theory: Constraint interaction in generative grammar. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press

[17] Salffner, S. (2009). Tone in the phonology, lexicon and grammar of Ikaar. Ph.D thesis, University of London.

[18] Selkirk, E. (1982). The syntax of words. Linguistic Inquiry Monograph Seven.

[19] Spencer, A. (1991). Morphological theory: An introduction to word structure in generative grammar. Oxford & Cambridge: Basil Blackwell.

[20] Udoh, I. (2010). Vowel deletion in Anaang. *Journal of Humanities*, 5, 36-51.

[21] Udoh, I. (2012). Anaang phonology: A descriptive sketch. Germany: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.

[22] Yip, M. (2002). Tone. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[23] Yip, M. (2006). Tone Phonology. Encyclopedia of Language & Linguistics.

Akpabio, Unwana Akpabio was born on 6th September, 1989 in Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. She had her B.A (Hons.) Degree in Linguistics at the University of Uyo in Nigeria, and M. A Degree in Linguistics, with specialty in phonetics and phonology, at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 2020. She is looking forward to enrolling for doctoral programme in Linguistics. Unwana is married with children. She loves reading.

Olusanmi Babarinde was born in Gbongan Osun State on 22nd May, 1974. He had his Bachelor of Arts Degree at the University of Ilorin. He obtained M.A and PhD degrees in Linguistics at the University of Nigeria in 2006 and 2012 respectively. His area of specialization is phonology, morphology, and language documentation. He is a postdoctoral student in the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria Nsukka. He has a number of scholarly publications to his credit. These include "Computer-assisted language instruction and language learning: Evidence from the English-learning Yoruba talking books 1-5**.** *Language Matters: Studies in the Languages of Africa.* 50(2), 100-111"; "Theme, diction and prosodic systems in Yoruba lullabies. *International Research in Children's Literature,* 12(1). 18–33"; A constraint-based analysis of morphological processes in the Ibibio language. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 11(2), 242-251.

His professional associations include Linguistic Association of Nigeria, Association for the Promotion of Yoruba Language and Culture, and Modern Language Association of Nigeria.

George Okedinachi Iloene is a Senior Lecturer in Linguistics at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He taught Linguistics and Igbo Language at Ebonyi State University Abakaliki, Nigeria from 2004 to 2015 before joining the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. His main research interests are phonetics, phonology and Igbo Language. He also has bias for the various interfaces of phonetics and phonology in the Igbo Language. He has published in reputable journals and contributed book chapters both at home and abroad. George Iloene is a Fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies and a three-time attendee of the highly competitive bi-annual African Linguistics School in 2009, 2011 and 2014 that held in Ghana, Benin Republic and Nigeria respectively. He is currently the editor of *Nsukka Journal of Language and Literature (NJALL)* of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The Use of Interactional Metadiscourse Markers in English Book Reviews Across Disciplines

Neda Zal

Department of Foreign Languages, University of Kashan, Iran

Mohammad Raouf Moini

Department of Foreign Languages, University of Kashan, Iran

Abstract—The study aimed to investigate the frequency and type of stance and engagement features in each move of book reviews of soft and hard disciplines according to Hyland's (2005) Interactional Metadiscourse taxonomy. A corpus of 102 book reviews published by 30 first quality journals in 6 disciplines was randomly selected and analyzed. The results indicated a significant difference between book reviews in terms of stance markers. Furthermore, Move 2 (Outlining) enjoyed the highest frequency of stance features, while move 4 (Evaluation) contained the least frequency of stance features. Also, a significant difference was observed in the use of stance markers in Introducing, Outlining, and Highlighting. However, using engagement markers, the significant difference was only in the highlighting.

Index Terms—engagement, hard discipline, metadiscourse, interactional metadiscourse, soft discipline, stance

I. INTRODUCTION

Categorization of communicative acts according to their form and function is referred to as genre analysis in linguistics. Various definitions have been presented in the area of applied linguistics for genre. According to Miller (1994), genre is a rhetorical action that is based on rhetorical practice. Swales (1990) states that genre is "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (p. 58). Hyland (2008) claims that genre is "a term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations"; he further claimed that genre originates from the idea that "members of a community usually have little difficulty in recognizing similarities in the texts they use frequently" (p. 543). Furthermore, the addressees of an academic text aim to "predict lines of thought, interrogate authors on their positions and evaluate work for its usefulness and importance to their own research" (Hyland, 1994, p. 239). Book review which is considered as a sub-category of academic discourse genre (Hyland, 2004; Hyland & Diani, 2009) aims to give information about new books in a specific field. Besides, this genre aims "to evaluate the scholarly work of a professional peer within the scholar community" (Vande Kopple, p. 40). Jalilifar, Hayati, and Don (2018) believe that among various academic genres, book reviews are functionally different. They include genres with the same content but different goals. As Hyland (2000) stated, the book review is "a site where the interpersonal stakes are much higher" (p. 41). Hyland (2002) stated that:

> Book reviews are more interactively complex than research papers as they don't simply respond to a general body of more-or-less impersonal literature. Instead there is a direct, public, and often critical encounter with a particular text and therefore with its author, who must be considered as a primary audience of the review. While writers of research articles commonly avoid critical references, reviews are centrally evaluative (p. 41).

Ghazanfari, Barani, and Rokhsari (2018) believe that in academic discourse metadiscourse has attracted much attention as a central rhetorical tool that could affect the ability of the members of the academic community to communicate. Metadiscourse, as a rather new approach, has been used in discourse analysis as well as studies in language education to present a framework for a more comprehensive understanding of interactions between writers, readers, and texts (Hyland, 2005a, as cited in Jalilifar, Hayati, & Don, 2018).

The importance of book reviews seems to be overlooked. In addition, mastering writing skill is one of the challenges writers encounter with. When it comes to writing book reviews in English the issue even gets more exacerbated. This is due to the fact that writers are not well informed of the genre of the book reviews and need to be quite aware of this genre and devices helping them to communicate effectively with their readers. In other words, as "the book review process is considered as a face-threatening act, being aware of items such as hedging and boosters can help ameliorate this problem and "attenuate unwelcome effects on the reviewer and makes the criticism more palatable" (Gea Valor, 2000, p.146). Junqueira and Cortes (2014) believe that cross-cultural studies on book reviews are particularly important to inexperienced researchers intend to contribute to the international academic fields. Based on the above, and according to the existing literature, a gap is felt within the area of writing the book reviews, especially of soft and hard disciplines. Yang (2014) believes that "knowledge in the hard science domain tends to be relatively analytical, structured and cumulative to establish empirical uniformities, while the soft science domain emphasizes interpretation,

diversity, and mutual understanding, and also allows for more tolerance on the part of readers" (p.64). In the present study, it was tried to investigate whether there was any significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of stance discourse markers and whether there is any significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of engagement discourse markers.

The present study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of different stance discourse markers?

2. Is there any difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of different engagement discourse markers?

3. Is there any difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of stance markers in different moves of book reviews?

4. Is there any difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of engagement markers in different moves of book reviews?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As one of the main elements of book reviews, metadiscourse has gained much attention during the past few decades (Hyland, 2005a). Metadiscourse is "the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community" (Hyland, 2005a, p.37). Metadiscourse markers are categorized into two groups, namely, interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers. Interactive metadiscourse markers provide the organization of texts and enhance readers' comprehension, while interactional metadiscourse shows the writer's attitude toward readers to construct the text (Hyland, 2005a).

Hyland (2005) has provided a model to justify the interaction between writers and readers. He states that writing aims not only to produce some texts or explain an external reality but also to construct social relations with the readers. Within this model, the interaction in academic writing occurs within two elements, namely, stance and engagement. Stance markers include attitude markers, boosters, hedges, and self-mentions and engagement includes personal asides, reader pronouns, appeal to shared knowledge, and appeals to directives and questions.

A. Stance Features

Hedges: "mark the writer's reluctance to present propositional information categorically" (Hyland 2010, p.129). Hedges are utterances used by the writers to present alternative viewpoints and show commitment to the proposition. Within hedges, information is given as an opinion rather than fact and the writer gives weight to it through words like perhaps, possible, or might.

a. Shield: Shields include all modal verbs which express possibility; adverbs of probability like 'probably, in addition to their derivations; and, verbs which relate to the probability of a proposition or a hypothesis being true like 'to suggest, known as epistemic verbs.

b. Approximate: Approximators like *about, somehow, some, kind of, sort of* are the words which change or give an alternative meaning to a proposition.

c. Expressions: like 'to our knowledge' and 'I believe' which express the authors' doubt are among the expressions.

Boosters are a class of metadiscourse markers which let writers express their level of certainty in what they say. Boosters are words like *clearly, definitely, certainly, should,* and *of course*.

Attitude Markers show the "writer's agreement, frustration, and so on, rather than commitment" (Hyland, 2008, p. 8). Attitude is shown by attitude verbs (e.g. prefer), sentence adverbs (unfortunately), and adjectives (remarkable).

Self-Mention: Self-mention like *I, we, my, me*, and *our* which show affective and interpersonal information (Hyland, 2001).

B. Engagement Markers

Reader pronouns are those markers which lead readers into a discourse like reader pronouns such as *you* and *your*. (Hyland, 2010).

Directives: are defined "as utterances which instruct the reader to perform an action or to see things in a way determined by the writer" (Hyland, 2002a, p.216). Imperatives like *consider* and note are examples of directives.

Personal aside: Hyland (2005b) believes that personal asides as a main reader-oriented strategy "allow writers to address readers directly by briefly interrupting the argument to offer a comment on what has been said" (p.183).

Appeals to shared knowledge: is "the presence of explicit markers where readers are asked to recognize something as familiar or accepted" (Hyland, 2005b, p. 184).

Questions: allow writers "to invoke explicitly the involvement of their readers in the discourse, addressing the perceptions, interests, and needs of a potential audience" (Hyland, 2002b, p. 529).

Despite the importance of book reviews in academia (Hyland, 2000), only in the past decade studies started to be published about their rhetorical patterns and their linguistic features, for example, praise and criticism (Hyland, 2000).

Accordingly, the present paper aimed to investigate the metadiscourse markers in the book reviews published in the field of soft and hard sciences.

C. Empirical Background

A large number of studies have focused on the type and function of metadiscourse resources in different genres, including textbooks (Hyland, 2002), advertisements (Fuertes-Olivera et al., 2001), research papers (Hyland, 2002a, 2005; McGrath & Kuteeva, 2012; Abdollahzadeh, 2011); and book reviews (Tse & Hyland, 2006). Furthermore, to find out some cross-cultural differences, several studies (e.g. Yang, 2013) have investigated the use of metadiscourse markers by speakers of different languages.

Ebrahimi (2018) investigated metadiscourse markers in texts from university books Published in Iran and compared them with books printed in Oxford University Press. It was shown that the texts published by Oxford University Press used more interactive and more interactional resources.

Jalilifar, Hayati, and Don (2018) compared book reviews and blurbs in four disciplines of applied linguistics, literature, history, and psychology. The corpus included 200 books and 4,282 blurbs were investigated. Hyland's (2005a) classification of metadiscourse markers was employed. The results revealed that the frequency and type of metadiscourse markers in blurbs and book reviews are genre -dependent. Metadiscourse markers were greater in the book reviews than in the blurbs.

Salahshoor and Afsari (2017) investigated interactional metadiscourse in natural and social science master theses. Thirty natural and social science master theses in six disciplines were chosen. This study analyzed only the discussion and conclusion sections of five master theses. Hyland's (2005) classification was used. The results showed that the total number of interactional metadiscourse markers in social science master theses was more than natural science master theses. Hedges were the most frequent marker in both corpora while attitude markers in social science and self-mention in natural science were the least favored role.

Gezegin (2016) investigated how interpersonal metadiscourse was used in Turkish and English book reviews. About 150 published book reviews published in English and Turkish were analyzed. Hyland's (2000) metadiscourse model was used. The findings showed that the total number of interpersonal metadiscourse features was higher in the English book reviews compared with those published in Turkish. There were differences in the use of hedges between the two languages.

Junqueira and Cortes (2014) in a study compared interpersonal metadiscourse in book reviews in Brazilian Portuguese and English. Hyland's (2000) metadiscourse framework was employed. The corpus consisted of 180 academic book reviews across two languages, Brazilian Portuguese (BP) and English, in three fields of study, namely, History, Applied Linguistics, and Psychology. All book reviews were published in international academic journals between 2001-2010. The total number of interpersonal metadiscourse features (normalized per 1000 words) was higher in the English corpus than in the BP corpus.

Ghafoori and Oghbatalab (2012) compared the use of metadiscoursal markers between the male and female native English writers. Like previous studies, Hyland's (2005) model was employed to identify the metadiscoursal features. The results revealed no significant difference between English male and female writers' use of metadiscourse. On the other hand, there were significant differences in the distribution of metadiscoursal elements.

Using Hyland's (2005) framework, McGrath & Kuteeva (2012) investigated stance and engagement markers in 25 research articles in the field of mathematics. The results showed a lower frequency of hedges and attitude markers compared to Hyland's (2005a). It was also shown that pure mathematics research articles can apply Hyland's framework.

Atai and Sadr (2008) also studied the use of hedges and boosters in 649 academic article abstracts from eight journals of applied linguistics. Hedges in abstracts published in journals published in English were more frequent than journals published in Chinese and boosters were found to be more in the abstracts of empirical research articles compared with non-empirical academic articles.

Similarly, Faghih and Rahimpor (2009) compared metadiscourse markers in discussion sections of applied linguistics research articles in English and Persian. Both groups used interactive metadiscourse markers more than interactional metadiscourse markers. Hyland (2005) compared interactive and interactional metadiscourse in 240 articles from 8 fields study. The result indicated that interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers were more frequent in the soft discipline than the hard discipline.

One of the most complete analyses of book reviews is what was done by Hyland (2004). Hyland investigated praise and criticism in 160 book reviews of different disciplines including humanities, social sciences, and science. The data was collected from 28 academic journals. The results showed that writers of English book reviews usually overuse praise and use them to open and close a book review. He also found that praise and criticism were used differently in soft and hard disciplines. "Evaluations in soft disciplines were longer, more detailed, and more discursive. On the other hand, in book reviews in hard sciences, praises were found to be dominant.

The frequencies and pragmatic purposes of metadiscourse in book reviews were investigated by Tse and Hyland (2006). The corpus included 84 reviews of books from three fields of study namely, sociology, philosophy, and biology. The analysis indicated a higher frequency of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers in book reviews in the field of philosophy. The way writers used metadiscourse as pragmatic strategies were also shown. According to the

literature reviewed, to the knowledge of the researcher, subcategories of interactional metadiscourse markers have not been studied in detail in the genre of the book reviews so far; therefore, the present study aimed to study the metadiscourse markers in the genre of the book reviews.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Corpus of the Study

A total number of 102 English book reviews from two broad fields of soft discipline and hard discipline, with 115932 words, constituted the corpus of this study. The corpus of the soft discipline was made up of 51 book reviews in sociology, psychology, and linguistics, yielding a total of 69640 words. The book reviews of the hard discipline included 51 book reviews of three disciplines, namely, physics, chemistry, and biology, yielding a total of 46292 words. Seventeen book reviews were selected randomly from five first quality journals in each sub-discipline. These journals were taken from Oxford, Elsevier, Sage, Taylor and Frances, Science Direct, ACS, and IOP. Book reviews were published during 2007-2015.

B. Rating Scale

Hyland's (2005) interactional model of stance and engagement was employed as an analytical framework to study the frequencies of stance and engagement resources. Hyland's (2005) model includes stances and engagements. Stance has four sub-categories: hedge, booster, attitude markers and self-mention; engagement is composed of five main elements: reader pronouns, personal asides, appeals to shared knowledge, directives and questions.

C. Data Analysis

1. Rating procedures

Book reviews were thoroughly examined manually word by word to detect stance and engagement and their sub-categories. These markers were highlighted and then counted manually. Furthermore, to find the frequency of stance and engagement markers in sub-sections of book reviews, the moves of book reviews (introducing, outlining, highlighting, and evaluation of the book) were identified manually according to Motta-Roth's (1995) framework. In the following samples, stance markers are bold-faced and engagement markers are underlined.

> Whenever **I** have discussed **my** research interests in plagiarism with fellow instructors, **I usually** found that they were eager to share a plagiarism-related story with **me; interestingly, nearly** everyone had a story to share. **Few would** disagree that plagiarism is a **critical** issue for schools and universities in the United States and worldwide. Accordingly, plagiarism has received **significant** attention over the past two decades in both English L1 and L2 writing literature, as scholars have examined the **many** factors that are involved. (Journal of Second Language Writing, Linguistics, Elsevier, 2013)

> There are 148 equations in the penultimate chapter, for example. Lengthy derivations are eliminated, though, by making them exercises for the reader. Since **some** of these are **challenging** to say the least, **it is a pity** that (at the time of **my** writing), the solutions do not **appear** on the publisher's website, as promised. **I** also found the use of 'Asides' (mini-appendices in the body of the text) **rather annoying, particularly** since **some** of the results from them are quoted in the text that follows. Should I read the Asides, or not? (Journal of Sound and Vibration, Physics, Elsevier, 2013)

2. Inter-rater Reliability

Since this analysis was subjective to some extend which is perhaps unavoidable, a PhD candidate who got training about this scale and became thoroughly familiar with it was asked to identify the discourse markers of 20% (N=20) of the book reviews. Then the researcher and the Ph.D. candidate checked the match in their analysis. There were slight differences found, but a consensus was reached after discussing the differences. As a statistical measure to assess inter-reliability, Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) was used. According to Bloch and Kraemer (1989), Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) is a measurement of agreement or consensus. The coefficient shows agreement between two or more raters or evaluation methods on the same set of data. An amount of 0.7-0.8 indicates strong agreement, and 0.8 indicates almost perfect agreement, so the value 1 represents perfect agreement and 0 shows no agreement at all. In this study, Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) between the features identified by the researcher and those identified by the Ph.D. candidate was calculated to be 0.933 which indicated almost perfect agreement.

TABLE 1
INTRACLASS CORRELATION COEFFICIENT

	Intraclass Correlation[b]	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.933[a]	.734	.985	28.893	8	8	.000

IV. RESULTS

A. Results of Stance Discourse Markers in Soft and Hard Disciplines

As it was stated earlier, the first research question intended a difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of stance discourse markers. Different subcategories of the interaction metadiscourse marker of stance are presented and compared across some soft and some hard disciplines in Table 2.

TABLE 2
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STANCE DISCOURSE MARKERS IN DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES

Stance Features	Soft Discipline			Hard Discipline		
	Frequency	Percentage	Per 1,000 words	Frequency	Percentage	Per 1,000 words
Hedge	887	26.01%	12.73	512	20.48%	11.06
Booster	1439	42.21%	20.66	951	38.04%	20.54
Attitude marker	971	28.48%	13.94	904	36.16%	19.52
Self-mention	112	3.28%	1.60	133	5.32%	2.87
Total	**3409**	**100%**		**2500**	**100%**	

As shown in Table 2, the total number of the stance discourse markers used in soft disciplines mounted to 3409 which is higher than that of hard disciplines (3409>2500). Among subcategories of stance features in soft disciplines, boosters enjoyed the highest frequency (1439 out of 3409 words, i.e. 20.66 words per 1,000 words), while, the category self-mention ranked the last (112 out of 3409 words, i.e. 1.60 words per 1.000 words).

The next category was attitude markers which were found 971 cases out of 3409 words, that is 13.94 words out of 1,000 words. The next category was hedge markers the frequency of which in soft disciplines was 887 out of the total 3409 stance metadiscourse markers. Differently stated, the class of hedge was found in 12.73 words per 1,000. The total number of stance features in the hard disciplines were found to be 2500 with the highest frequency belonging to the class of boosters (n=951, 20.54 words out of 1,000 words); therefore, it can be seen that the class of boosters similarly scored the first among the stance metadiscourse markers of both soft and hard disciplines. The subcategory of self-mention with a frequency of 133 out of 2500 stances (2.87 per 1,000 words) was identified to be the least used class of metadiscourse markers in hard disciplines. The next class of stance metadiscourse markers was found to be attitude markers (n=904 of 2500 words, that is 19.52 per 1,000 words). Hedges with a frequency of 512 out of 2500 words (11.06 per 1,000 words) scored the next class of stance discourse markers. Figure 1 illustrates the frequency of subcategories of stance metadiscourse markers as occurred in soft and hard disciplines.
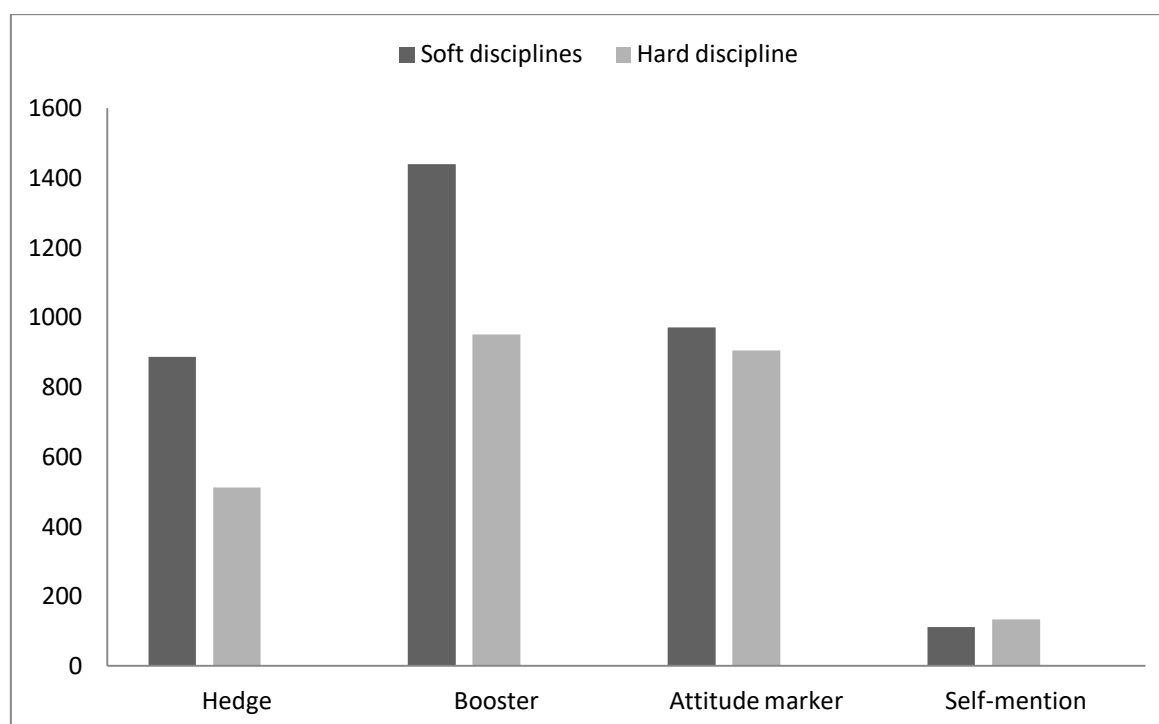
Figure 1. Frequency of Stance Features in Soft and Hard Disciplines

As shown in Figure 1, except for self-mention in the other three categories, soft disciplines included higher numbers of stance metadiscourse markers than hard disciplines. The frequency of the stance markers was compared through a Chi-square test, the results of which are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE FOR USE OF STANCES DISCOURSE MARKERS IN SOFT AND HARD DISCIPLINES

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Soft	3409	2954.5	454.5
Hard	2500	2954.5	-454.5
Total	5909		
Chi-Square		139.834	
Df		1	
Asymp. Sig.		.000	

According to the statistics presented in Table 3 (χ^2=139.834, p= 0), the p value is smaller than the significance level of .05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis of the research can be rejected and it can be claimed that there is a significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of stance discourse markers.

B. Results of Sub-categories of Stance

To find out why the distribution of subcategories of stance is different, the Chi-Square test was run to realize the degree of the significant differences among hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions in soft and hard disciplines. See Table 4.

TABLE 4
RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE FOR USE OF DIFFERENT STANCES MARKERS IN SOFT AND HARD DISCIPLINES

	Observed N		Expected N		Residual		Chi-square	df	Asymp.sig.
	Soft	Hard	Soft	Hard	Soft	Hard			
Stance									
Hedge	887	512	699.5	599.5	187.5	-187.5	100.518	1	.000
Booster	1439	951	1195	1195	244	- 244	99.642	1	.000
Attitude marker	971	904	937.5	937.5	35.5	- 35.5	2.394	1	.122
Self-mention	112	133	122.5	122.5	-10.5	10.5	1.800	1	.180

Results of Table 4 show that the p value for hedges (.000) is less than the significance level (.05); therefore, it could be concluded that there was a significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of hedge markers in favor of soft discipline (χ^2=100.518, p=.000<.05). Results also indicate there was a significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of booster markers in favor of soft discipline. (χ^2=99.642, p=.000<.05). As shown in Table 4 the p value for attitude markers turned to be .122 that could be claimed that there was not any significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of attitude markers (χ^2=2.394, p=.122>.05). Also, the p value for self-mentions was .180>.05, so there was not any significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of self-mentions (χ^2=1.800, p=.180>.05).

C. Results of Engagement Discourse Markers in Soft and Hard Disciplines

The second research hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of engagement discourse markers. To find evidence to accept or reject this hypothesis, 102 English book reviews from six fields of study including three soft disciplines and three hard disciplines were analyzed using Hyland's (2005) model of interactional metadiscourse markers. To provide a more comprehensive view of the issue under question, some soft and hard disciplines were compared in terms of fields of study. In Table 5, engagement markers of hard and soft disciplines are compared.

TABLE 5
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF USE OF ENGAGEMENT DM IN SOFT AND HARD DISCIPLINES

Feature	Soft Disciplines			Hard Disciplines		
	Frequency	Percentage	Per 1,000 word	Frequency	Percentage	Per 1,000 word
Reader pronoun	179	65.56%	2.57	143	61.63%	3.08
Shared knowledge	21	7.69%	0.30	34	14.65%	0.73
Question	41	15.1%	0.58	48	20.68%	1.03
Personal aside	15	5.49%	0.21	4	1.72%	0.08
Directive	17	6.22%	0.24	3	1.29%	0.06
Total	**273**	**100%**	**3.9**	**232**	**100%**	**4.98**

As it was stated the number of the engagement markers were counted and the results are presented the total number of words in the book reviews of soft discipline (69640 words) and the total number of the words in the book reviews of hard discipline (46292 words). According to the statistics presented in Table 5, out of 69640 words of soft discipline,

273 words were found to be the engagement markers. On the other hand, 232 words out of the total 46292 words of book reviews of hard disciplines were found to be engagement markers. The difference in the total number of engagement in the book reviews of soft and hard disciplines is not much, with that of soft disciplines being a little higher than that of hard disciplines (273>232). Figure 2 illustrates the frequency of subcategories of engagement metadiscourse markers as occurred in soft and hard disciplines.
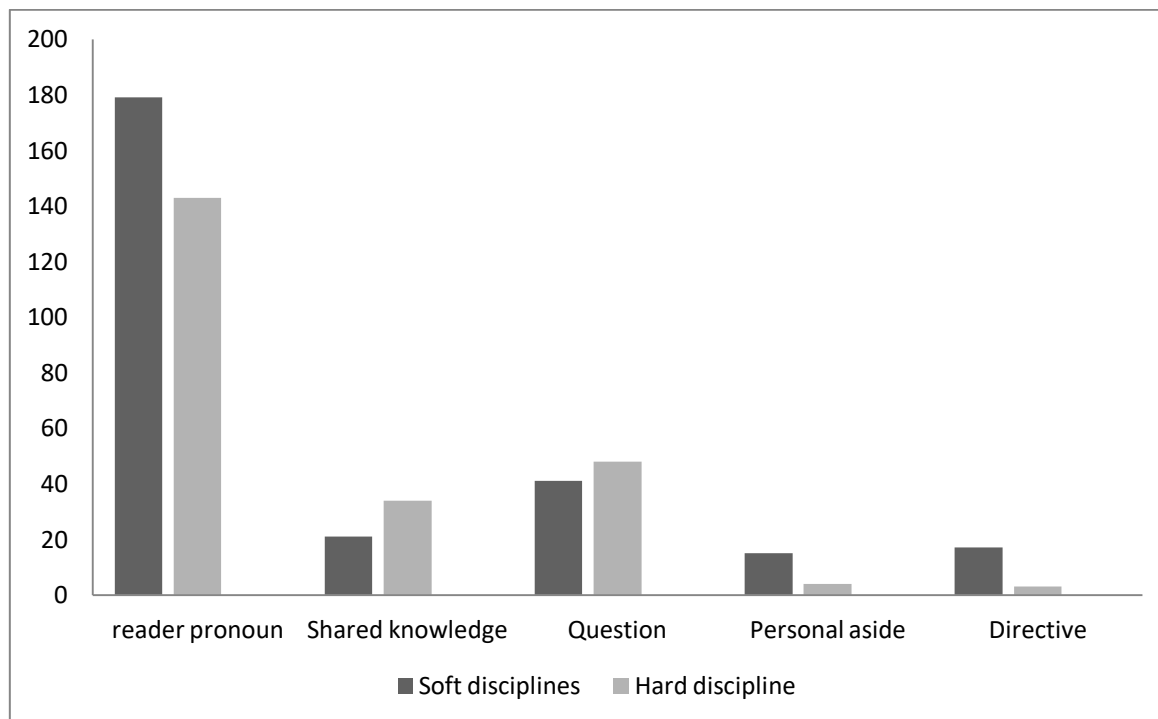

Figure 2. Frequency of Engagement Features in Soft and Hard Disciplines

To provide a comprehensive picture of the differences and similarities between the stance and engagement discourse markers, a Chi-square was run, the results of which are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6
RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR USE OF ENGAGEMENTS DM IN SOFT AND HARD DISCIPLINES

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Soft	273	252.5	20.5
Hard	232	252.5	-20.5
Total	505		
Chi-Square		3.329	
df		1	
Asymp. Sig.		.068	

According to the results presented in Table 6, there is no significant difference between the engagement markers of soft and hard disciplines (χ^2=3.329, p= .068>0.05).

D. Results of Sub-categories of Engagement

To find out the degree of the differences among reader pronouns, shared-knowledge markers, questions, personal-aside markers, and directives in soft and hard disciplines, the Chi-Square test was run. See Table 7.

TABLE 7
RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE FOR USE OF DIFFERENT ENGAGEMENT MARKERS IN SOFT AND HARD DISCIPLINES

	Observed N		Expected N		Residual		Chi-square	df	Asymp.sig.
	Soft	Hard	Soft	Hard	Soft	Hard			
Engagement									
Reader pronouns	179	143	161.0	161.0	18.0	-18.0	4.025	1	.045
Shared- knowledge	21	34	27.5	27.5	-6.5	6.5	3.073	1	.080
Questions	41	48	44.5	44.5	-3.5	3.5	.551	1	.458
Personal -Asides	15	4	9.5	9.5	5.5	-5.5	6.368	1	.012
Directives	17	3	10.0	10.0	7.0	-7.0	9.800	1	.002

Results of Table 7 show that the *p* value for reader pronouns (.045) is less than the significance level (.05); therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of reader pronouns (χ^2=4.025, *p*=.045<.05).To further analyze, Chi-Square Test was run to realize the degree of the differences among shared knowledge in soft and hard disciplines. According to the statistics presented in Table 7 the *p* value is .080>0.05. So, there is not any significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of shared knowledge (χ^2=3.073, *p*=.080>0.05). Also, is not any significant difference between soft and hard disciplines in the use of questions (χ^2=.551, *p*= .458>0.05). Results of Table 7 also indicate that there is a significant difference between soft and hard disciplines in the use of personal asides (χ^2=6.368, *p*=.012<0.05). It can be claimed that there is a significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of directives (χ^2=9.800, *p*=.002<0.05).

E. Results of Stance Comparison in Moves of Book Reviews

The present study investigated the frequency of stance features in moves of book reviews of hard and soft discipline. The total frequency of stance markers in each move of book reviews is presented in Table 8.

TABLE 8
FREQUENCY OF STANCE DISCOURSE MARKERS IN MOVES OF BOOK REVIEWS FOR SOFT AND HARD DISCIPLINES

		Soft Discipline			Hard Discipline	
			Stance Features			
Moves	Move Description	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
1	Introducing	430	12.61%		543	21.72%
2	Outlining	1724	50.57%		1025	41%
3	Highlighting	840	24.64%		533	21.32%
4	Evaluation	415	12.17%		399	15.96%
Total		3409	100%		2500	100%

As shown in Table 8, move 2 with a frequency of 1724 stances enjoyed the highest frequency of stance features in book reviews of soft discipline while move 4 with the frequency of 415 stances contained the least frequency of stance features. Move 3 and 1 are ranked in the second and third positions respectively according to the frequency of stance feature. Regarding the distribution of stance markers in moves of book reviews of hard discipline, while moves 2 presented the highest frequency of stance features, move 4 presented the least frequency of stance features. Move 1 and 3 are ranked in the second and third position respectively.

To find out the degree of difference among different moves of soft and hard disciplines (introducing, outlining, highlighting, evaluation) in the use of stance discourse markers, the Chi- Square test was run. Results of the Chi-square test for use of stance markers in different moves are presented in table 9.

TABLE 9
RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR USE OF STANCE DM IN DIFFERENT MOVES

	Stance Features		
Moves	Chi-square	df	Asymp.sig.
Introducing	13.123	1	.000
Outlining	177.738	1	.000
Highlighting	68.645	1	.000
Evaluation	.314	1	.575

Results of Table 9 show that there is a significant difference between *Introducing* soft and hard disciplines in the use of stance markers (χ^2=13.123, *p*=.000<.05). Results also indicate there is a significant difference between *Outlining* of soft and hard disciplines in the use of stance markers (χ^2=177.738, *p*=.000<.05). As shown in Table 9 there is a significant difference between *Highlighting* of soft and hard disciplines in the use of stance markers (χ^2=68.645, *p*=.000<.05) and there is not any significant difference between *Evaluation* of soft and hard disciplines in the use of self-mentions (χ^2=.314, *p*=.575>.05).

F. Results of Stance Comparison in Moves of Book Reviews

The total frequency of engagement markers in each move of book reviews is also presented in Table 10.

TABLE 10
FREQUENCY OF ENGAGEMENT MARKERS IN MOVES OF BOOK REVIEWS OF SOFT AND HARD DISCIPLINES

Moves	Move Description	Soft Discipline		Hard Discipline	
		Engagement Features			
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Introducing	43	15.75%	46	19.83%
2	Outlining	109	39.92%	120	51.72%
3	Highlighting	96	35.16%	43	18.53%
4	Evaluation	25	9.16 %	23	9.91%
Total		273	100%	232	100%

As shown in Table 10, move 2 with a frequency of 109 engagement markers enjoyed the highest frequency of engagement feature in book reviews of soft discipline while move 4 with the frequency of 25 engagement markers contained the least frequency of them. Move 3 and 1 are in the second and third rank respectively according to the frequency of engagement feature. Regarding the distribution of engagement markers in the moves of book reviews of hard discipline, while moves 2 presented the highest frequency of stance feature, move 4 presented the least frequency of engagement features. Move 1 with the frequency of 46 markers and move 3 with the frequency of 43 markers are ranked in the second and third position respectively.

To find out the degree of difference among different moves of soft and hard disciplines (Introducing, Outlining, Highlighting, Evaluation) in the use of engagement discourse markers, the Chi- Square test was run. Results of the Chi-square test for use of engagement markers in different moves are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11
RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR USE OF ENGAGEMENT DM IN DIFFERENT MOVES

Moves	EngagementFeatures		
	Chi-square	df	Asymp.sig.
Introducing	.101	1	.750
Outlining	.528	1	.467
Highlighting	20.209	1	.000
Evaluation	.083	1	.773

Results of Table 11 show that there is not any significant difference between *Introducing* soft and hard disciplines in the use of engagement markers ($\chi^2=.101$, $p=.750>.05$). Results also indicate there is no significant difference between *Outlining* of soft and hard disciplines in the use of engagement markers ($\chi^2=.528$, $p=.467>.05$). As shown in Table 11 there is a significant difference between *Highlighting* of soft and hard disciplines in the use of engagement markers ($\chi^2=20.209$, $p=.000<.05$) and there is not any significant difference between *Evaluation* of soft and hard disciplines in the use of self-mentions ($\chi^2=.083$, $p=.773>.05$).

V. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The results regarding the first research question showed that stance markers (boosters and hedges) are more common in book reviews in soft discipline than those of hard discipline and boosters are strongly represented. The highest frequency of boosters in soft discipline suggests that soft sciences book reviewers claim their discourses with a higher degree of certainty and leave very little space for readers to give alternative opinions. The reason may be related to this point that by using boosters they want to create a sense of mutual understanding.

This result is compatible with the results found by Hyland (2005a). According to (Hyland 2005a) "both hedges and boosters tended to be more common in the humanities and social science papers. This can be attributed to the fact that the soft-knowledge fields are usually more interpretive and less abstract than the hard sciences and their forms of argument rely more on a dialogic engagement and more explicit recognition of alternative voices" (p. 145). This finding is in line with findings found by Tse and Hyland (2006) who found a large number of hedges and boosters in book reviews in philosophy compared with biology. Hyland (2010) claimed that hedges and boosters which indicate the degree of caution, help writers construct proximity with readers. Hedges show that a claim matches with the writer's reasoning rather than certain knowledge.

The highest number of hedges and boosters was found in linguistics. The results of the present research lend support to the study by Junqueira and Cortes (2014), who found that interpersonal metadiscourse devices like hedges were more frequent in the book reviews in the English corpus across the three subfields of soft disciplines, namely, History and Psychology, and applied Linguistics. This is in line with the study by Salahshoor and Afsari (2017) who investigated interactional metadiscourse in natural and social science master theses, and found that hedges were the most frequent marker in both corpora while attitude markers in social science and self-mention in natural science were the least favored role.

The findings also lend support to the study by Hu and Cao (2011) which investigated the use of hedges and boosters in academic article abstracts and showed that hedges in abstracts published in English-medium journals were more frequent than those published in Chinese-medium.

Furthermore, the results suggested that the writers of book reviews tended to use self-mention a little more in hard discipline than soft discipline, but this difference was not significant. This finding is in line with findings found by Tse and Hyland (2006) about the equal number of self-mentions in philosophy and biology. This result is incompatible with the result found by Hyland (2005a) about the high proportion of self-mention in the humanities and social science papers. According to Hyland (2005a) "establishing an appropriately authorial persona and maintaining an effective degree of personal engagement with one's audience are valuable strategies for probing relationships and connections between entities that are generally more particular, less precisely measurable and less clear cut than in the hard sciences" (p. 148).

According to the result, although attitude markers were more in book reviews of soft discipline than those of hard discipline, this difference was not significant. This result is compatible with the findings of Hyland (2005), and Hyland (2010). According to him writers in soft articles can express their feelings and emotions easier than hard articles in which some scientific facts are reported. As the findings of this study revealed the writers of book reviews of soft discipline are more inclined to express their feelings towards the text and therefore use more attitude markers. The results of the present research are against the study by Junqueira and Cortes (2014), in which it was found attitude markers were the least frequent in the English and Brazilian Portuguese (BP) book reviews across the three subfields of soft disciplines, namely, History and Psychology, and applied Linguistics.

Regarding the findings related to research question 2, it can be claimed that there was no significant difference between English book reviews of soft and hard disciplines in the use of engagement markers. This result is in line with the findings of the study conducted by Tse & Hyland (2006). They concluded that Engagement markers were the most frequently used features in both the philosophy and biology texts. In both disciplines, it is necessary to use devices such as engagement markers to construct writer-reader relations and create a sense of solidarity.

Regarding move analysis move 2, outlining the book, is usually the longest move in both book reviews of soft and hard disciplines, so it is reasonable that it holds more stance and engagement features. Writers of book reviews highlight and evaluate specific parts of books through move 3, high lighting the book. In book reviews of soft discipline due its nature, reviewers find more opportunity to give their opinions on specific chapters, so it is tried to use a high number of stance and engagement feature in this move to build proximity with readers and writers of books. Due to this fact that move 4 is the final evaluation of the book and the writers of book reviews try to recommend or reject books based on final evaluation as well as this point that in most cases this move is quite short, it is expected that this move contains the least stance and engagement features in both disciplines.

The findings of this study could enrich the literature in the area of research, especially in an Iranian context. The findings of this study may recommend that during the writing and research courses at university, teachers include some exercises on genre-based instruction in their course content. Furthermore, the findings will be applied to the field of language teaching by helping English language teachers to use new techniques in their classes to develop their students' writing skill. The results of this study can be useful for postgraduate students, in that it can help them enhance their research knowledge and publish book reviews, in addition to research articles. This study can help students know how to learn writing effectively. Besides, this study can be a source of information for another researcher who wants to conduct the same research.

APPENDIX. SAMPLES OF MOVE ANALYSIS OF BOOK REVIEWS OF SOFT AND HARD DISCIPLINES

Move	SAMPLE BOOK REVIEWS
Move 1 (Introducing)	In the recent book *Changing Minds or Changing Channels? Partisan News in an Age of Choice*, Kevin Arceneaux and Martin Johnson examine the effects of partisan cable news. They **propose** that the small, and **unique** audience drawn to partisan cable news blunts its **possible** effects.
Move 2 (Outlining)	The book is organized into eight chapters. The first chapter **focuses on** the contested nature of power and sketches out the dual ways in which power is **typically** conceptualized (e.g. as a capacity versus as a possession).
Move 3 (Highlighting)	**I** see two shortcomings that, in the end, do not detract **significantly** from the overall contribution of the book. First, chapters four and five ("This Body Is No Longer My Own" and "Making Rooms for Babies") stray **a bit** from the strong connection the author makes throughout the book to the practices of ordinary pregnancy. **We** see little practical application for Chapter 6. The more mathematical sections (Chapters 2 and 3) are **heavy going** and these **we** leave for others to judge. They are **clearly** sign-posted, so it is **easy** for the reader to skip them if preferred, as **we** have done.
Move 4 (evaluation)	In summary, *Beyond Caring Labour to Provisioning Work* is a volume of importance to academics, researchers and members of the public who share a passion and interest for how women work and the nature of such work in a social context that counts and even notices **only** the smallest measure of the work they do.

REFERENCES

[1] Abdollahzadeh, E. (2011). Poring over the findings: interpersonal authorial engagement in applied linguistics papers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *43*, 288-297. https:// doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.07.019.

[2] Atai, M. R., & Sadr, L. (2008). A cross-cultural study of hedging devices in discussion section of applied linguistics research articles. *Teaching English Language and Literature Society of Iran (TELLSI)*, *2*(7), 1-2.

[3] Ebrahimi, S., J. (2018). The Role of Metadiscourse Markers in Comprehending Texts of Reading Comprehension Books Published in Iran and Oxford University Press. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature. 7(3), 90-96.*

[4] Faghih, E., & Rahimpour, S. (2009). Contrastive rhetoric of English and Persian written text: Metadiscourse in applied linguistic research articles, *Rice Working Papers in Linguistic*, *1*, 92-107.

[5] Fuertes-Olivera, P. A., Velasco-Sacrist.n, M., Arribas-Bano, A., & Samiengo-Fern.ndez, E. (2001). Persuasion and advertising English: Metadiscourse in slogans and headlines. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *33*, 1291-1307. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(01)80026-6.

[6] Gea Valor, M. L. (2000). The pragmatics of positive politeness in the book review. *Resla, 14,*145-159.

[7] Gezegin, B., B. (2016). A Corpus-based Investigation of Metadiscourse in Academic Book Reviews. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 232*, 713-718.

[8] Ghafoori, N. & Oghbatalab, R. (2012). A Comparative Study of Metadiscourse in Academic Writing: Male vs. Female Authors of Research. Articles in Applied Linguistics. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics,* 5(1), 87-113.

[9] Ghazanfari, M., Barani, G. & Rokhsari, S. (2018). An Investigation into Metadiscourse Elements Used by Native vs. Non-Native University Students across Genders. *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies, 10* (1), 60-94.

[10] Hyland, K. (2000). Disciplinary discourse: Social interactions in academic writing. London: Longman.

[11] Hyland, K. (2000). Hedges, Boosters and lexical invisibility: noticing modifiers in academic texts. *Language Awareness*, *9* (4), 179-197. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658410008667145.

[12] Hyland, K. (2000). Praise and criticism: Interactions in book reviews. In K. Hyland (Ed.), *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing* (pp.41-62). Harlow, England: Longman.

[13] Hyland, K. (2001b). Humble servants of the discipline? Self-mention in research articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, *29*(3), 207-226. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(00)00012-0.

[14] Hyland, K. (2002). Directives: Power and engagement in academic writing. *Applied Linguistics*, *23*(2), 215-239.

[15] Hyland, K. (2003). Genre-based pedagogies: A social response to process. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 12,* 17-29. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(02)00124-8.

[16] Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*(2), 133-151. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.02.001.

[17] Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics, 25*, 156-177. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/25.2.156.

[18] Hyland, K. (2005a). Metadiscourse. Exploring interaction in writing. London/New York: Continuum.

[19] Hyland, K. (2005b). Stance and engagement: a model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies*, *7*, 173-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445605050365.

[20] Hyland, K. (2008b). Persuasion, Interaction and the Construction of Knowledge: Representing Self and Others in Research Writing. *International Journal of English Studies*, *8* (2), 1-23.

[21] Hyland, K. & Diani, G. (2009). Introduction: Academic evaluation and review genres. In K. Hyland & G. Diani (Eds.), *Academic Evaluation. Review Genres in University Settings* (pp. 1-14). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

[22] Hyland, K. (2010). Constructing proximity: Relating to readers in popular and professional science. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *9*, 116-127. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2010.02.003.

[23] Jalilifar, A., Hayati, S. & Don, A. (2018). Investigating Metadiscourse Markers in Book Reviews and Blurbs: A Study of Interested and Disinterested Genres. *Studies about Languages, 33*, 90-117.

[24] Junqueira, L. & Cortes, V. (2014). Metadiscourse in book reviews in English and Brazilian Portuguese: A corpus-based analysis. *Rhetoric, Professional Communication, and Globalization*.6, 88-109.

[25] McGrath, L., & Kuteeva, M. (2012). Stance and engagement in pure mathematics research articles: Linking discourse features to disciplinary practices, *English for Specific Purposes*, *31*, 161-173. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2011.11.002.

[26] Miller, C. (1994). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 70*, 151-167. https://doi.org/10.1080/00335638409383686.

[27] Salahshoor, F. & Afsari, P. (2017). An Investigation of Interactional Metadiscourse in Discussion and Conclusion Sections of Social and Natural Science Master Theses. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics and Applied Literature: Dynamics and Advances, 5*(2), 7-14.

[28] Swales, J. (1990). Genre analysis: English in academic settings. Cambridge University Press.

[29] Tse, P. & Hyland, K. (2006). So what is the problem this book addresses? Interactions in academic book reviews. *Text & Talk 26*(6), 767-790. https:// doi.org /10.1515/ TEXT. 2006. 031.

[30] Vande Kopple, W. (1985). Some explanatory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication 36, 82-93.*

[31] Yang, Y. (2014). Exploring linguistic and cultural variations in the use of hedges in English and Chinese scientific discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics, 50*, 23-36. https:// doi.org/ 10.1016/ .pragma. 2013.01.008.

Neda Zal was born in Isfahan, Iran in 1978. She received her Master' s degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) from the department of language in University of Kashan, Kashan, Iran in 2017

She has been working as an English teacher for more than 20 years in language institutions in Isfahan, Iran. She has been teaching IELTS for more than 10 years and she has translated several Medical articles.

Other work experience include: A member of Translator Group, International Intangible Cultural Heritage Festival & General Assembly (ICCN 2014)

Team member of Translator Group, The 18th General International Assembly of the World Crafts Council, Sep 2016

Mohammad Raouf Moini was born in Isfahan, Iran in 1968. Educational backgrounds include:

Ph.D in TEFL, English Department, University of Shiraz, Shiraz, Iran, 2003

M.A. in TEFL: English Department, Tarbiat Modarres, Tehran, Iran, 1992

B.A. in TEFL: English Department, University for Teachers' Education, Tehran, Iran, 1990.

He is the retired assistant professor of TEFL, Department of English, University of Kashan, Iran. Regarding work experience, he worked as an Assistant Professor of TEFL, Department of English, University of Kashan Iran, A Member of ASIA TEFL and Head of Department of English Literature, University of Kashan, Iran 2004-2003-2005. He has published research papers and books including: Expand your reading ability: an Enjoyable EFL reader. Tehran. Iran. Jungle Publication, 2004 & Research methods and designs in humanities. Tehran: Jungle Publication, 2008. Papers: Moini, M. R. (2008). Bottom-up and top-down processing in C-test performance: A cognitive model Journal of Humanities, Al.Zara University. 18 (72). 129-53. Moini. M. R., (2009). The impact of EFL teachers' cognition on teaching foreign language Grammar. Pazhuhesh-e zabanha-ye Khareji. 49, 141-164.

A Tentative Exploration on Multimodal Teaching of Legal English*

Yuehua Lu

School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, China

Abstract—**Based on the theory of multimodality and Internet technology, the present paper analyzes the existing problems in legal English teaching, explores the feasibility of constructing a multimodal teaching mode, and presents a case study of moot court by applying the multimodal means of teaching. The tentative study proves that a multimodal teaching mode can satisfy the requirements of legal English teaching, though there still exist problems to be solved.**

Index Terms—**legal English, multimodality, moot court, ESP teaching**

I. INTRODUCTION

In the 1990s, with the rapid development of multimedia technology and corpus research, multimodal discourse analysis, as a new theory of discourse analysis, has been incorporated into language research. This research focuses on the realization of meaning, holding that not only language, but also all other symbol systems have realized meaning. This theory exceeds the limitation of traditional language analysis which studies language itself in isolation, extends the research to other modal symbols such as image, color and font, and studies the role of various modal symbols in classroom discourse.

The year 2020 witnessed the spread of COVID-19 throughout the world. To enable the students who are stuck at home to continue their study and complete the corresponding teaching process, online teaching, a new teaching form has become the dominant way of education at this stage. Although online teaching is an expedient, its advantages have been found and recognized by more teachers as well as students. Looking into the future, the combination of online and offline teaching will become an irreversible trend. Hybrid teaching is not only the teaching of mixed resources, but also the teaching of mixed multi-modal environment. In the process of teachers' teaching and students' learning, by employing video, audio, picture, text and other multimedia devices, a multi-modal teaching environment integrating vision, hearing, speaking, and gesture is thus created, which will improve the learning efficiency and effect.

Legal English, taking common English as its basis, is a language with legal characteristics formed and used in legislation, judicature and other legal-related activities. Legal English is normally used to express legal scientific concepts, and it is employed either in litigation or non-litigation legal affairs. At present, the legal English course has become part of the curricula in most law schools or foreign language schools in China's political and Law Universities and some comprehensive universities. The construction of legal English course is an effective means to realize the goal of cultivating legal talents.

The present paper, by referring to the theory of multimodality and Internet technology, is intended to explore the feasibility and then construct a multimodal teaching mode of the legal English course.

II. THE THEORY OF MULTIMODALITY

A. The Theory of Multimodality

Modality is defined as the way in which human beings interact with the external environment through their senses (Gu, 2007). It is the meaning potential formed by material media after a long time of social shaping, and it is a social and cultural resource used to represent and exchange meaning. Undoubtedly, language is the most common mode. However, such items as image, intonation, sound, expression, gesture, color, video, Internet, laboratory, PPT and other modern technological devices can all be called mode. The five communication modes, namely, visual mode, auditory mode, tactile mode, olfactory mode and gustatory mode arise from the five senses of human beings (Zhu, 2007).

Originated from Functional Linguistics and Social Semiotics in 1990s in the West, multimodal research has achieved rapid development. The most outstanding researchers, such as Kress (2001), Royce (2002), and Jewitt (2016), to name just a few, have conducted systematic explorations on the multimodal phenomena in different social and cultural fields, including architecture, painting, sculpture, mathematics, language and so on. Over more than 20 years of development, multimodal research has far transcended the field of linguistics, extending to semiotics, philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, politics, journalism, law, aesthetics, and medicine. The research objects have also expanded

from language to music, image, web design and architectural style.

In China, although multimodal research started late, it develops rapidly. Li Zhanzi (2003, 2012) introduced the theory of multimodal discourse analysis from the perspective of social semiotics, which initiates the study of multimodality. Since then, Hu Zhuanglin (2007), Zhu Yongsheng (2007), Zhang Delu (2009, 2010, 2012, 2019) and other scholars have studied the relationship between multimodality and computer semiotics, the theoretical basis and methods of multimedia, multimodal learning analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis, all of which have played a macro guiding role in promoting domestic multimodal research.

B. Multimodal Teaching in China

Modern teaching itself, characterized by multimedia, online courses and other means of modern education, is multimodal. Under the circumstance of multimedia and network information teaching, modality has become a means as well as a method for teachers and students to acquire, recognize and transmit information via various senses. The relationship between media and modality can be interpreted as that between entity and form (Zhang, 2019). Different media entities are the concrete embodiment of different modality forms. All the tools employed in multimedia teaching such as text, picture, video, and PPT can be regarded as modes. The coordination of these multimedia teaching aids is actually a multi-modal synergy, in which words, pictures, teachers' gestures and facial expressions can be regarded as visual modes, and teachers' explanation and various audio files are auditory modes. In addition, the network contains both the auditory mode and the visual mode, which are the most important and frequently used modes in teaching. Applying multiple modes will definitely achieve better effects than using only one mode, and the best result can be achieved by using various modes flexibly and giving full play to the positive synergy of different modes.

Professor Zhang Delu from Tongji University is the leading representative of scholars engaged in multimodal teaching research. Prominent scholars who have published papers in CSSCI journals also include Huang Lihe (2019), Cheng Ruilan (2017), Liu Xiuli (2013) and others. Multimodal teaching integrates text language elements and non-language elements such as vision, hearing, expression, action and gesture, empathizing the synergetic effect of multi senses and multi modes. The realization of multimodal teaching depends on the change of teachers' concept of education, which requires teachers to design multimodal tasks as much as possible, and guide students to comprehensively use multimodality to fulfill the tasks. There is no doubt that the effect of using multimodal teaching method is better than that of using only one mode, which will help students to receive and digest what they have learned in class.

III. LEGAL ENGLISH TEACHING IN CHINA

A. An Overview of Legal English

Legal English, one of the most important branches of English for specific purposes (ESP), is a new interdisciplinary subject of legal science and English linguistics. With the gradual integration of foreign language education and legal education, legal English has been established as a professional direction in many colleges and universities, especially in political and legal ones. Legal English is affiliated to legal linguistics, and it is by no means a simple combination of law and English (Zhang, 2019). To master legal English, one must have both legal and English backgrounds. Specifically speaking, the course of legal English, based on the knowledge of common law, systematically teaches the Anglo-American legal system, including British and American legal culture, major department laws, as well as the corresponding legal English translation, legal English writing, case analysis and foreign-related practical skills. With the development of legal English, there appeared a considerable number of scholars who are devoted to the study of legal English, such as Zhang Falian (2009, 2013, 2019), Qu Wensheng (2017), Ma Qinglin (2019) and others, who focus their research mainly on the cognition of the characteristics of legal language, namely, vocabulary, terminology, syntax, the translation of legal terms, legal texts, and laws and regulations.

B. Present Situation of Legal English Teaching in China

Legal English teaching, which first appeared in the late 1970s and early 1980s, has achieved rapid development since the beginning of the 21st century. The teaching objective is to cultivate applied talents with proficient English language skills and certain basic knowledge of law, strong cross-cultural communication ability, broad international vision and certain practical and innovative ability, who can deal with foreign legal affairs and engage in relevant interpretation and translation. However, legal English is different from ordinary college English and traditional English courses in that it belongs to the category of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). To put it another way, legal English is related directly to law, explaining legal problems and teaching legal knowledge in English, aiming to impart the knowledge of British and American legal culture and legal system. Secondly, the nature of ESP leads to the second feature of legal English teaching, that is, content-based teaching, which means that language teaching is built on the teaching of certain subject content and the language materials are authentic. According to the concept of content-based teaching, only when learners regard language as a means rather than a purpose of learning subject knowledge and obtaining information, only when learners feel that the information that they obtain is useful, interesting and satisfying, and only when teaching is aimed at helping students achieve the best learning effect, can language learning be more successful.

The two distinctive features of legal English determine that legal English teaching should combine language learning

with subject knowledge learning, for the purpose of improving students' overall English level and their legal English ability. Therefore, legal English teaching is rather challenging to teachers, who should have good legal knowledge and skillful English proficiency.

C. Existing Problems in Legal English Teaching

Legal English course is always welcomed by students; however, there still exist certain problems in terms of setting and teaching.

Firstly, syllabus and curriculum standards are not always unified. With regard to the subject orientation of legal English, different schools take different approaches, some classifying it as professional English while others categorizing it into optional public courses. As a result, the qualifications of teachers, the curriculum system, and teaching methods exhibit great differences.

Secondly, teachers are not well equipped. A sizable proportion of teachers are English majors who have received short-term training of legal knowledge. Professional law teachers who have the background of studying overseas also occupy a substantial percentage. However, those who have dual disciplinary background of law and English account for a small percentage. It is hard for the teachers to form a cooperative teaching team and the teachers' stability and professional identity are not well guaranteed.

Thirdly, the teacher-oriented teaching method is comparatively backward, relying too much on textbooks and courseware. Although such activities as question-and-answer, classroom presentation, and group discussion are often organized in class, the overall teaching, as restricted by class hours and other factors, is still unable to get rid of the concept of authoritative teaching materials and knowledge transmission.

Fourthly, the often used means of evaluation, namely, term papers, assignments, and examinations, fail to effectively reflect the learning process and individual cognitive differences, which will cause the students' lack of initiative of autonomous learning and classroom participation.

In view of the above-mentioned problems, it is of great necessity to innovate, deepen and refine the teaching of legal English. To establish a multimodal mixed teaching mode is a bold but feasible trial.

IV. MULTIMODALITY IN LEGAL ENGLISH TEACHING

A. The Practical Value of Multimodal Legal English Teaching

The characteristics of legal English determine the uniqueness of its teaching, which is in urgent need of reform. Take Shanghai University of Political Science and Law as an example. As a judicial training base of Shang Cooperation Organization, Shanghai University of Political Science and Law shoulders a great responsibility of cultivating qualified legal talents with international vision, who are familiar with international rules and able to participate in international affairs and competitions. To achieve this glorious mission, foreign language and legal education must be upgraded from being a stepping-stone of promotion and employment to the level of improving foreign language ability and serving the national strategy. The teaching reform and personnel training of foreign language and law should be positioned at this level. The accurate orientation of the course is conducive to the overall development of legal English teaching. In the face of the existing teaching shortcomings, a reform is imperative.

To improve the efficiency of teaching and promote students' internalization of what they have learned, teachers are supposed to use pictures, recordings, videos, film clips, objects, court props and other different modes to organize teaching, giving full play to the synergy and reinforcement between different modes, and organizing teaching in as real a multi-modal situation as possible. In addition, more practical activities such as role playing, court debate, moot court, and court observation should be organized, so as to promote and speed up the transformation of legal English knowledge into legal English ability.

B. Multimodal Teaching as Exemplified by Moot Court

Moot court has the basic elements and complete process of real court, which is determined by the features of real court. Moot court, according to the degree of authenticity and difficulty, can be categorized into rehearsal form and confrontational form, the former of which is more suitable for the primary stage while the latter of which is for the higher stage. The operation procedures and specific requirements for these two are not identical. Rehearsal moot court refers to the plaintiff and the defendant working together to negotiate the case, define the role, prepare relevant trial materials, and rehearse together, in the hope of completing all the procedures of the moot court. This kind of moot court is similar to a play rehearsal, which requires a planner and organizer who will prepare in advance all the words and deeds of each role and rehearse them repeatedly. The essence of the court trial process is the process of "acting".

From the perspective of multimodality, the trial is a multi-modal symbolic situation (Zhang, 2020). The complete process of the court trial is the one of multimodal synergy, in which different participants in the trial interact with each other in the context of multimodal symbols by virtue of discourse, voice, intonation, action, expression, gesture, posture and other communication modes, find out the facts by means of words, objects, images, audio, video and other media modes, and finally make a decision. Moot court is an important way of legal practical teaching, which has been widely used in legal education. The following will present how a rehearsal moot court can be performed in the legal English course through multimodal means. In the real teaching practice, students can be organized to do the following

procedures.

Firstly, to select cases and assign roles. It is of great necessity to determine a case with clear disputable points, the complexity and the personnel of which can be set according to the actual needs. Then, separate roles should be assigned, including the director, the judge, the jury, the plaintiff and his lawyer, the defendant and his lawyer, the witness, and the bailiff. There is no requirement for the exact number of the people involved, as the number of lawyers and witnesses is not fixed.

Secondly, to clarify role requirements and analyze the case. Through the analysis of the case, the plaintiff's litigation claim, the cause of action, the required witnesses and evidence, as well as the defendant's defense and the related witnesses and evidence, are all made clear. In addition, the respective roles and tasks of the lawyers, judges, juries and bailiffs of each party are clearly defined, and the trial discourse and relevant materials that each role player needs to prepare are determined through consultation.

Thirdly, to coordinate and rehearse. All the links of the trial and the corresponding tasks of the characters having been clarified, the director and all the participants are supposed to be well-coordinated. During the repeated rehearsals, the script will get modified and polished before finally reaching perfection. Furthermore, necessary props such as judges' robes, mallets, police uniform, and lawyers' uniform need to be well prepared, and the required furnishings of the moot court should be confirmed.

Fourthly, to mock the trial. The whole procedure of the trial is conducted in an orderly manner: the judge announcing the opening of the court session, the opening statement, the court inquiry and debate, the final statement, the jury making a ruling, and the judge pronouncing the sentence.

Through the above steps, we can see that the moot court is presented in a multimodal way, in which different modes interact with each other smoothly and effectively. By simulating the real court environment and trial process, the moot court provides students with opportunities and platforms to apply what they have learned to legal practice.

In terms of confrontational moot court, it resembles real court trial, with high simulation and strong antagonism, in which both parties prepare and rehearse separately, without communicating with each other before the trial. Therefore, it is of high practical value. Similar to rehearsal mock court, confrontational moot court involves setting the case, role division, trial material preparation, case analysis, rehearsal, and formal court session. The differences between confrontational moot court and rehearsal mock court lie in the fact that the former imitates the real trial and emphasizes the substantive confrontation. Therefore, every concrete step should be performed on the spot according to the process of the trial, without any preparation in advance. Confrontational moot court is more demanding and difficult, which requires students to have solid legal English knowledge and high proficiency in listening and speaking. Therefore, this kind of multimodal teaching is suitable for senior students.

V. PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED IN PRACTICE

To implement the multimodal teaching mode of legal English is challenging. There still remain certain problems to be solved in practice.

A. Contradiction between Multimodal Teaching and Traditional Teaching

It is noticeable that the multimodal teaching mode of legal English may contradict the traditional teaching mode in that the requirements for time and energy are different. Legal English, as an ESP course, is usually set up as an optional course and covers about two class hours per week. However, the demonstration of multimodal teaching involves a large quantity of time and energy, which puts forward harsh demands for the teacher's competency and devotion. On the other hand, for students, the multimodal teaching mode can be rather helpful for them to grasp in depth certain knowledge points, but it can also be superficial and formal, which is not conducive to the cultivation of their logical thinking ability.

B. The Reform of Ways of Evaluation in Multimodal Teaching Mode

A comprehensive, objective, real and accurate evaluation system plays a crucial role in realizing the objectives of legal English teaching. Under the multimodal teaching/learning mode, a certain number of students will make best use of the advantages and bypass the disadvantages in terms of evaluation index and mode selection. For instance, while studying the chapter of jury system, those extroverted students tend to choose the mode of dynamic performance to present their learning results, while other students may prefer to study the differences in the jury system between the Anglo-American legal system and the Chinese one. How to evaluate these two groups of students remains a question. In this case, a scientific evaluation system which combines formative evaluation with summative evaluation needs to be established. Students are encouraged to present their studying results in a multimodal way, including self-evaluation, mutual evaluation, group presentation, discussion, and, if necessary, test papers. The performance of each mode is added up to the total score according to a certain proportion. Guided by this kind of evaluation system, students can not only input and output information and knowledge in a multimodal form, but also exercise their critical thinking through traditional reading and writing modes.

C. Requirements for Teachers' Sustainable Development

Legal English, if taught in a multimodal mode, will bring about bigger challenges as well more opportunities to teachers. Those teachers who lack the knowledge background of English and American law are supposed to further their study in the hope of becoming qualified legal English teachers. The development of multimodal teaching mode, on the other hand, provides new research directions to the teachers on their teaching methods, classroom case analysis and the transformation of different modes.

Therefore, to satisfy the requirements of multimodal teaching mode for teachers' knowledge and ability, teachers need to keep studying and improve their comprehensive quality.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

With the rapid development of the rule of law in China, there leaves spacious research space in terms of curriculum, teaching methods and teaching content of legal English, due to the continuous improvement of legal provisions, rich judicial cases, increasing business contacts and diversified legal views. As mentioned at the very beginning, the combination of online and offline hybrid teaching will be the general trend, which is actually a mixture of various modes. Teachers need to make full use of network resources and modern teaching equipment, keeping pace with the times to supplement and update teaching content at any time. Hopefully, the multimodal teaching mode can stimulate students' interest in learning, improve students' ability of autonomous learning and cooperative learning, cultivate students' thinking ability in the interdisciplinary fields of linguistics and law, and enhance their application of legal language and practical ability of foreign legal affairs.

REFERENCES

[1] Cheng R. L. & Zhang D. L. (2017). Multimodal Discourse Analysis in China: Taking Journal Articles as an Example. *Foreign Languages in China, 7 (3)*, 36-44.
[2] Gu Y. G. (2007). On Multimedia Learning and Multimodal Learning. *Technology Enhanced. Foreign Language Education, (2)*, 3-12.
[3] Hu Z. L. (2007). Multimodalization in Social Semiotics. *Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies, (1)*, 1-10.
[4] Huang L. H. & Zhang D. L. (2019). Multi-core Parallel System: Paradigm, Path and Domain Issues of Multimodal Research. *Foreign Language Education*, (1), 21-26
[5] Jewitt，C., Bezemer, J. & K., O'Halloran. (2001). Introducing Multimodality. New York: Routledge.
[6] Kress, G. Jewitt, C. Ogborn, J. & Tsatsarelis. C. (2001). Multimodal Teaching and Learning: The Rhetoric of the Science Classroom. London: Continuum.
[7] Lewis, M. (1985). Practical Techniques for Language Teaching. Hove: Jimmie Hill.
[8] Li Z. Z. (2003). Social Semiotic Approach to Multi-modal Discourse. *Foreign Languages Research, (5)*, 1-8.
[9] Li Z. Z. & Lu D. Y. (2012). Multimodal Semiotics: Theoretical basis, Research Approaches and Development Prospects. *Foreign Languages Research, (5)*:1-8.
[10] Norris, S. (2011) Identity in (Inter)action: Introducing Multimodal Interaction Analysis. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 39, 41, 48-50.
[11] Qu. W. S. (2017). Legal English Teaching in China: Problems and Prospects. *Foreign Languages in China, (4), 4-11.*
[12] Royce, T. (2012). Multimodality in the TESOL Classroom: Exploring visual-verbal synergy. *TESOL Quarterly*, *36 (2)*: 191-205.
[13] Zhang D. L. (2009). Theoretical Framework for Multimodal Interaction Analysis. *Foreign Languages in China, (1)*, 24-30.
[14] Zhang D. L. (2010). Preliminary Investigation into the Concept of Design and the Selection of Modalities in Multimodal Foreign Language Teaching. *Chinese Foreign Languages, (3)*, 48-53.
[15] Zhang D. L. & Li Y. X. (2012). A Study of Modal Coordination in Multimodal Classroom Discourse. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching, (1)*, 39-43.
[16] Zhang F. L. (2019). On the subject orientation of legal English. *Foreign Languages in China, (3),* 4-9.
[17] Zhang X. (2020). On the Dilemma and Innovative Application of Moot Court in Colleges. *Legal System and Society (29),* 165-166.
[18] Zhu Y. S. (2007). Theory and Methodology of Multimodal Discourse Analysis. *Foreign Language Research (5)*, 82-86.

Yuehua Lu was born in Yancheng, Jiangsu, China in 1974. She received her PH. D degree in English Language and Literature from Shanghai International Studies University in 2018. She is currently an associate professor in the School of Languages and Cultures, Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, Shanghai, China. Her research interests include Modern Linguistics, Legal English, and English teaching.

Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Nigerian Political Hate Speeches

Harriet Chinyere Obiora
Department of Linguistics, Igbo & Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Sopuruchi Christian Aboh
Department of Linguistics, Igbo & Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Bridget O. Dioka
Centre for Igbo Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Abstract—**The study examines the hate speeches used by the Nigerian politicians within the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Some of the hate speeches used by the Nigerian politicians are selected and analyzed. The objectives of this study include identifying and investigating the hate speeches using critical discourse analysis. The random sampling is used to elucidate data from Nigerian dailies. The data includes hate speeches used by Nigerian politicians against the opposing parties or individuals. The methodology for this research is the descriptive approach. The study finds out that the hate speeches are seen in this study as the use of accusations and judgments, mockery and degradation, propagation and solving problems using disdain statements and the use of rhetoric by the members of All Progressive Congress (APC) and People Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria to show power and dominance over one another.**

Index Terms—**hate speeches, political discourses, APC, PDP, critical discourse analysis**

I. INTRODUCTION

We live in a society where language has a strong influence on lives, opinions and beliefs of the people. The essence of language in communication cannot be over emphasized. Language is very important in the implementation of successful democratic rule in any country. "Language is used to serve variety of needs which are either negative or positive in every society" (Eze, 2015, p. 1). Language is seen as a double-edged sword that should be used tactfully as it could be used to destroy and soothe. Ajalie (2007) observes that language can be used to build a very strong nation and language can be used to tear nation apart. The use of language in speech or writing can be used to influence or incite people. Hate speech is any speech used to reduce or lower the respect given to a person or persons based on their race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and influence or condition the individual to acts of violence. In Nigeria, it is at the heat of the election period or campaign period that most individual slander or insults the political leaders, protests against government policies and propagates against the government. People have been arrested in this country for speaking against the Nigerian government on social media. Though, some of these media information are doctored. Other speeches from some government officials that subordinate their oppositions came to be real. These set of rulers have the aim of achieving their aims through disdain statements. These disdain statements are more achieved through social media. This might be one of demerits of social media in the world and Nigeria in particular. Hate speeches are seen all over the world especially during electoral processes. Ezeibe (2015) avers that hate speech is any speech that is defamatory and can stimulate violence. In accordance to Neisser (1994, p. 337) hate speech refers to "all communications (whether, verbal, written, symbol) that insults a racial, ethnic and political group whether by suggesting that they are inferior in some respect or by indicating that they are despised or not welcome for any other reasons".

Hate speeches are seen in Nigeria on social media print, visual artistic and in the news during or after the election by the two major ruling parties in Nigeria. They are: APC – All Progressive Congress (the ruling party) and PDP – People Democratic Party (Opposition party).

This work will be analyzed using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The study seeks to identify and analyse the hate speeches the Nigerian politicians are employing to achieve their selfish interests without being opposed. The study shall seek to characterize the mind control strategies used by these two parties in executing their hate speeches, in order to control the mind of the public against the other political party.

The study shall find out how hate speeches are used as instruments of dominance by PDP (opposition party) over their dominant party APC (ruling party) counterparts.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Political speeches are defined as speeches by the government or candidates in an office in any discussion of social issues or political issues. They are speeches or strategies or techniques that the government officials or candidates in the government offices use to persuade and make the public to believe in them. Political speeches focus on the public or on the opposition party either to convince or to confuse them on a particular political decision.

Hate speeches occur when a religious group or a political movement systematically attack a specific group or groups in the society through social media of any kind. Some of these media involve radio, television stations, newspapers and internet social media. It is a speech that demeans on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, and disability.

Okafor and Alabi (2017) state that hate speeches are words that wound, which can lead to harm or violence. They concluded that hate speeches refer to every discourse that are hateful in nature, which is used to discriminate against an individual based on their social status, gender, ethnicity, race and religion. Ukwueze and Uche (2015) aver that hate speeches ridicule or attack an individual or a group of people. They stated that in the law of same countries, hate speech is verbal and nonverbal expressions, which is forbidden because it incites violence action against or by a protected individual or group. Weber (2009) states that even though there is no universally accepted definition of hate speech, most state governments in Nigeria adopted a legislation banning expressions amounting to hate speech. Aboh (2019) adds that hate speech can occur between two ethnic groups or political parties and can as well occur within an ethnic group or a political party.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework used is the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Critical Discourse Analysis is a theory or model that examines power relation in discourse analysis. Bastone (1995) argues that CDA is a model of linguistic analysis that seeks to unravel the ideological constructions that are covert in texts. CDA deals with discourse dimensions of power abuse and the injustice that result from it. Gee (2011, p. 68) notes that CDA goes beyond description to handle "social practices, not just in terms of social relationships, but also in terms of their implications for things like status, solidarity and the distribution of social good and power".

van Dijk (1993) observes that the CDA is a model of discourse that deals with social power of groups or institutions. Agbedo (2011) states that language is a tool for power in the sense that those who possess power make it known through their language and that language serves the function of controlling mind and action. Critical discourse analysts understand the nature of social power and dominance. As such, they formulate ideas about how discourse contributes to production of power. It involves the properties for relations among social groups. According to Gee (2011, p. 9) "CDA goal is not just to describe how language works or even to offer deep explanations, though such discourse comes to the limelight of political and social intervention among the people in the world. They also want to speak to and perhaps, intervene in, social or political issues, problems and controversies in the world. They want to apply their work to the world in some fashion."

Fairclough (1992, p. 64) defines discourse "as a practice not work not just of representing the world but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in a meaning". van Dijk (1997:26) defines ideology as a "shared self-definitions of groups that allows group members to coordinate their social practices in relation to other groups. Stibbe (2001, p. 148) affirms that "ideologies are embedded through discourse, influence the individual members' representation of a society's members, which in turn influence their actions.

van Dijk (1993) states that CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 27-280) summarize the main tenets of CDA as follows: "CDA addresses social problems; Power relations are discursive; Discourse does ideological work; Discourse constitutes society and culture; Discourse is historical; The link between text and society is mediated; Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory; Discourse is a form of social action."

IV. EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Ezeibe (2015) analyzes the hate speech and electoral violence in Nigeria. He analyzes the effects of hate speech on pre, during and post election violence in Nigeria. He observes that the political leaders in Nigeria neglect the provocative tendencies of hate speech so long as it enables them to capture and retain political power and hate speech has been elevated to the status of political campaign strategy. For example, he said that the hate speech has eaten deep into the bone marrows of Nigerians and hatred between the ethnic groups that makeup Nigeria. The hate speech is among the dominant ethnic groups Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The Igbo and Yoruba people see the Hausa people as 'abokis' which though means friends but derogatorily, it means a moron. In a similar vein, the Hausa and the Yoruba people see the Igbo people as 'anyamiri' meaning lovers of money while the Hausa and the Igbo people see the Yoruba people as 'ndị ofe mmanụ' meaning cowards and saboteurs. He concluded that the independent national electoral commission and other civil society organizations should identify and prosecute individuals and organisations that breached the relevant laws governing electoral campaigns and public speeches in Nigeria.

Abiodun, Olusola and Kehinde (2017) investigate hate speech during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. They observed that during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria, that the political environment was intensified with different

adverts and propaganda messages. The media organizations in Nigeria are used as vehicles and channels of expression and propaganda. They noted that these messages had element of hate speeches, which were targeted at ridiculing the opponents & opposition parties. They evaluated the extent at which hate speeches were used during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. For example, they analyzed the speech made by the Kastina State Governor, Ibrahim Shema, where he urged his supporters to reprise any provocation by the opposition and to kill them like they kill cockroaches. They concluded that the political actors that engaged in the use of hate speeches during electioneering should be punished according to the electoral laws of the country.

Agbedo (2008) uses CDA perspective for analysing the communicative characters of manipulations in President Umaru Musa Yar adua's 2001 budget speech. He observes the analysis of 2001 budget speech of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua as presented to the session of the National Assembly of Nigeria as showing manifestations of manipulation at the different levels of language. He shows the semantics, syntactic and pragmatic levels of manipulation & the effect it has on the recipient's mental models as instance of an abuse of ideological power.

Agbedo (2011) uses a CDA perspective of fuel subsidy removal and the mind control game in Nigeria. In his paper, he tends to characterize the discourse of oil subsidy removal as a fundamental component of economic reforms in Nigeria while the dominant group represented by the federal government canvasses capitalist – driven free mercerization of the economy, the dominated group represented by the labour unions, civil society groups and their negative effects on the poor masses in Nigeria.

Agbedo, Obiora & Ahamefula (2016) investigate regulated women and manipulative language use in African proverbs: A critical Discourse Analysis perspective. They analyzed African proverbs but with particular focus on Igbo proverb as a discourse form. For example

    a.   *Nwanyi leda di ya anya, Ike akpo ya nku* – interpretation: when a woman despises her husband, she loses favour from him, and she suffers.

This proverb that is contemptuous of the woman and feminist generally links a woman's success directly to the mercy of the husband. The implication of this statement goes to becloud the minds of women in our society with the perverted indoctrination that womanhood, wife hood and successes attached to them do derive directing from the grace of the husband. They observed that there are elements of oppression and male dominance in some Igbo proverbs that relate to women and recommends a change in the way the society views women to check the undue regulations of women.

Agbedo (2012) studies power manifestations and manipulations in interactive discourses: evidence from Ezikeoba Elders council. Agbedo relies of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective to discern the linguistic forms that create unequal balance of power relations and determine the extent to which the traditional judicial system can be listed in the interpretation of interactional power. As Agbedo further observes the interactional power as follows: asymmetrical employment of politeness strategies, address forms, prerogative use of proverbs resources/topic selection and sustenance use of evaluative statements, negotiation on speaking turns and speaking rights, questioning, over statement of power and dominant interpretive framework. He concluded that these are the interpretation of the different power equations that exist in Ezikeoba Elders council.

V. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

A. Data

Text 1

The defections that hit the All Progressive Congress (APC) were due to the fact that the APC at the Federal Government level has failed Nigerians. He declared that the (APC) Federal Government runs on vindictiveness, intimidation and illegality. The defections are due to failure of APC Federal Government (Ref. Governor Wike on July 28, 2018 by Emmanuel Okogba Vanguard news online.www.vanguardngr.com).

Text 2

"Ekiti is a no go area, I have been your governor for the past four years and there has been no herdsmen attack or violence" (Ref. Ekiti is a no go area, fayose warns APC on July 7, 2018, www.vanguardngr.com).

Text 3

The Governor of River State, Gov. Wike stated that the police high command has promoted the Sars and the Assistant Commissioner of Police over their criminal role in the rigging of rerun elections on December, 2016 and beating INEC officials, Democracy in Nigeria has gone. "The police are the one promoting crime in Nigeria. Most of the kidnapping in the country are done by the police". We cannot continue like this enough is enough! APC has made it a policy to intimidate and destroy the judiciary. (Ref. Wike accuses APC of laying structures to rig 2019 election, August 14, 2018, www.punchng.com).

Text 4

"With PDP's claim on the press statement, it is deliberately attempting to divert public attention from the comical performance put up by Governor Ayodale Fayose". The story of how Gov. Fayose used the security agencies to manipulate the last election is still fresh in the memory of the people. "Winning a free and fair election is a strange territory to him and that is why he is looking stranded, "it is therefore mischievous of PDP to continue to claim that the police assaulted Fayose on Wednesday after Fayose himself apologized to the police for lying against their officers"

(Ref. Ekiti election alleged attack on Fayose is a comical performance. The above statement culled from the APC national secretary, Bolaji Abdullahi on 12/08/2018 by Gbenga Bada Premium Times, Tribune online).

Text 5

"On this Ekiti election, President Buhari demonstrated truly what is not a Democratic dispensation, but a dictator and fascist pet excellence," it is only Buhari who will pride himself with the security shooting sporadically at polling centres, scaring people to pave way for the APC thugs to snatch ballot boxes. The president should bury his head in shame for using the Police, Army, Nigeria security, Civil Defence Corps and INEC to snatch the mandate given to Olusola & deliver it to Fayemi".

"Feyemi's victory is a day light robbery, a brazen subversion of the will of the people and a direct assault on our democracy" (Ref. I don't lose battles; Fayose reacts to Ekiti Election Result, attacks Buhari by Akinola Ajibola, July 16, 2018. Pulse. nglogo).

Text 6

"As your Governor I will never surrender your mandate and abiding interest of our state to our enemies who seek to keep us enslaved and plundered even at the pain of death. Habile Joshak shamelessly claimed that they acted to the Governor".

"Today's brutal actions were therefore carried out in furtherance of the deliberate plan to intimate the people of Ekiti State in order to facilitate the actualization of the devilish intentions of the enemies of democracy" (Ref. Gov. Nyesom Wike of Rivers State condemned the brazen attack on Ekiti State by the Nigerian police – July 11, 2018 www.vanguardngr.com).

Text 7

"That is a cheap talk and Nigeria should not regard it. I think that has become Fayose style of talk and Nigerians must never take those kinds of talk serious because is capable of creating confusion in the system (Ref. Fayose's remark on Buhari is a hate speech as written by Okorocha, Leon Usigbe in Augsut 14, 2018 on *Nigerian tribune*).

Text 8

"Three years down the line, Nigeria had become a war zone because the present governments alleged in competence. There is no way APC will win, look at the country, Are we united, Are we stable, Are we prosperous? Are we secured? We have become a world embarrassment; we are becoming an ancient nation. There is no way Buhari will come back no matter, what he does, because he knows he is a contraption who ride on the notions of the Nigerian people based on blackmail, sentiment and hate speech" (Ref. Governor Lamido: President Buhari came to power through blackmail, hate speech stated by Mahmud Dan Fulani, March 23, 2018).

In the next section, we shall explain the disdain between the ruling party (APC) and the opposition party (PDP) to analyze and determine the extent or the strategy used by both parties to control the mind of the people by the more powerful group to reproduce dominance and social inequality.

B. Accusations and Judgments as a Strategy Used by the Opposition Party (PDP)

van Dijk (1997) states that one of the senses of ideology is a mode of thought and practice developed by dominant groups in order to reproduce and legitimatize their domination. In the texts 1 – 3, the opposition party (PDP) used all these words to denigrate the person or dignity of the group or persons involved. Governor Wike pointed out that the ruling party (APC) runs their government on illegality and intimation, Fayose stated that the invasion of the herdsmen attack on Ekiti State is due to the APC government and Wike accuses the APC government on using the police in promoting the crime in the country like kidnapping, killings and also promoting the SARs and the commissioner of police over their criminal role in rigging the election. Using all these invective words on the ruling party (APC) is to run them and disparages the party. But the PDP (opposition party) members, Governor Wike and Governor Fayose, with the rest of PDP party members did not see it as a hate speech but as a speech that will promote or give their own party an edge to the opposition party (APC) while the opposition party members see it as an offensive statement. Dijk shows how discourse structure may influence the formation and change of mental and social representation, that the dominant groups control public discourse, its structure and have more control over the minds of the public at large.

1. The use of mockery and degrading statements

Rogers et. al (2005:37) analysis of this dimension involves exploration of the ways in which discourses operate in various domains of the society. Text 4, 7, and 8 shows the use of hate speeches between the APC candidates, Bolaji Abdullahi, Okorocha and PDP candidate, Governor Lamido. APC secretary stated that PDP are trying to divert the public attention through their comical performance over their claim. Okorocha stated that Fayose's talks are cheap and should not be regarded by Nigerians, and Fayose's kind of talk is capable of creating confusion in the system. On the other hand, Lamido states that Nigerian had become a war zone due to the APC incompetence, we have become a world of embarrassment and that Buhari is a contraption, are we united? Are we secure? Are we stable? Who ride on the notions of the Nigerian people based on blackmail, sentiment and hate speeches?

For Bolaji to use such statement on the PDP members as being a comical performance is a derogatory expression of qualifying the PDP's as being comedians. Okorocha's statement for describing a notable politician like Fayose as making a cheap statement that is capable of creating confusion in the system is a kind of criticising the person of Fayose in the public as making a cheap statement, but low statement are statements made by people with poor intellectual is a degrading statement. van Dijk (1995a) observes that variations of relevance or importance of a news items are open to

ideological control. For instance, information that is inconsistent with the interests of powerful groups may be downgraded. Lamido's statement against Buhari has made somebody like the President of the country, Buhari to lose his dignity and self respect. Lamido used conundrum questions in other to win the mind of the (publics), Nigerians against their President, Buhari. He stated that Buhari is not compliance to the Nigerians due to his blackmail and hate speeches. While describing the President Buhari as a blackmailer that uses hate speeches in appropriate and unreasonable statements make the President looks worthless to the people of Nigerian.

Bolaji, Okorocha and Lamido's statements are statements that cause somebody (groups) to lose their dignity and appear foolish to the public. These statements influence the mental representations of these parties, APC and PDP. These mental representations are part of what van Dijk (1997) calls social cognition because members of a society share them through participation in, and exposure to discourse. Using such malign statements against either APC or PDP has been realized as weapons of dominance to the opposition party.

2. The use of propaganda and solving problems by using disdain statements as a mind control strategy

Damico et al (2005) see power and its manipulations in the social and cultural contexts in this modern society as being pervasive. Fayose noted it when he describes Buhari as dictator, fascist per excellence and using APC thugs to snatch the boxes in winning the Ekiti election with his power everywhere. Fayose stated that the President should bury his head in shame for using the police, army, Nigerian security, civil defense corps and INEC to snatch the mandate given to Olusola and deliver it to Fayemi. Here, Fayose uses such exaggerated statement to brainwash the public against the President in the results of Ekiti election on the actual statement of Fayose it runs thus: "Fayemi's victory is a day light robbery, a brazen subversion of the will of the people and a direct assault on our democracy".

Ofshe (2003) state that the minds control is a systematic manipulation of psychological and social influence, where a group or individual systematically uses manipulative methods to persuade others to conform to the wishes of the manipulators, often by causing harm to the person being manipulated. Fayose calling Fayemi's victory a day light robbery is an inflammatory statement and that Fayemi's victory is shameful by trying to or destroying the political system of the people's will and a direct violent attack on the system of the government. Here, Fayose is trying to manipulate and influence the minds of the public against the (APC) and the president by calling Fayemi's victory a day light robbery. The members of the opposition party (PDP) may see the statement as a mere word but the members of the ruling party (APC) will see it as a hate speech. The use of such statement only fosters a complex inferiority for the (APC) members making them to feel very ashamed for destroying the political system.

3. The use of rhetoric

Text 6 shows how the Governor Nyesom Wike of the Rivers State is trying to use language in an impressive way to influence the people of Ekiti State and the public.

"As your Governor I will never surrender your mandate and abiding interests of our state to our enemies, who seek to keep us, enslave and plundered even at the point of death". Gov Wike uses conviction as his own way of influencing the public against the APC by belittling them.

Van Dijk (1991) exposes how racists, sexists and other ideologies are expressed in discourse through demeaning words that belittle other discourse participants. Wike continued "Habila Joshak shamelessly claimed that they acted to the Governor. Today's brutal actions were therefore carried out in furtherance of the deliberate plan to intimidate the people of the Ekiti State in order to facilitate the actualization of the devilish intentions of the enemies of democracy". Wike uses negative words or information that is against the APC government to influence the public and the Rivers State people in favour of their PDP counterparts. Wike uses such statement to influence the public against the APC government. The opposition party (PDP) did not consider the statement as being offensive but their counterpart the ruling party (APC) see it as a hate speech by calling them the enemies of democracy. Nielsen (2002) avers that the degradation and humiliation brought by hate speech can silence the victims and therefore reinforce existing hierarchies in society.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study has looked at selected Nigerian political hate speeches and how some hate discourses are deployed to show social dominance and to create unequal power relations between the APC (ruling party) and the PDP (opposition party). The study shows the social power of group or groups or institutions as a central notion in most studies in CDA. The analysis reveals the extent which the dominant party in Nigeria politics use all manner of hate speeches to influence and manipulate the public over the dominated group. While the dominant group is represented by the opposition party (PDP) and the dominated group is represented by the ruling party (APC). Van Dijk (1996) states that social power to have (more or less) power by the group or individual to be able to control the acts and minds of other groups. An example is seen in Nigeria where the members of the ruling party (APC) are deflecting to their opposition party (PDP). The result of the study also indicates that there are elements of breach of laws, intimidations, disdain languages and violation of rights of the dominated groups. Perhaps, the objectives of the study have been achieved from the findings. In Nigeria, the media, cultural, religious and ethnic groups also aggravate the situation by making public hate speeches against each other. The study recommends that another researcher continues with a conversational analysis of selected Nigerian political polite speeches.

References

[1] Aboh, S. C. (2019). Political discourse analysis of hate speeches in Nigeria. MA dissertation, Department of Linguistics, Igbo and other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

[2] Abiodun, F., Olusola, Y, & Kehinde, O. (2017). Hate speech and the 2015 General elections in Nigeria. *International Journal of Advances in Social Sciences*, *4.3*, 10-11. Retrieved from http:iiijasos.ocerintjournals.org 948. Accessed on 20th December 2017.

[3] Agbedo, C.U. (2011). Fuel subsidy removal and the mind control game in Nigeria: A critical discourse analysis perspective. Paper presented at 24 the Annual Conference of the Linguistics Association of Nigeria (LAN), Bayero University, Kano.

[4] Agbedo, C.U. (2012). Power manifestations and manipulations in interactive discourse: Evidence from Ezikeoba elder's council. *Journal of Research on Humanities and Social Sciences, 2* (27), (1-10)

[5] Agbedo, C., Obiora, H & Ndubuisi, O. (2016). Regulated women and manipulative language use in African proverbs: A critical discourse analysis perspective. *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies, 1*, 37 – 60.

[6] Ajalie, C.I. (2007). Promoting positive attitude towards English language learning in globalization. *Journal of Linguistics and Literary Studies, 2*(1), 110 – 115.

[7] Bastone, R. (1995). Grammar in discourse: Attitude and deniability. In G. cook and B. Seidlhofer, (Eds.), *Principle and Practice in Applied Linguistics, 2*(1), 97 – 213. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[8] Damico, J.S., Simmons, M. N & Hawley, H. (2005). Language and power. In M. J Ball (Eds.), *Clinical sociolinguistics* (pp. 63 – 73). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

[9] Eze, C.N. (2015). A pragmatic study of euphemistic expressions in Igbo. Ph.D. thesis, Department of Linguistics, Igbo & Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

[10] Ezeibe, C. (2015). Hate speech and electoral violence in Nigeria: A seminar paper submitted to the Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

[11] Fairclough, N.C. (1992). Discourse and social change. London: Polity Press.

[12] Fairclough, N. L. & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.) *Discourse studies. A multidisciplinary introduction* (pp. 258-284). London: Sage.

[13] Gee, J.P (2011). An introduction to discourse analysis, theory and method. (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

[14] Neisser, E. (1994). Hate speech in the New South Africa: Constitutional consideration for a land Recovery from Decades of Rational Repression and Violence. *South African Journal of Human Rights, 10,* 333 – 356.

[15] Nielsen, L.B (2002). Subtle, pervasive, harmful racist and sexist remarks in public as hate speech. *Journal of Social Issues, 58*, 2 – 5.

[16] Ofshe, J.R. (2003). Coercive persuasion and attitudinal change. *Encyclopedia of Sociology, 1*. New York: Macmillan Publishers.

[17] Okafor, V.C. & Alabi, T.O (2017). A speech analysis of hate speeches in the 2015 general election campaign in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature, 5*(6), 61 – 72.

[18] Rogers, R., Malancharuvi, E, Mosley, M, Hui, D. & Joseph, G. (2008). Critical discourse analysis in education: A review of the literature. *A Review of Educational Research, 75*(3), 365 – 416.

[19] Stibbe, A. (2001). Language, power & social construction of animals. *Society and Animals, 9*(2) 145 – 161.

[20] Ukwueze, C.I. & Uche, A. (2015). The rise of hate & peace journalism in the Nigerian democratization process: The place of the news media. *Communication Panorama African & Global Perspective, 1* (1), 38 – 50.

[21] van Dijk, T.A. (1991). Racism and the press. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

[22] van Dijk, T.A. (1993). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse and Society, 4*(2), 83-249.

[23] van Dijk, T.A (1996). Discourse, power and access. In R.C. Caldas–Coulthard and M. Coulthard (Eds.), *Texts and practices: Readings in critical discourse analysis* (pp. 84 – 104). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

[24] van Dijk, T. A. (1997). Discourse studies. London: Sage Publishers.

[25] Weber, A, (2009). Manual on hate speech. Council of Europe Publishing Strasbourg. Retrieved from http://book.coe on 8/8/2018.

[26] Wodak, R. & van Dijk, T. (2008). Racism at the top. Austria: Drava.

Harriet Obiora is a native of Ogbunike, Anambra State. She bagged BA in Linguistics from Ebonyi State University and MA in Linguistics from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Harriet specialises in Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics.

She has published "Cognitive semantic analysis of titular names in Ogbunike speech community" in *Ikoro Journal*.

Mrs. Obiora is a member of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria.

Sopuruchi C. Aboh was born in Aba, Abia State on 20th November. He had his Bachelor of Arts Degree and Master of Arts Degree in Linguistics at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Sopuruchi specialises in sociolinguistics and pragmatics.

He has published some articles including: "The ideology of post-truth in Nigerian cities: A discourse historical analysis", *Journal of Linguistic Association of Nigeria*, 22(1), 64-78 and "A comparative analysis of lexical prepositions in the Ibibio and Igbo languages", *Macrolinguistics*, 6(9), 36-45.

Mr. Aboh is a member of Pragmatics Association of Nigeria, Nigeria Ecolinguistics Association, and Nigerian Institute of Translators and Interpreters.

Bridget Ogechi Dioka was born in Mbaise, Imo State on the 2nd of February. She's got BA and MA degrees in Linguistics and Igbo language at the University of Lagos, Akoka. She specialises in Semantics and Igbo language. She has published a chapter in

Chinua Achebe and the convolution of immortality (pp. 75-84). She is also a PhD student in the Department of Linguistics, Igbo and Other Nigerian Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Has Differentiated Instruction Gone 'Awry' in Online Teaching and Learning?

Faizah Idrus
Kulliyyah of Education, The International Islamic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Nur Afini Zainal Asri
Kulliyyah of Education, The International Islamic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Nurin Najihah Baharom
Kulliyyah of Education, The International Islamic University Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Abstract—**Differentiated Instruction (DI) is a classroom strategy that helps teachers to cater their teachings to students with different abilities and learning needs. The issue here is whether DI is still relevant in the online teaching and learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the aim of this paper is to explore selected ESL teachers' practices of differentiated instructions in their online classes. It also seeks to examine challenges these teachers withstand while implementing DI in their online classrooms. A qualitative design employing the semi-structured interviews and teachers' reflection notes are used as data collection instruments. A total of six English language teachers from three selected schools in Malaysia took part in this investigation. Thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke (2006) is applied. The findings revealed that environmental strain, resources constraint and students' and parents' attitudes are the main challenges in DI while teaching in an online platform.**

Index Terms—**Differentiated Instruction (DI), online teaching and learning, strategies, challenges, ESL teachers**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Is Differentiated Instructions still Relevant in Online Teaching and Learning?

The education scenario has taken a huge turn when the world is plagued with the Covid-19 pandemic. At present, education across the globe demonstrates significant changes in student teaching and learning and the platforms used for lessons' delivery. What is more alarming is the way in which students receive education with the sudden halt of face to face teaching and learning. As Dudley and Osváth (2016) mentioned that characteristics of students vary significantly in relation to their cultural, ethnic, linguistic, academic, socioeconomic and cognitive backgrounds and differing learning needs, online teaching and learning would greatly be a challenge to teachers, students, as well as parents and guardians. While this change can be beneficial for students and/or parents, it can also create pressure for teachers to plan effective instructions that focus on the needs of the diverse groups of students. Despite the fact that scholars (before the pandemic struck) recommended that differentiated instruction (DI) to be a reasonable alternative to address the issue of varying needs, very little information can be obtained to identify whether the same can be carried out in online platforms. The question to what extent do teachers go all out to practice DI, especially when teaching and learning are carried out online, is a rugged terrain to be explored. When DI is concerned, Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) surmised that it is based on the following sets of assumptions: (a) readiness to learn, interests, learning styles, lived experiences and life circumstances differ in same aged students; (b there is evident significance in these differences which can impact the students' learning needs; (c) the connection students make between the curriculum and their life experiences along with their interests indicates the quality of learning the students; and (d) the fundamental job of schools is to maximize the potential of each child (www.uwispace.sta.uwi.edu). In addition to online teaching and learning, a new set of assumption can be added to the existing ones which is; students with varying needs, would need specific platforms and/or online tools to cope with the demand of online learning. With the current scenario, more criteria have to be added to the list of assumptions. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate selected ESL teachers' practices of differentiated instructions in their online classes. It also seeks to examine challenges these teachers face while implementing DI in their online classrooms.

B. Significance of the Study

The implementation of mixed-ability classrooms in all secondary schools in Malaysia calls for effective teaching strategies. Hence, DI was introduced as a teaching framework that takes into account students' readiness, interests and background knowledge. Little information was able to be retrieved on DI in the current situation, although a study stated several challenges encountered including lack of time, minimal professional development workshops or

considering DI as another educational trend that may quickly pass and get replaced with new strategies (Robinson, Maldonado & Whaley, 2014). A particular study revealed that the gifted and talented students at PERMATApintar (a centre for gifted students) with different skill levels fail to fulfil their learning needs when they were in an inclusion setting in the absence of DI (Hasrul, Hazita & Azizah, 2015). With students currently learning from home (due to the pandemic) in online teaching and learning, it is interesting to explore how students with differing abilities fair and whether there are other alternative strategies used by teachers to fulfill the needs of their students.

Hence, the objectives that we seek to achieve are to:
1) examine ESL teachers' perceptions regarding the implementation of differentiated instruction (DI) in online teaching and learning classrooms
2) investigate ESL teachers' practices of differentiated instruction (DI) in online classrooms.
3) analyse challenges ESL teachers face when implementing differentiated instruction (DI) online.

C. *Is Differentiated Instruction Still Relevant at the Current Climate*?

Implementing differentiated instruction is essential for teachers who aspire to help develop students of mixed skill levels learn, but the teachers in these classrooms are faced with many challenges even before the Covid-19 pandemic struck (Tamirat & Xiaoduan, 2020). Based on literatures which pointed to teachers' challenges to practice DI, and students not meeting the standards, there is justification that this study is needed to understand Malaysian ESL teachers' perceptions and what support they need to help overcome any challenges they face. Understanding the kind of support teachers need could lead to educational decision makers offering them professional development which could further promote teachers' effective use of differentiated instruction in online platforms.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Examining Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated Instruction (DI) refers to a philosophy of teaching and a proactive student-centered approach for teaching diverse learners in a supported and heterogeneous environment driven by assessment of the instruction (Hellman, 2007; Suprayogi, 2017; Tomlinson, 2014). Similarly, Valiandes (2015) stressed that differentiated instruction is a learning design which calibrate instructions to meet the students' diverse learning needs, provide each student with corresponding level of challenge, and equip support to help students achieve their learning goals. In the same vein, Blaz (2006) opined that differentiated instruction is the standards and curriculum that inform the students of required knowledge and differentiated instruction techniques help teachers guide the students to the knowledge while teaching them how to learn. Hence, the definition of differentiated instruction encompasses the students reaching the same academic goal, but with the tools of differentiated instruction, as for the process of arriving there is unique and different for each student.

Kryza, Duncan, and Stephens (2010) suggested five elements to differentiate in terms of chunk (new information is presented to the learner), chew (the learner has to make sense of the information), check (the teacher checks if the learner has processed the information), environment (tone and setting of the classroom), and content (what we teach). On the other hand, Tomlinson (1999) emphasized that the core of differentiated instruction is flexibility in content, process, and product. Content is what students are to master or learn from the instruction; process is how the students must complete the learning content; and product is how the learning is demonstrated or observed (Bender, 2012; Cox, 2008).

Taylor (2015) surmised differentiating content is when teachers can vary the level of complexity. This means teachers can provide various suitable materials for the same content or syllabus depending on the students' specific needs instead of using textbooks that caters for everyone. Meanwhile for differentiating process teachers can stretch the learning activities based on the students' interests or learning styles. The students can learn the same content by doing various activities that can evoke their interests. Hence, the learning process would not either be too boring or too difficult for them.

According to Chin (2015) many language teachers do not differentiate their instruction in terms of content. This is due to the insufficient resources for language teachers (Kao, 2014; Reese, 2011). However, it is known that the majority of the English teachers differentiate their instruction in terms of process and product, such as flexible grouping (Sun,2015; Yeh, 2012) or tiered assignments (Alavinia & Sadeghi, 2013; Chen, 2007; Chen et al., 2014; Chien, 2015a, 2015b; Lin, 2014; Tu, 2012). Sun (2015) and Yeh (2012) employed student team achievement for cooperative learning as a differentiated process.

The effectiveness of differentiated instruction is evident. Servilio (2009) conducted a research on the effectiveness of using differentiated instruction to motivate students to read. Students were provided reading materials of their preference, different choice for reflection of reading materials and different methods of connecting their reading via extended researching, composing a song to memorize rules given to George Washington in battle, or picture drawing with their own explanation for the drawings. She found, "An average of 83.4% of the students' grades improved in reading, 12.5% remained the same, and 4.1% of the grades decreased" (Servilio, 2009, p. 10). She went on to suggest that it is imperative that teachers get to know their students and utilize acquired knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses to create activities that are of the students' interest upon using differentiated instruction. This is because the

research finding shows when students' interests are at the forefront of teachers' planning and preparation, it is possible to fully engage students thus enhance their academic performance over time (Ratcliff et al, 2012). In addition, Tomlinson (1999) found that by investigating differentiated instruction strategies, the students' verbal and writing proficiency are enhanced. Furthermore, Mizell (2010) differentiated instruction is essential in improving students' learning, improve self-esteem, and generate a positive attitude towards the school. Similarly, a study by Morgan (2014) revealed that students have increased motivation and better achievement when differentiated activity was catered to their interests and strengths.

Prior to the implementation of DI, teachers must be able to recognize students' readiness, abilities and needs. Tomlinson (2005) stated that students' readiness refers to students' preparedness for the ability, skill and concept of a given subject. Students' interest also refers to the attention, curiosity and involvement of a student in a given topic (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010). Whereas, according to Tomlinson & Imbeau (2010) learning profile, which embraces gender, culture, learning styles, multiple intelligences and learning preferences of students, involves a preference for taking in, exploring, or expressing content. These preferences influence the students' proficiency and efficiency in learning.

Several studies have been conducted pertaining to the outcomes of differentiated instruction on students' learning within the Malaysian education system. Esther (2015) investigated the practices of differentiated reading instruction by secondary school teachers in the ESL classroom on two ESL teachers and 76 students' reading skill. This case study involved interviewing two ESL teachers, distributing Multiple Intelligences Survey to 15-year-olds as well as classroom observations. The researcher concluded that, despite the challenges revealed by the teachers when differentiating their lessons, the differentiated lessons had managed to evoke active participation in reading classroom where the activities were structured according to students' level and pace of learning. However, hitherto, no studies have been conducted on DI in online learning platforms. It is interesting to know the strategies teachers use should they implement DI in their online lessons.

Hasrul, Hazita and Azizah (2015) explored the effects of differentiated instruction on the gifted students at the PERMATApintar National Gifted Center from ESL teachers' perspectives. They reported that the teachers agreed that differentiated lessons promote spaces for student-centered with plenty of opportunities for active involvement. Despite receiving several training sessions on differentiated instruction, teachers indicated that designing appropriate strategies for the gifted students was challenging due to time constraints and insufficient guidelines by the authority.

III. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this research is to understand and uncover ESL teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction strategies used in their online lessons in the midst of Covid-19. Qualitative research design employing semi-structured interviews was used. Qualitative research is suitable in this investigation as researchers could explore a problem and develop an understanding of the meaning, provide a literature review to justify the problem, state the purpose and research questions, and collect, analyse, and interpret the data.

A. Settings

The investigation centred around 3 selected schools in Kuala Lumpur, Batu Pahat as well as a school in Selangor.

B. Instruments

1. Semi-structured Interview

The participants consisted of six English language teachers who had had more than 5 years experience as English Language teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. Each interview took place approximately 45 minutes. The questions were open ended and revolved around their teaching experience, feelings on using differentiated instruction, online lessons amidst the pandemic, and how their strategies and practices have influenced their students' abilities to progress in their learning.

2. Respondents

The target participants of this research were six high school English language teachers. Each of them had had some experiences in carrying out differentiated instructions in their lessons. The gender of the respondents is not taken into consideration.

TABLE 1
PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

	Years Teaching	Years in Current School	Years Using DI
FN	5	4	4-5
DB	21	4	8
AJ	5	1	1
NK	5	1	1
KL	5	5	3
WM	5	6	0.5

<center>IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION</center>

Data analysis of this study involved exploring detailed verbatim transcripts to identify themes found within the teachers' responses to the interview questions. The first three interview questions aimed at collecting information regarding the teachers' professional background particularly their experiences in English language teaching before and after the Covid-19 pandemic, their experience in practicing differentiated instruction as a strategy and the differences of DI face-to-face and having to do it online. All of them had at least five years teaching experience. Most teachers had taught at the same school throughout their teaching career. Majority practiced differentiated instruction since they began teaching in the schools. One exception was WM, who said her first few months of teaching career was "a very challenging journey" as she was new to the area and her experience through practicum was inadequate to implement differentiated instruction and overcome the challenges in the classrooms. Since they had taught a minimum of five years, it appeared that each teacher would have classroom management under control which is necessary to successfully implement differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2001).

A. Thematic Coding of Data Source

<center>TABLE 2
THEMATIC CODING OF DATA SOURCE: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS</center>

	Codes Identified	**Selected Themes Identified**
1. Understanding DI concept	1. Use of different strategies 2. Addressing students' diversity	Understanding of DI
2. Perception	1. Meeting varying students' needs 2. Challenging task	1. DI as an essential approach to teaching 2. DI as a challenging approach to teaching
3. Utilising DI before the Pandemic	1. Differentiated content 2. Differentiated process	Application of Differentiated Instruction in ESL classrooms
4. Utilising DI during the Pandemic	1. Challenging task to practice DI 2. Impossible to carry out DI	DI has not been practised thus far during the pandemic
4. Challenges in school 5. Challenges in differentiated classrooms	1. Environmental strain 2. Resource constraint 3. Students' attitudes 4. Connectivity 5. Attitudes	Challenges to implementing Differentiated Instruction in ESL classrooms face to face and online
6. Ways to overcome challenges	1. Support from Ministry of Education (MoE) 2. Support from colleagues 3. More trainings are needed	Resources and trainings to enhance the practice of Differentiated Instruction in online ESL classrooms

B. Understanding of Differentiated Instruction

It is imperative for teachers to have a thorough understanding of the DI concept to implement differentiated instruction into professional practice, with its specific strategies, because without such knowledge, differentiation can be impossible to be enforced effectively (Prast et al., 2018). This is because differentiated instruction is not a single arena, but a combination of both conceptual orientation and practical application (Pham, 2012). When asked for their understanding of DI, most of the teachers demonstrated similar responses by acknowledging that differentiation involved providing all students within their diverse classroom community with different avenues for their learning and mastery. DB stated:

> So, I cannot just generalize, this group belongs to this group and knows everything. I have to specify their needs. Let's say I give them a test, so I have in that test, I will know this group needs more on writing, so this group needs to learn reading first, give a list of readings for them so that they can write better. Meaning that, for me differentiated learning is… I need to understand what students' needs are in learning language. (DB 21)

FN expressed:

> It is a framework of teaching and providing my pupils what they need in the classroom given the fact that we have a wide range of learners in class. In other words, it is how I teach, how I give work, how I assess them based on their diverse ability. (FN 13)

NK asserted:

> Based on my own understanding, differentiated instruction is when the teacher adjusts or paraphrases instructions/activities for different groups of students. This can happen either in the same class or through several classes whereby I would use the same rough content of the lesson plan, and then further adjust it to suit the level of the students/classes. (NK 14)

The data showed two specific codes that define differentiated instruction: (1) use of different strategies and (2) addressing students' diversity. (1) Use of different strategies: When asked to define differentiated instruction, DB associated it with the use of a variety of different instructional strategies. She elaborated it with examples: "I will know this group needs more on writing, so this group needs to learn reading first, give a list of readings for them so that they can write better." Use of different strategies is one of the significant aspects used to define differentiated instruction in

most existing literature. Tomlinson (2014) stated that, differentiated instruction can be implemented through a variety of instructional strategies by differentiating content, process and product that is aligned with students' readiness, interests and learning profiles. Similarly, Turner, Solis and Kincade (2017) highlighted that to use appropriate instructional strategies, teachers need to take into account their students' individual differences. Based on the above literature, it can be postulated that the definition given by the teacher is appropriate in terms of the importance of utilizing multiple instructional strategies to cater to students' needs.

It was observed that while emphasizing variation in instructional strategies, FN, AJ, KL and NK articulated different instructional strategies aligned with students' diversity. The teachers stressed students' diversity through expressions such as "a wide range of learners in class", "students with different abilities" and "different groups of students". In addition, students' diversity was supported with elaborations by the teachers. For instance, FN reported, "it is how I teach, how I give work, how I assess them based on their diverse ability". NK also noted, "I would use the same rough content of the lesson plan, and then further adjust it to suit the level of the students/classes". The findings illustrated similar strands describing differentiated instruction as attending to students' individual needs by providing tasks and activities that are appropriate to the level of the students.

The above findings are in line with literature explicating that addressing students' diversity is one prevalent aspect of differentiated instruction. Tomlinson (2001) emphasized teachers who utilised DI must take into consideration students' levels, needs and interests. It is how an instruction is tailored to meet the needs of diverse learners so that all students within a classroom can learn effectively, regardless of differences in their ability. And when the differences are well accommodated, students learn best (Tomlinson, 2005). These literatures validated the current findings of addressing students' diversity which could be an appropriate way to define differentiated instruction.

Strikingly, the result revealed that, although the model of differentiated instruction describes differentiation using three main components: (1) content, (2) process and (3) product, all teachers focused their definition heavily on the content and process only. None of them highlighted product to define the concept. Moreover, the teachers did not use common vocabulary associated with the approach such as content, process or product. This shows that the teachers possess limited knowledge about differentiated instruction in general, hence, it could be hypothesised that differentiated instruction is not only a challenge to practice, but is also difficult to understand.

C. Differentiated Instruction as an Essential Approach to Teaching (Face-to-face)

In general, there was a mutual feeling among the teachers that differentiated instruction was an essential approach to teaching face-to-face that assisted them in meeting varying students' needs. KL stated: I feel that it is very effective in catering to the needs of the pupils and it can mediate my teaching based on what they need. (FN 22). Sharing on its importance, DB responded while providing some examples:

> I find it much easier in order to understand some students. When I try to reach them, I can understand their problem better. For example, disciplinary problem, they don't do their work, but if I go to them and then I try to give simple exercises to see whether they can actually understand the language or not. (DB 49)

Similarly, NK declared:

> Giving instructions from the front and asking for a choral response to your- "Do you understand?" prompt just never really works, does it? Whether or not the students answer with a "Yes", it is undeniably harder to scan whether they truly understand their task/lesson for the day or not if you try to assess a large group of 25-35 students at a time. (NK 26)

Based on the information recorded above, it indicated that they felt strongly that the DI carried out face-to-face was a valuable and necessary approach to teaching. The teachers realized that implementing DI enabled them to meet the needs of all students. This theme is aligned with Tomlinson's (2005) view that teachers are increasingly aware that they need to teach differently to cater to the growing population of diverse students.

D. Differentiated Instruction as a Challenging Approach to Teaching amidst the Pandemic

DI had a different turn when the teachers were compelled to teach online. Although the majority of the teachers had a positive perception of differentiated instruction, AJ, FN and especially WM (who was relatively new to DI) had notably negative perception of the approach with regard to the amount of support from parents and colleagues, trainings as well as students' attitudes towards online learning. The finding revealed that they viewed the implementation of DI as challenging, time consuming and they notoriously were ill-prepared, mentally and emotionally. WM had this to say:

So, I know this is going to be a very challenging journey for me because I am new to this and my experience does not include DI. Considering the pandemic situation we are going through right now, it is extremely difficult to teach the students as they do not join the online class let alone for me to apply the differentiate instruction. Hence, I do not carry out DI…just normal lessons. (WM 28)

While FN added: "But I personally think that it is quite time consuming to prepare such lesson especially when you know half the class won't be there online…". (FN 23). Although DB and KL could be considered as 'masters' of DI as they had many years of practicing DI in their classrooms, they too were quite skeptical on the effectiveness of carrying out this strategy online. KL mentioned that she was very positive at the beginning of the pandemic and had hoped that classes will run as usual. Her expectation was totally crushed when many of her usually responsive students reacted otherwise. She continued by saying that the reasons behind this might include internet connectivity, shared devises with

other siblings, no proper study area at home, parents' squabbles and many other possible factors.

This finding corresponds with Lunsford (2017) in which teachers agreed that implementing differentiated instruction could be beneficial to students' learning, however they also agreed that there are challenges to it. As revealed in Merawi's (2018) study, teachers' negative perceptions towards differentiated instruction is due to a number of prevailing factors such as: time constraints, knowledge gaps, large class size, lack of resources, poor leadership support, lack of commitment from teachers and lack of learning interest on students side. However, we have found that no study had yet to describe the challenges of carrying out DI online, perhaps due to the recentness of the issue.

E. Challenges to Implementing Differentiated Instruction

Based on the findings garnered from the interviews, there are several main challenges for the participants to implement DI online, which are among others; students attendance, lack of training, environmental strain, resource constraint and students' attitudes. The first main challenge is students' attendance in online DI. Many teachers are baffled of what to do with students not appearing online. AJ shared her experience when only two students appeared in her class despite many reminders. The most she could do was to personally send a message to parents telling them that their children were absent in her class. Next is the lack of training on DI. Not many trainings were provided to the teachers on DI. To add to that, online trainings in general is scarce. KL said that thus far she had only attended one DI workshop and that was it. The environmental strain is another factor. From the interviews, we identified three factors that contributed to environmental strain. The most prominent and biggest challenge shared by all respondents is time. There are two aspects of time that played some parts in the challenge. Firstly, it is time consuming to implement DI. FN expressed her thoughts: 'Seriously, teachers need to be ready and prepare all materials and plans before the class. Sometimes, a week or two ahead. (FN58). Meanwhile, NK added: 'As much as the more focused methods work, we simply have no time to prepare the activities/lessons every time'. (NK 88)

Correspondingly, Joseph et al. (2013) reported that teachers need to spend long hours for planning, organising and scheduling individual and groups in a large class setting when the strategy was implemented. Furthermore, in a study conducted by Mariam Shareefa et al. (2019), in which they found out that time is the highest ranking challenge out of six challenges. Another aspect of time that contributed to a part of the challenge is time constraint. The participants stated that they basically did not have enough time to implement DI due to insufficient class hours with the students. DB stated: 'I can use that for two periods of learning in the class and also if I have just one period, I cannot do that... (DB 144)

This is also acknowledged by AJ, who shared: 'English usually has a 1-hour period per session, which could be quite tight to implement the differentiated instruction. (AJ 76). Concurrently, NK added:

> Another aspect of time is in the classroom itself… things that are out of our control such as the technological part or even the things like students coming up late from the lab/library, or the previous teacher is taking your time… All those little things can affect your plans and activities. (NK 91)

Thus, it can be seen that time is the biggest challenge in implementing differentiated instruction. NK even labeled time as her nemesis (NK88).

The next factor that contributes to environmental strain is tiredness. Tiredness could be from preparing materials for DI while handling other school matters. FN firmly stated about depletion of energy: 'I think it could be quite exhausting as we are juggling with many other work too'(FN 59). In order to implement DI, teachers need to identify students' abilities. Based on their abilities, teachers can provide various assignments based on skill levels or interests to meet the needs of all students (Dixon et al., 2014). Hence, it is understandable if teachers perceive DI as tiring because a lot of effort is needed to plan differentiated lessons. However, with almost every class conducted online, they are not just tired but mentally drained to get students to do different things at the same time, if ever the students decided to appear that day. The last factor that led to environmental strain is the large number of students in a class. The large number of students in a class is a normal situation in almost every school during the face-to-face lessons. DB emphasized:

> The number of students that should be in the class is around 20 to 25. Not more than that. Because I've been teaching this one class, they have around 22 students, okay, and it is easier for me to teach them effectively because less number of students. (DB 161)

According to Ford & North Central Regional Educational Lab, N.O (2005) small group instruction can play a pivotal role in a differentiated classroom. In addition, small group instruction allows the teachers to work more closely with a smaller number of students to help them achieve more (Lipson & Wixson, 2012). Moreover, based on a study by Aldossari (2018), the biggest challenges facing male and female teachers in the use of DI strategies related to the school environment is "the density of students per classroom" with the arithmetic mean of 4.52. Hence, the number of students in a class can affect the implementation of differentiated instruction. Nevertheless, the inconsistencies of students' attendance in the online class made it problematic for teachers to carry out DI systematically no matter how small the group maybe.

The next main challenge identified from the interviews is resources. It is said that teachers do not have enough resources to use for the teaching and learning sessions. DB stressed: 'We don't have enough materials for example books, okay, reference books that caters to the students' needs'. (DB 151)

Tomlinson (2005) stated that differentiated instruction means responsive teaching whereby the teachers embrace the differences and tailor instruction to the needs of the students and when the differences are well accommodated, students

learn best. Hence, the implementation of DI needs various activities that can cater to the students' needs and complement their abilities. This point was also stressed by Idrus (2014) in that in examining the activities used in the classroom, teachers would be able to be responsive to varieties of students' needs. Teachers need suitable resources that can aid them to come out with appropriate and sufficient activities for the students.

The final challenge gathered from the interviews is students' attitude. Students' attitude towards learning is crucial to determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning sessions. AJ expressed: 'If the student is lazy and does not want to cooperate with the teachers…that would be difficult' (AJ 74). The implementation of DI could be challenging if the students do not show any interest to learn in the first place. According to a study by Aldossari (2018) it showed that "students' weak motivation for learning" is the third lowest challenge out of eight challenges of implementing DI. This shows students' attitude definitely has an impact towards differentiated instruction. On the other hand, the greatest challenge is the "weakness of students' conviction in using the DI strategy", which means students do not have confidence in the differentiated class (Aldossari, 2018). This could be due to various reasons. For teachers to differentiate effectively, they must first recognize the different aspects of the learning needs of the students in the classroom (Herrelko, 2013; Latz & Adams, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to get to know their students first before implementing differentiated instruction. AJ also stressed: 'After getting know your students' needs and abilities then you can slowly start implement the differentiated instruction. Do it step by step, do not do it in a rush'. (AJ 103)

Based on the outcomes above, it showed that the teachers were aware of these challenges upon implementing DI even before the pandemic struck. Hence, these challenges should be addressed properly by finding the right solutions to assure the success of the implementation of differentiated instruction in classrooms be it face-t-face or online.

V. CONCLUSION

In sum, we explored ESL teachers' perceptions towards implementing differentiated instruction (DI) in online teaching and learning. Teachers' perception has been identified as one of the significant factors influencing teachers' behavior. As such, studies examining teacher-thinking have proven that there is a significant relationship between teachers' thinking, beliefs and attitudes associated with the behavior and actions (Rosidah & Nurahimah, 2020). In this regard, research on teachers' perception of DI and associated relationships with the adoption of the approach in teaching is abundant (Nicolae, 2013; Chin-Wen, 2015; Merawi, 2018; Tamirat & Xiaoduan, 2020). However, DI in online teaching and learning is scarce and relatively new. It has long been argued that teachers' perception of DI is inconsistently changing in that many believe that all students are capable of learning within a mixed ability classroom despite varying platforms (face-to-face and online). Mariyam et al. (2019) opined that the positive perceptions held by teachers regarding differentiated instruction is expected to enhance the adoption of such teaching practices in curriculum delivery. Similarly, Charles and Luard (2018) qualitative study revealed that the use of differentiated instruction is prevalent when teachers perceive that differentiated instruction is essential in a mixed skill level classroom. This implies that having a positive perception of differentiated instruction is influential in increasing the use of the approach in the classrooms. Sadly, this is not the case in the current study. Online DI can be seen as very challenging or even a failure to some ESL teachers.

Discourse constructed from the interviews was used to explore the feelings and emotions to unearth what is actually happening on the ground. It was revealed that the teachers are still grappling with the notion of DI, and it was made worse when classes had to be conducted online due to COVID 19 pandemic. For teachers to successfully implement DI, they must have a clear notion of DI as well as the probability to apply DI on different platforms. Some felt strongly that differentiated instruction was a valuable and necessary approach to teaching but to implement it online needs time as well as ample trainings. However, it is not uncommon that some of them realized that utilising DI enabled them to meet the needs of all students, which is a relief albeit with many trials and tribulations. It can be concluded that DI has really taken its toll in online teaching and learning but not to the point of 'gone awry'. Finally, the study was restrained by certain limitations. Firstly, sampling was restricted to a specific region of the country reducing its generalisation to other regions. All of the participants were Malay ESL teachers. This study focused mainly on differentiated instruction through selected teachers' point of views. Hence, future studies could be adapted to find out perspectives from students, school administrators, and officers from Ministry of Education. Future studies could also include observations. This is to see how the teachers would implement differentiated instruction in online classrooms.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES

[1] Adams, P., & Townsend, D. (2014). From action research to collaborative inquiry: a framework for researchers and practitioners. *Education Canada*, 54(5), 12–15.
[2] Alba, F. (2015, September 3). Collaborative Action Research (CAR). Retrieved November 12, 2020, from https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/sacfi12b-CAR overview.pdf.

[3]   Al-Subaiei, M. S. (2017). Challenges in mixed ability classes and strategies utilized by eli teachers to cope with. *Journal of English Language Teaching* 10(6), 182-189.

[4]   Bailey, C. & Bridges, D. (1983). Mixed Ability Grouping – A Philosophical Perspective. New York: Routledge.

[5]   Bernard, H.R. (2002). Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative methods. 3rd edition. AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek, California, Applied Social Research Methods Series.

[6]   Boyatzis, R.E. (1998). Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

[7]   Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77–101.

[8]   Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Terry, G. (2015). Thematic Analysis. In P. Rohleder & A. C. Lyons   (Eds.), *Qualitative Research in Clinical and Health Psychology* (pp. 95–113). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hamphshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

[9]   Brown, G. H. (1947). A comparison of sampling methods. *Journal of marketing*, 6, 331-337.

[10] Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2007). Business Research Methods. 2nd edition. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, cop. 2007.

[11] Burgess, R.G. (1984). In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research. London: Unwin Hyman.

[12] Castro, E. (2015). Helping English language learners succeed in school. *The Education Digest*, 80 (7), 44-47

[13] Corey, S.M. (1953). Action Research to Improve School Practices. New York: Teachers College Bureau of Publications, Columbia University.

[14] Creswell, J. (2009). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

[15] De Jesus, O. N. (2012). Differentiated instruction: can differentiated instruction provide success for all learners? *National Teacher Education Journal,* 5(3), 5-11. Retrieved from Education Research Complete database. (Accession No. 84313770).

[16] Dudley, E. and E. Osváth. (2016). Mixed-Ability Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[17] E. J. Prast, E. Van de Weijer-Bergsma, E. H. Kroesbergen, and J. E. H. Van Luit. (2018). Differentiated instruction in primary mathematics: Effects of teacher professional development on student achievement," *Learn. Instr.*, vol. 54, pp. 22–34.

[18] Ginja, T. G., & Chen, X. (2020). Teacher Educators' Perspectives and Experiences towards Differentiated Instruction. *International Journal of Instruction,* 13(4), 781-798. https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2020.13448a.

[19] Hammersley, M. and Traianou, A. (2012). Ethics in Qualitative Research: Controversies and Contexts. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

[20] Henderson, L. (2017). "Someone Had to Have Faith in Them as Professionals": An Evaluation of an Action Research Project to Develop Educational Leadership Across the Early Years. *Educational Action Research*, 25(3), 387–401.

[21] Hines, M. B., & Conner-Zachocki, J. (2015). Using Practitioner Inquiry Within and Against Large- Scale Educational Reform. *Teacher Development*, 19(3), 344–364.

[22] H. L. Pham. (2012). "Differentiated instruction and the need to integrate teaching and practice," J. Coll. *Teach. Learn,* 9(1), 13–20.

[23] Idrus, F. (2014). Initiating Culturally Responsive Teaching for Identity Construction in the Malaysian Classrooms. *English Language Teaching*, 7(4), 53-63.

[24] Ishak, N.M., & Bakar, A.Y.A. (2017). Identification Process of Young Gifted Learners: The Malaysian Experience. *Journal for the Education of Gifted Young Scientists*, 5, 2, 71-81.

[25] Jelas, Z. M. & Mohd Ali, M. (2012). 'Inclusive Education in Malaysia: Policy and Practice', *International Journal of Inclusive Education.* DOI: 10.1080/ 13603116.2012.693398.

[26] Jin, E. A. W. N. (2015). Teachers' practices of using differentiated reading instruction in ESL classroom. Wawasan Open University.

[27] Kepol, N. (2017). Quality Malaysian English language teachers: Examining a policy strategy. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction,* 14(1), 187-209.

[28] Kincade. (2017). "Differentiating instruction for large classes in higher education.," Int. J. *Teach. Learn. High. Educ.,* vol. 29, no. 3, pp. 490–500.

[29] Lodico, M., Spaulding, D. T., & Voegtle, K. H. (2010). Methods in educational research: From theory to practice (Laureate Education, Inc., customed.). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

[30] Lunsford, K.J. (2017). Challenges to Implementing Differentiated Instruction in Middle School Classrooms with Mixed Skill Levels. PhD Thesis, Walden University. https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations.

[31] Malaysia Education Blueprint, M. (2013). Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 - 2025. *Education* 27(1): 1–268. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2010.08.007.

[32] Mariyam Shareefa, Visal Moosa, Rohani Mat Zin, Nor Zaiham Midawati Abdullah and Rosmawijah Jawawi. (2019). Teachers' Perceptions on Differentiated Instruction: Do Experience, Qualification and Challenges Matter? *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*. Vol. 18(8).214-226. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.18.8.13.

[33] Marks, D. and Yardley, L. (2004). Research methods for clinical and health psychology. London: SAGE Publication

[34] Manesi, S., & Betsi, S. (2013, March 4). (PDF) Collaborative Action Research Projects. Retrieved November 12, 2020, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256546932_Collaborative_Action_Research_Projects_the_role_of_Communities_of_ Practice_and_Mentoring_in_enhancing_teachers'_ Continuing_Professional_Development.

[35] Maxwell, J. A. (1996). Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach London Merriam, S. (2009). Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

[36] Melesse, T. (2018). Differentiated instruction: Perceptions, practices and challenges of primary school teachers. *Science, Technology and Arts Research Journal*, 4(3), 253. doi: 10.4314/star. v4i3.37.

[37] Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

[38] Mohd Hasrul, K., Hazita, A., & Zahidi, A. M. (2015). Differentiation Practices among the English Teachers at PERMATApintar National Gifted and Talented Center. *Asian Social Science*, 11(9), 346-351.

[39] Mohd Hasrul, K., Hazita, A., & Zahidi, A. M. (2017). Differentiated instruction strategies in English language teaching for

gifted students. *Journal of Applied Environmental Biological Science*, 7(1S),78-90, 2017

[40] Palmer, Cathryne & Bolderston, Amanda. (2006). A Brief Introduction to Qualitative Research. *Canadian Journal of Medical Radiation Technology*. 37. 16-19. 10.1016/S0820-5930(09)60112-2.

[41] Robinson, L., Maldonado, N., & Whaley, J. (2014). Perceptions About Implementation of Differentiated Instruction. Paper presented at The Annual Mid-South Educational Research (MSERA) Conference. Retrieved from Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) No. ED554312.

[42] Rosidah Ramli, Nurahimah Mohd. Yusoff. (2020). Self-efficacy and Differentiated Instruction: A Study among Malaysian School Teachers. *Universal Journal of Educational Research,* 8(4), 1252 - 1260. DOI: 10.13189/ujer.2020.080416.

[43] RAJA, V. S. (2020). Difference between Probability and non-probability sampling. Market Research. Retrieved 1November 2020, from https://pgdabm1618.wordpress.com/2017/01/15/difference

[44] Said, M., & Ehsan, N. (2019). The Effects of Differentiated Instruction on Students' Language Attitude and Critical Thinking in an ESL Context (Doctoral dissertation, University of Sheffield).

[45] Shenton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Educ. Inf.*, 22, 63-75.

[46] Steffen, Edith. (2016). Ethical considerations in qualitative research.

[47] Sternberg, R. and L. Zhang. (2005). Styles of Thinking as a Basis of Differentiated Instruction. *Theory into Practice*, 44(3): 245-253.

[48] Taherdoost, Hamed. (2016). Sampling Methods in Research Methodology; How to Choose a Sampling Technique for Research. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management*. 5. 18-27. 10.2139/ssrn.3205035.

[49] Taylor, B. K. (2015). Content, process, and product: Modeling differentiated instruction. *Kappa Delta Pi Record,* 51(1), 13-17. doi:10.1080/00228958.2015.988559.

[50] Thomson, V. (2009). Impact of differentiation on instructional practices in the elementary classroom (Doctoral Dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved July 2, 2010 from Proquest Research Database.

[51] Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). Leadership for differentiated classrooms. *The School Administrator*, 56(9), 6–11.

[52] Tomlinson, C.A. (2001). How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms (2nd ed.). Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

[53] Tomlinson, C. A. (2005). Traveling the road to differentiation in staff development. *J. Staff Dev.*, vol. 26, no. 4, p. 8-12.

[54] Tomlinson, C. A., & Imbeau, M. B. (2010). Leading and Managing a Differentiated Classroom. Virginia: ASCD Publications.

[55] Tomlinson, C. A., & Imbeau, M. B. (2012). Common sticking points about differentiation. *School Administrator,* 69(5), 18-22.

[56] Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners. Ascd.

[57] Trachoma, William M.K. (2006). Sampling. Retrieved October 28, 2020 from http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/sampling.php

[58] W. D. Turner, O. J. Solis, and D. H. Winifred, A. (2014). NUTP wants less paperwork, more time with students. http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/nutp-wants-less-paperworkmore time-with-students. Accessed on 10 May 2020.

[59] Yasmin, Farhana. (2018). Challenges to Computer Assisted Language Teaching at University Level. *International Journal of Language & Literature*. 6.10.15640/ijll. v6n2a10.

[60] Yin, R. K. (2003). Case study research, design and methods, Newbury Park, CA, SAGE.

Faizah Idrus is an Associate Professor at Kulliyyah of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia. Her research interests include but not confined to ELT, Language, Identity and Community, Teacher Education, Cultural Intelligence, CRT and a few others

Nur Afini Zainal Asri was born on 22nd November 1998 in Sultanah Nora Ismail Hospital, Batu Pahat, Johor. Afini is currently undergoing her degree in Teaching English as a Second Language at International Islamic University Malaysia in Gombak. She completed her foundation in TESL in 2017 at Universiti Teknologi MARA in Dengkil.

Nurin Najihah Baharom was born on 6th July 1997 and raised in Kuantan, Pahang. She completed her foundation at UIA Foundation Center in Petaling Jaya and pursuing her degree in Teaching English as a Second Language at International Islamic University, which is situated in Gombak, Kuala Lumpur. She is currently in the final semester of her degree.

Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

Aims and Scope

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:

- Language teaching methodologies
- Pedagogical techniques
- Teaching and curricular practices
- Curriculum development and teaching methods
- Programme, syllabus, and materials design
- Second and foreign language teaching and learning
- Classroom-centered research
- Literacy
- Language education
- Teacher education and professional development
- Teacher training
- Cross-cultural studies
- Child, second, and foreign language acquisition
- Bilingual and multilingual education
- Translation
- Teaching of specific skills

- Language teaching for specific purposes
- New technologies in language teaching
- Testing and evaluation
- Language representation
- Language planning
- Literature, language, and linguistics
- Applied linguistics
- Phonetics, phonology, and morphology
- Syntax and semantics
- Sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics
- Discourse analysis
- Stylistics
- Language and culture, cognition, and pragmatics
- Language teaching and psychology, anthropology, sociology
- Theories and practice in related fields

Special Issue Guidelines

Special issues feature specifically aimed and targeted topics of interest contributed by authors responding to a particular Call for Papers or by invitation, edited by guest editor(s). We encourage you to submit proposals for creating special issues in areas that are of interest to the Journal. Preference will be given to proposals that cover some unique aspect of the technology and ones that include subjects that are timely and useful to the readers of the Journal. A Special Issue is typically made of 15 to 30 papers, with each paper 8 to 12 pages of length.

A special issue can also be proposed for selected top papers of a conference/workshop. In this case, the special issue is usually released in association with the committee members of the conference/workshop like general chairs and/or program chairs who are appointed as the Guest Editors of the Special Issue.

The following information should be included as part of the proposal:

- Proposed title for the Special Issue
- Description of the topic area to be focused upon and justification
- Review process for the selection and rejection of papers
- Name, contact, position, affiliation, and biography of the Guest Editor(s)
- List of potential reviewers if available
- Potential authors to the issue if available
- Estimated number of papers to accept to the special issue
- Tentative time-table for the call for papers and reviews, including
    o Submission of extended version
    o Notification of acceptance
    o Final submission due
    o Time to deliver final package to the publisher

If the proposal is for selected papers of a conference/workshop, the following information should be included as part of the proposal as well:

- The name of the conference/workshop, and the URL of the event.
- A brief description of the technical issues that the conference/workshop addresses, highlighting the relevance for the journal.
- A brief description of the event, including: number of submitted and accepted papers, and number of attendees. If these numbers are not yet available, please refer to previous events. First time conference/workshops, please report the estimated figures.
- Publisher and indexing of the conference proceedings.

If a proposal is accepted, the guest editor will be responsible for:

- Preparing the "Call for Papers" to be included on the Journal's Web site.
- Distribution of the Call for Papers broadly to various mailing lists and sites.
- Getting submissions, arranging review process, making decisions, and carrying out all correspondence with the authors. Authors should be informed the Author Guide.
- Providing us the completed and approved final versions of the papers formatted in the Journal's style, together with all authors' contact information.
- Writing a one- or two-page introductory editorial to be published in the Special Issue.

More information is available on the web site at http://www.academypublication.com/jltr/

(Contents Continued from Back Cover)